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## Integrating Reading Aloud, Writing, and Assessment Through Voice Recording With EFL Learning\*

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### Abstract

This study attempts to develop an EFL learning output activity by integrating reading aloud, writing, and assessment through voice recording. 62 college students participated in the activities for 15 weeks. Surveys, self-evaluations, and teacher evaluations were conducted and analyzed using the SPSS *t*-test to examine the students' reactions to the activities. The survey results for the psychological questionnaires on confidence, anxiety, and attitude toward English were not statistically significant except with regard to willingness to practice English. The students became familiar with the activities and this might have led them to feel that they could improve their English skills through this repetitive integrated activity. Additionally, while students' self-evaluation results in the competence for listening, reading, speaking, grammar, and vocabulary were statistically significant ( $p < .05$ ), the competences for writing and pronunciation were not. Writing fatigue and pronunciation mistakes encountered during the activities might have contributed to students' negative reactions in the confidence, anxiety, and attitude questionnaires. Nevertheless, it can be surmised that the integrated activities could help activate the English knowledge possessed by students. The methodology can also be recommended for use in EFL classes to make students become active participants and be aware of their English competence.

**Keywords:** EFL learning, integrated activity, writing, reading aloud, voice recording

**Applicable level:** tertiary

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\* This work was partially extracted and cited from the doctoral dissertation of Chong (2019) at Busan University of Foreign Studies.

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## I. INTRODUCTION

Exercising and practicing the acquired English knowledge is as vital as learning more of it in the context of learning English as a foreign language (EFL). Bygate (1987, 2001) states that two aspects must be considered in language acquisition—knowledge of the language and skills in using the knowledge. For example, learners preparing to use a target language must have a certain amount of grammar and vocabulary knowledge, and the skills to use the knowledge, which is acquired by practicing speaking and writing in the language. In other words, possessing a certain amount of knowledge about a target language alone does not suffice; a learner should also be able to use their knowledge of the language in various situations.

In the words of Harmer (2007), receptive skills, such as listening and reading, and productive skills, such as speaking and writing, cannot be separated virtually as they reinforce each other during the teaching and learning of a target language. However, it is not easy to provide harmonized opportunities to use receptive skills and productive skills in the EFL context. For instance, Korean students learn English as one of the major foreign languages; however, in the general Korean context, while most of them spend a lot of time learning the rules and vocabulary of the English language, they have relatively limited opportunities practicing their English knowledge and skills in class. According to Joh (2002), about 60% of colleges in Korea made their students take mandatory classes in English listening, reading comprehension, conversation, and writing as part of their general education; however, their English skills had not developed at a rate commensurate with the time spent. Specifically, acquiring language skills pertaining to speaking and writing remained the most demanding and difficult. Thus, researchers in Korea have focused on developing class activities for speaking and writing skills at a college-level (Chong, 2021b; Kim, 2014; Kim & Kim, 2005; Ko, 2018; Lee & Yoon, 2010; Park & Park, 2018; Yu, 2015).

Additionally, the language learning activities recommended in previous research have reported some positives and negatives, and much greater synergy can be expected when guided with the integration of some of these language learning activities. Thus, many studies in EFL learning have attempted to create synergy and maximize the learning effects of learners by integrating various language skills such as the integrations of listening and reading, and speaking and writing (Baranowska, 2020; Hinkel, 2010; Jacobs, 2016; Oxford, 2001; Sadiku, 2015; Yaman, 2016). According to Oxford (2001) and Sadiku (2015), learning a target language using an integrated approach balances and harmonizes the practical use of communicative language skills. Hinkel (2010) also states that an integrated approach is necessary to broaden foreign language learners' opportunities for having meaningful communication, interaction, and real language use. Some Korean EFL studies have also shown that integrated methods are more helpful in improving the reading, speaking, and writing skills of foreign language learners (Chong, 2019b, 2021a; Kim, 2014; Kim, 2018; Ko, 2018; Lee & Yoon, 2010; Song, 2006).

Among the EFL studies of the integrated methods, some studies have focused on the integration of reading aloud and other skills (Chol & Lewis, 2018; Chong, 2019b, 2021a; Heo, 2017; Hung, 2019; Jacobs, 2016; Johnston, 2015; Kim, 2018; Yu, 2015). Studies on reading aloud have been conducted on EFL learners that the practice of reading aloud is important and positively effective in English learning. Thus, to develop an EFL class activity where students can practice their English knowledge, this study attempted to explore an integrated EFL learning output activity—the integration of reading aloud, writing, and self-voice recording.

This study utilized a reading aloud method integrated with writing and self-voice recording activities to enable EFL students to use their acquired English knowledge. It was vital to choose activities that would enable every student to participate during the class. The activities of writing, reading aloud, and voice recording are learning methods that can enable student involvement throughout the learning process. Writing has a function of language expression, and it was assumed that writing could facilitate students' utilization of their previously acquired English knowledge by organizing their ideas on a given topic (Aaron & Joshi, 2006; Hinkel, 2010; Joe, 2003; Kara, 2013; Sadiku, 2015; Scott, 1996). Next, reading aloud, which has been highlighted in the field of language learning to develop comprehension and fluency, could also play an important role after completing a writing task (Bygate, 2001; Chol & Lewis, 2018; Gabrielatos, 2002; Gibson, 2008; Griffin, 1992; Huang, 2010; Jacobs, 2016; Johnston, 2015; Lane & Wright, 2007). For example, reading aloud could help students cognitively prepare the story flow and contents of their own writing. By repeatedly reading aloud what they had written, the students can become familiar to it, and

thus, reduce their hesitation in uttering their outputs on the given topic. In addition, students can assess segmental and supra-segmental features, such as pronunciation, stress, tone, and speed when they speak; this may eventually help improve their overall utterance skills. Finally, with the process of self-voice recording on the given topic after the activities of writing and reading aloud, they could analyze their recording from an objective perspective and become cognizant of the deficiencies in their fluency, accuracy, naturalness, and other utterance errors (Aoki, 2014; Brown, 2012; Chong, 2019b, 2021a; Daska & Krekeler, 2008; Jaber, 2021; Kim & Chang, 2010; Venkatagiri & Levis, 2007).

This study intended to examine the changes in students' psychological reaction toward using English and some potential effects when they participate and engage in the reading aloud activity integrated with writing and self-voice recording by integrating these activities. The questions examined in this study are as follows:

1. Are there positive changes in the psychological reactions of the students in using English before and after the reading aloud activity integrated with writing and self-voice recording?
2. Are there positive changes in the students' self-evaluations in English competence before and after the reading aloud activity integrated with writing and self-voice recording?
3. Are there precautions to be taken when conducting a reading aloud activity integrated with writing and self-voice recording in an EFL class?

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

### 1. Integration in Language Skills

Language skills are generally comprised of reading, listening, speaking, and writing. While reading and listening belongs to receptive skills, speaking and writing are productive skills (Harmer, 2007). The use of integrated language skills in teaching and learning started to emerge into practice along with the communicative movement. Subsequently, studies utilizing effective integrated methods and approaches for teaching and learning a foreign language have become common practice. These studies, which merged various skills, such as reading, listening, writing, and speaking, reported importance and effects of integrated approaches (Harmer, 2007; Hinkel, 2010; Klimova, 2012; Nunan, 2015; Oxford, 2001, Sadiku, 2015). Thus, much greater synergy can be expected, such as increased motivation and learning outcomes, development of possessed knowledge, and the ability to use the language in real communication, when guided with the integration methods (Hinkel, 2010; Klimova, 2012; Oxford, 2001).

Oxford (2001) stated that a teaching approach that integrates language skills can lead EFL students to naturally use the acquired language skills naturally in actual communication situations. The integrated approach not only exposes EFL students to a target language and motivates students with various experiences to learn the target language learning, but also allows teachers to monitor students' development process in different language skills. In addition, she suggested that a variety of integrated language teaching and learning methods can be developed by any teacher, but careful reflection and planning for instruction should be preceded. In the words of Hinkel (2010), as the importance of communication skills increases, various methods and developments for acquiring language skills should be considered and taught for communication in real situations. Hinkel also claimed that an integrated approach is necessary to broaden foreign language learners' opportunities for having meaningful communication, interaction, and real language use; thus, such an approach of the integrated language skills is in harmony with the process of using target language skills in actual communication. Sadiku (2015) indicated that students need opportunities to integrate their English skills in class because language skills are separate yet bound together. For the EFL learning to be successful, language skills, such as reading, listing, speaking and writing, should be integrated in an effective way.

Many researchers have conducted integrating methods to improve students' various language skills in EFL contexts (Borhany, Tahriri, & Tous, 2015; Córdoba Zúñiga, 2016; Klimova, 2012). Borhany et al. (2015) performed an integrated approach on lower-intermediate EFL Students and their overall listening comprehension and strategy use were improved. Córdoba Zúñiga (2016) also implemented an integrated approach with task-based teaching to help students improve their English communication skills in Colombia and reported that the integration approach could

facilitate four language skills of EFL students. In addition, Klimova (2012) tried to integrate curricular subjects in Czech EFL context and stated some benefits related to content, culture, and language learning.

Some studies overviewed English education policies and programs of the Korean EFL teaching and learning (Chong, 2021b; Chung & Choi, 2016; Joh, 2002; Moodie & Nam, 2016). Among them, Joh (2002) analyzed about 40 colleges in Korea (60%) that have made their students take mandatory classes in English skills, such as listening, reading comprehension, conversation, and writing as part of general education, and observed that speaking and writing skills remained the most demanding and difficult. Thus, researchers in Korea have focused on developing effective class activities for speaking and writing skills (Joe, 2003; Kim, 2014; Kim & Kim, 2005; Lee & Yoon, 2010; Park & Park, 2018; Song, 2006); however, relatively little attention has been paid to the integrated approach using reading aloud (Chong, 2019b, 2021a; Heo, 2017; Kim, 2018; Yu, 2015).

## 2. Studies in Reading Aloud

While reading aloud has been a traditional language reading method, numerous researchers have started re-evaluating reading aloud as an important learning skill and a learning process for EFL learners; moreover, they have further studied the relationship between reading aloud and other language skills (Bygate, 2001; Celce-Murcia, Brinton, Goodwin, & Griner 2010; Chol & Lewis, 2018; Fountas & Pinnell, 2012; Gabrielatos, 2002; Gibson, 2008; Griffin, 1992; Huang, 2010; Jacobs, 2016; Johnston, 2015; Lane & Wright, 2007; Nation, 2013; Senawati, Suwastini, Jayantini, Adnyani, & Artini, 2021; Trelease, 1995). Gabrielatos (2002) valued reading aloud as a skill that can be used to raise awareness of and practice in phonological language aspects. He also presented class activities and guidelines for using reading aloud, such as reading news articles, performing a role-play with a script, and acting as a storyteller. Similarly, Gibson (2008) argued that reading aloud is effective for improving automatic phonological coding, and the speed of vocal and sub-vocal speech. He also claimed that reading aloud played a vital role among many Asian learners for practicing English sounds and pronunciation. Trelease (1995) discussed some benefits and strategies for teachers reading aloud to students in class, and claimed that as teachers read aloud to students, they can share the joy of reading and motivate students to read on their own regardless of their age and reading level. To enhance the effectiveness of reading aloud, Jacobs (2016) suggested guidelines for teachers in terms of how to choose the appropriate text and how to read the text with joy. Using the guidelines of Jacobs (2016), Senawati et al. (2021) developed the guidelines and procedures for reading aloud activities. However, most of these are focused on the importance of undertaking activities where teachers read aloud to their students or on choosing appropriate texts for the reading aloud activity to improve students' motivation for reading.

Among the few studies focused on reading aloud activities in the Korean EFL context, Kim (2018) and Yu (2015) examined reading aloud activity to analyze the effects of reading aloud mostly on reading comprehension, vocabulary, and syntactic knowledge. Kim (2018) conducted their study on reading aloud task using a mobile phone with a focus on EFL vocabulary and reading skills, and reported some positive changes on the EFL learners' vocabulary and reading comprehension skills. Similarly, Yu (2015) examined whether reading aloud activity can be helpful for college students to enhance skills of vocabulary, syntactic skills, and comprehension. Her study demonstrated that higher-level students improved in their skills of vocabulary, grammar, and reading, while lower-level students showed improvement only in their vocabulary. Chong (2019b, 2021a) also attempted various classes using reading aloud. Chong (2019b) utilized the repeated reading aloud method in the field of translation and interpretation. The study indicated that repetitive reading aloud activities continuously provided a success experience for EFL learners and helped increase their confidence in target language use. Chong (2021a) then conducted the reading aloud activity using English news articles as a way to provide increased opportunities for EFL college students to improve their confidence in English speaking. She compared the psychological changes in the surveys based on students' experiences in foreign countries, and reported that students without learning experiences in a foreign country positively reacted to the activity. In particular, most of Chong's works attempted to develop an EFL learning activity in class using the reading aloud method.

### 3. Difficulties in Learning EFL Writing

Despite the positive effects of the various activities in class, Levelt (1989) claimed that linguistic factors affecting foreign language fluency, including vocabulary, pronunciation, and grammar, could be encoded in largely automatic, efficient, and inflexible processes. In particular, writing has been reported as one of the most demanding and difficult language skills in the process of EFL teaching and learning (Aaron & Joshi, 2006; Chong, 2019b; Joe, 2003; Kara, 2013; Kim, 2014; Kim & Kim, 2005; Lee & Yoon, 2010; Park & Park, 2018; Scott, 1996; Song, 2006). In the context of EFL, Joe (2003) studied the factors causing writing apprehension among EFL college students and found that there were three major factors: linguistic, situational, and psychological. Kara (2013) also investigated students' attitudes toward academic writing classes to determine whether students experience L2 writing anxiety and the reasons for their anxiety and failure in writing classes. Thus, the study claimed that the students had writing anxiety and might fail as they were not accustomed to expressing themselves in writing.

Moreover, students perceived writing as a complex productive skill, for which they lacked the necessary strategies, such as gathering, organizing, and combining ideas and information to express themselves clearly. Scott (1996) suggested writing strategies for teaching and urged the revising and editing processes of writing, wherein students can have an opportunity to examine their writings closely by focusing on grammatical errors, vocabulary problems, and organizational issues. In the Korean EFL context, Kim and Kim (2005) pointed out problems with writing instructions in Korean EFL classes—emphasizing grammatical forms and final products, lacking genre-based writing curriculums and diverse feedback types—and proposed the need for a balanced curriculum and a genre-based writing approach to address the problems they identified in Korean college writing instructions. Park and Park (2018) further investigated the different effects of the online and offline writing environments on the acquisition of writing skills and reported that online students outperformed the offline group in their writing performance. In addition, studies integrating writing and other language skills have been continuously reported to alleviate and supplement the difficulties of students in learning EFL writing (Chong, 2019b; Hinkel, 2010; Kim, 2014; Lee & Yoon, 2010; Oxford, 2001; Sadiku, 2015).

### 4. Potential Effects of Voice Recording in EFL Learning

Along with the studies of effective methods to learn a language, Swain and Lapkin (1995), and Brown (2012) have highlighted the importance of producing output in language learning; thus the opportunity to allow students to practice and receive feedback on their output performance is essential. Many other studies suggested voice recording as one of the output tools which could provide students a chance to observe their performance (Aoki, 2014; Chong, 2021a; Gabrielatos, 2002, Hung, 2019; Jaber, 2021; Kim & Chang, 2010; Lane & Wright, 2007; Yaman, 2016). The self-voice recording activity allowed students to have a self-reflection and self-feedback of their performance by listening to their own recording, and self-assess the aspects that they would have to improve in their future recordings.

The study by Aoki (2014) identified some advantages of voice recording activity along with useful tools and applications (such as cassette tapes, mobile phones, Google Voice, Evernote, etc.) by reviewing the existing literature. While it is unclear whether self-reflection of voice recording activity would directly improve students' supra-segmental features of pronunciation, voice recording activity may positively contribute to students' awareness of their own oral output, such as pronunciation, intonation, linking, and stress. Jaber (2021) also studied on the effects of self-voice recording as a technique on oral performance for EFL learners through electronic learning system. The study determined some significant effects of self-voice recording techniques, such as students' high interest in e-learning, positive perspective in using the self-voice recording technique, and improvement of students' speaking skills.

Similarly in the Korean EFL context, Kim and Chang (2010) claimed that the voice recording method could help students to improve their English speaking skills and able to enhance their autonomous learning. The study further showed positive results on the perceptions of the voice recording through collaborative learning experience, such as enjoyment, confidence, and self-directed learning. In addition, Chong (2021a) conducted self-voice recording and reading aloud activities in class using English TV news to increase the number of opportunities in making utterance outputs for Korean EFL learners. She further claimed that students without any overseas English learning experience showed significantly positive reactions toward the activities in the study.

### III. METHODS

In line with the existing research, this study aimed to develop an EFL learning output activity that integrates reading aloud and writing followed by voice recording. Then, surveys and self-evaluation from students were administered to explore the reactions and effects to the integrated activities.

#### 1. Participants

The integrated activity class in the study was an elective course from a private college in South Korea, and 62 college students participated in the study as shown in Table 1. At the beginning of the semester, students provided their background information, such as name, sex, school year, English test scores obtained, and overseas experience.

**TABLE 1**

Student Information			
School year	Women	Men	Total
2 <sup>nd</sup> year	2	2	4(6%)
3 <sup>rd</sup> year	12	10	22(36%)
4 <sup>th</sup> year	17	18	35(57%)
Unidentified school year	1	0	1(1%)
Total	32(52%)	30(48%)	62(100%)

Among the participants, 57 (about 93%) were third- and fourth-year students, and the proportions of women and men were almost equal. According to the background information, their average Test of English for International Communication (TOEIC) score was 731 (lowest = 565, highest = 925). Interestingly, many of them were planning to take English speaking tests as potential job applicants. In addition, about 32 students (52%) had overseas experience in English-speaking countries of between 3 months and 31 months as travelers, exchange students, and volunteers.

#### 2. Materials

In the integrated activities of reading aloud and writing followed by self-voice recordings, practical and casual topics such as introducing people, places, schools, majors, classes, hobbies, sports, and vacations were extracted from textbooks and the websites of the English-speaking tests,<sup>1</sup> which contained exercises appropriate for an EFL college student. In addition, as mentioned in the student information of Table 1, most participants (93%) were juniors and seniors who planned on taking an English-speaking test as part of their job applications. As Gabrielatos (2002) and Jacobs (2016) emphasized the importance of choosing the appropriate texts of reading aloud for learners to read the texts with the motivation, it was presumed that the topics from actual English-speaking tests could provide a realistic motivation to college students and were covered in the exercises as shown in Table 2.

**TABLE 2**

Topics and Schedules	
Week	Topics and Schedules
1 <sup>st</sup>	Overall class information and syllabus
2 <sup>nd</sup>	Self-introduction / Conduct pre-survey and self-evaluation
3 <sup>rd</sup>	Introduce family and friends
4 <sup>th</sup>	Introduce housing and neighborhood
5 <sup>th</sup>	Describe school campus
6 <sup>th</sup>	Describe school major and minor
7 <sup>th</sup>	Describe memorable events in school
8 <sup>th</sup>	Mid-term exam
9 <sup>th</sup>	Introduce leisure activities
10 <sup>th</sup>	Introduce hobbies and interests
11 <sup>th</sup>	Introduce how to maintain health
12 <sup>th</sup>	Introduce vacation plans

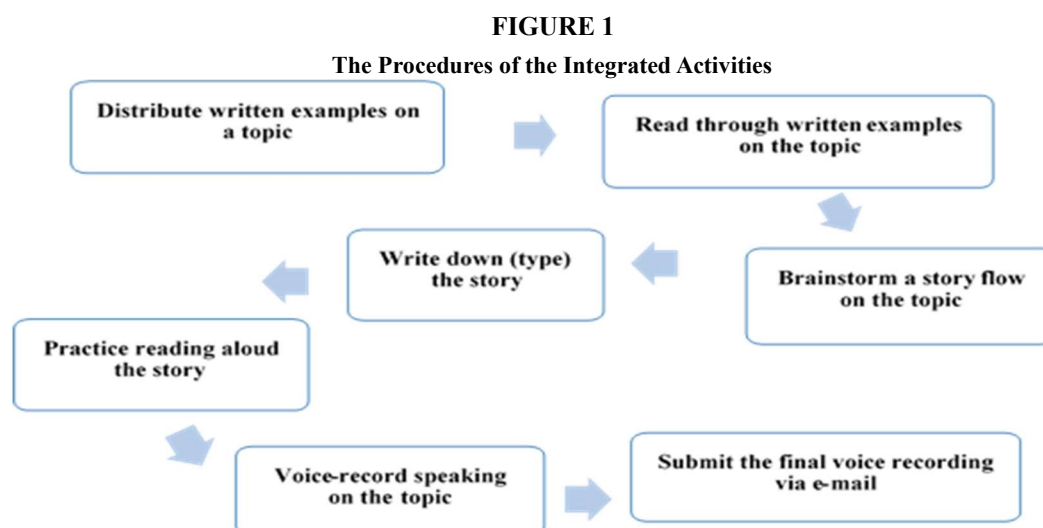
<sup>1</sup> Oral Proficiency Interview-computer (OPIc) Test: <https://www.opic.or.kr>; TOEIC Speaking Test: <https://exam.ybmnet.co.kr/toeicswt/>

13 <sup>th</sup>	Describe procedures to prepare for trips
14 <sup>th</sup>	Describe memorable trips / Conduct post-survey and self-evaluation
15 <sup>th</sup>	Final exam

Topics for the activities were extracted from actual English tests, such as Oral Proficiency Interview-computer (OPIc) and TOEIC Speaking, that contained practical realistic topics, such as friends and family, leisure activities, school life, vacation, etc., while considering EFL college students' level and realistic motivation, which was to achieve a high score on English speaking tests to secure a job after college graduation.

### 3. Procedures

This study integrated the activities of reading aloud, writing, and assessment through self-voice recording, which may allow students to experience the process of using their English knowledge and activate their English skills. The class for the integrated activities was held for 15 weeks in a computer lab, where students could access the Internet and use computers or mobile phones in 2017. The integrated activities' procedures are shown in Figure 1.



The main purpose of the writing activity in this study was to assist students to improve their English knowledge and organize their ideas around a certain topic. One topic was given in each class along with some writing models related to the given topic. The teacher highlighted the necessary vocabulary, expression, pronunciation, and flow while reading aloud about four to five distributed writing models to students. It usually took about 20 minutes.

The writing tasks were implemented individually. The students initially brainstormed on what and how to write on the given topic. Subsequently, about 20 minutes of individual writing time was given. During the task, students used a computer or their mobile phone to search for relative grammar and vocabulary information on a given topic, and then typed their written response. Kim and Kim (2005) stated that writing instructions for university students in Korean EFL classes have some problems, such as heavy emphasis on grammar and on final writing product. In this study, grammar and vocabulary requirements for writing tasks were neither emphasized nor directly taught during the class as explicitly mentioning grammar before the writing activity may give students an impression that their grammar skills were being emphasized. This may lead them to take longer to complete the task on account of ensuring grammatical accuracy. Instead, the students were allowed to search online for the grammar and vocabulary needed.

Then, the class was separated into small groups to read their writing aloud. About 20 minutes of practice time was given for this small group activity. During this group exercise, the students had to practice by “acting as if they were not reading their writing” or “pretending not to look and read.” This was to give students the opportunity to practice their tone of speaking and listen to the tone of others speaking.

Instead of submitting their writing, the class went on to conduct another individual task whereby they would practice reading their written stories aloud and voice recording it. To voice record and submit the final oral task, it

was important for students to be cognitively prepared for their own story flow. Then, the students had to read and practice speaking aloud until they felt comfortable with the flow of their written stories. It might have been difficult for students to voice record their written stories naturally without stuttering, if they did not repeatedly practice the flow of the story. Finally, when they felt ready, they recorded themselves using the applications, such as Windows Voice Recorder, GOM Recorder, Voice Recorder on Google Play, and so on. The students took the rest of the class time to practice until they felt satisfied with the accent and tone of their voice recordings, and to submit the final oral task with the best voice recording via email.

#### 4. Instruments

To explore the students' reactions to the integrated activities, the surveys and self-evaluations<sup>2</sup> were administered twice: at the beginning and at the end of the semester. Comments and feedback were also used to discover the reactions and attitudes of the students toward the integrated activities to expand EFL learning techniques. Finally, to examine students speaking improvements, teacher's evaluations were conducted during mid-term and final exams.

##### 1) The Survey

The basic construction of the survey questions was guided by the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) identified by Horwitz, Horwitz, and Cope (1986). The study extracted eight questions referred to the FLCAS questions and used additional vocabularies to match the purpose of this study. The survey questions<sup>3</sup> were then divided into two on confidence, two on anxiety, and four on attitude as shown in Table 3.

**TABLE 3**  
**Survey Questions**

Survey questions	
Confidence	1. I have confidence in English speaking. 2. I have confidence in English writing.
Anxiety	3. I worry about making mistakes when using English in class. 4. I feel anxious and frustrated when I use English in class.
Attitude	5. I feel positive about taking English lectures or learning English. 6. I am willing to keep practicing English to improve English communicative skills. 7. I know methods to produce English outputs. 8. I think it is possible to improve my English skills in the Korean EFL context.

The survey used a typical five-point Likert scale (1 = *strongly disagree*, 2 = *disagree*, 3 = *neither agree nor disagree*, 4 = *agree*, 5 = *strongly agree*), which is the most widely used approach to scaling responses in survey research.

##### 2) The Self-Evaluation

Several studies in language education have claimed that students' self-evaluation can be valuable and have much wider benefits in all stages of the language learning process. Additionally, self-evaluation aids students to gain insight into their language learning progress and become aware of their own language competence (Anderson & Freiberg, 1995; Dochy & McDowell, 1997; González-Betancor, Bolívar-Cruz, & Verano-Tacoronte, 2019; Hung, 2019; Munoz & Álvarez, 2007; Nodoushan, 2010; Ünalı, 2016). Thus, when students self-evaluate, they may become an active participant in their own evaluation. They assess their own English language competence and identify the skills they need to improve from a more practical perspective. This may eventually lead to further development of EFL proficiency and autonomy. In this study, pre-self-evaluation and post-self-evaluation questions were developed for seven language skills: listening, reading, writing, speaking, grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation, and the students self-evaluated their English competence as shown in Table 4.

<sup>2</sup> See Appendix.

<sup>3</sup> The survey questions for this study were partially extracted from the doctoral dissertation of Chong (2019a). There were 13 survey questionnaire items used in the thesis, and their average reliability by Cronbach's alpha analysis was 0.694, which was a 'questionable' range.



**TABLE 4**  
**Self-Evaluations**

Language skill	Evaluation scale									
	(very good)					(very poor)				
Listening comprehension	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
Reading comprehension	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
Writing	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
Speaking	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
Grammar	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
Vocabulary	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
Pronunciation	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1

The self-evaluation ratings were made on a ten-point Likert scale ranging from one [very poor] to ten [very good]. By convention, Likert scales typically range from two to ten, with three or five being the most common (Wittink & Bayer, 2003). However, in this study, it is preferable to have a larger Likert scale to obtain statistical variables (mean, standard deviation, etc.) for self-evaluation questions as it allows for greater variability of responses, a higher degree of precise measurement, and better opportunity to detect changes between pre- and post-self-evaluations of learners. It is also assumed that most students are likely to have experienced a rating scale ranging from one to ten. One was marked as ‘very poor’ and ten as ‘very good’, and students’ responses were induced according to the score value.

### 3) The Teacher Evaluation

Teacher’s evaluations were conducted twice to examine students speaking improvements and the trend for the frequency changes in students’ competence between mid-term and final exams. The purpose of the teacher’s evaluations was to compare the results of the students’ midterm and final exams to examine if the students’ communicative skills improved after the integrated activities. The evaluation criteria for the exam were made by referring to the evaluation criteria of the TOEIC Speaking Test<sup>4</sup>: pronunciation, intonation and stress, grammar, vocabulary, consistency, and completeness. The exams were in the form of voice recordings and were evaluated based on pronunciation (including intonation and speed), vocabulary, grammar, and story flow and naturalness as shown in Table 5.

**TABLE 5**  
**Teacher Evaluation Rating**

Name:	Mid-term Exam						Total: 25
Q1	Pronunciation (x 0.1)	Intonation (x 0.1)	Speed (x 0.1)	Vocabulary (x 0.2)	Grammar (x 0.2)	Flow/Naturalness (x 0.3)	Total (x 1.0)*0.5
Q2	Pronunciation (x 0.1)	Intonation (x 0.1)	Speed (x 0.1)	Vocabulary (x 0.2)	Grammar (x 0.2)	Flow/Naturalness (x 0.3)	Total (x 1.0)*0.5
Q3	Pronunciation (x 0.1)	Intonation (x 0.1)	Speed (x 0.1)	Vocabulary (x 0.2)	Grammar (x 0.2)	Flow/Naturalness (x 0.3)	Total (x 1.0)*0.5
Q4	Pronunciation (x 0.1)	Intonation (x 0.1)	Speed (x 0.1)	Vocabulary (x 0.2)	Grammar (x 0.2)	Flow/Naturalness (x 0.3)	Total (x 1.0)*0.5
Q5	Pronunciation (x 0.1)	Intonation (x 0.1)	Speed (x 0.1)	Vocabulary (x 0.2)	Grammar (x 0.2)	Flow/Naturalness (x 0.3)	Total (x 1.0)*0.5

Students were given five questions to record their speaking during the exams. Each question was worth five points for a total score of 25 points for each exam. The score at the time of the evaluation was calculated out of 10 points for each recorded speaking. Pronunciation criteria were divided into pronunciation, intonation, and speed, each with a weight of 10%. Vocabulary and grammar were rated at 20% each, and story flow and naturalness were at 30%. Compared to other evaluation criteria, story flow and natural delivery were evaluated as the most important, which were intended to stimulate and motivate students to practice continuously. Then, if students’ naturalness and delivery skills improved through continuous practice, it was to give more credit to the students’ efforts even if their pronunciation and grammar skills were not excellent.

<sup>4</sup> TOEIC Speaking Test: <https://www.toeicswt.co.kr/common/template/viewContents.php?contentsCode=72>

## 5. Data Analysis

Data were gathered from survey questions and self-evaluations, which were conducted twice—in the beginning and at the end of the research—to investigate EFL college students' reactions to the integrated activities. To explore students' reactions to the integrated activities, mean scores, standard deviations, *t*-values, and *p*-values were analyzed. SPSS 25 was used for the statistical analyses.

## IV. RESULT AND DISCUSSIONS

### 1. Changes in Psychological Reactions to English

The data in Table 6 are based on the results of the students' surveys and show the students' psychological reactions toward the integrated activities of reading aloud and writing followed by voice recording.

**TABLE 6**  
**Students' Psychological Reactions to Using English**

	Pre-survey		Post-survey		<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>		
1. Confidence in English writing	2.65	0.851	2.72	0.761	-0.830	.410
2. Confidence in English speaking	2.85	0.846	3.02	0.911	-1.397	.168
3. Worry about making mistakes in English class	3.21	1.118	3.07	1.177	0.830	.410
4. Anxiety when using English in class	3.03	1.055	2.93	0.989	0.739	.463
5. Feel positive about taking English lectures	4.03	0.849	4.28	0.715	-1.651	.104
6. Willing to practice English communicative skills	2.53	0.987	3.93	0.861	-8.577	.000**
7. Know methods to produce English outputs	2.65	0.943	3.22	0.865	-3.886	.000**
8. Possible to improve English skills in the Korean EFL context	2.85	0.989	3.35	1.039	-2.593	.012*

Note: \**p* < .05, \*\**p* < .001

All mean scores on the post-survey were higher than those on the pre-survey in Table 6. However, the results of an SPSS *t*-test showed different figures. It was observed that the students' psychological reactions toward the integrated activities were not as positive as presumed. The *p*-values of confidence in writing (*p* = .410), confidence in speaking (*p* = .168), worries (*p* = .410), and anxiety (*p* = .463) were not significant at all, suggesting that even though the mean scores on the post-survey were higher than on the pre-survey and the difference was not statistically significant. The attitude toward taking English classes (*p* = .104) was slightly more positive than the others, but the statistical result was not that significant. For survey questions on willingness to practice English skills and on knowing English output methods showed statistically significant differences, with a *p*-value of *p* < .001 for both. Finally, question item #8 for possibility to improve English skills in the Korean EFL context also showed the statistically significant data with a *p*-value of *p* < .05. It can be cautiously assumed that the students had a willingness to continue practicing making English outputs and felt that they might improve their English skills by using the integrated activities conducted in the study. Unfortunately, the survey results demonstrate that the integrated method was not as effective as assumed in improving the students' confidence and anxiety. Thus, it is necessary to investigate how long it would take to increase confidence in using English and reduce anxiety in an EFL class through related future research.

### 2. Self-Evaluations on English Competence After the Integrated Activities

The integrated activities needed to be examined further on the students' self-evaluations in English competence. Several studies in language education supported the hypothesis that students' self-evaluation can be valuable and have benefits in all stages of the language learning process (Anderson & Freiberg, 1995; Dochy & McDowell, 1997). Students can gain insight into their language learning progress and be aware of their own language competence while

experiencing self-evaluation. When students evaluate themselves, they may become an active participant in their own evaluation. They assess their own English language competence and identify the skills they need to improve from a more practical perspective. The data in Table 7 indicate the effectiveness of the integrated activities based on the self-rated evaluations by the students. Although students' reactions in the surveys did not show significant improvements on confidence, anxiety, and attitude toward the activities, the students' self-evaluation results on English competence showed slightly different figures.

**TABLE 7**  
**Students' Self-Evaluations on English Competence**

	Pre-survey		Post-survey		<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>		
Listening	6.15	1.726	6.67	1.623	-2.034	.046*
Reading	5.77	1.654	6.37	1.626	-2.440	.018*
Writing	4.87	1.635	5.22	1.541	-1.537	.130
Speaking	5.11	1.926	5.57	1.845	-2.019	.048*
Grammar	4.81	1.982	5.53	1.909	-2.279	.026*
Vocabulary	4.68	1.637	5.23	2.094	-2.022	.048*
Pronunciation	5.74	1.899	5.78	1.860	-0.223	.824

Note: \* $p < .05$

As seen in Table 7, the mean scores of all language skills on the post-self-evaluation were higher than in the pre-self-evaluation. The mean scores for English competences improved from 6.15 to 6.67 for listening, 5.77 to 6.37 for reading, 4.87 to 5.22 for writing, 5.11 to 5.57 for speaking, 4.81 to 5.53 for grammar, 4.68 to 5.23 for vocabulary, and 5.74 to 5.78 for pronunciation. It was observed that the students' self-evaluations results after the integrated activities were much more positive and significant, despite the students' psychological reactions in the surveys. The *p*-values of competence in listening, reading, speaking, grammar, and vocabulary were statistically significant with  $p < .05$ , respectively, whereas the *p*-values for writing ( $p = .130$ ) and pronunciation ( $p = .824$ ) were not.

Data obtained from the students' self-evaluations are interesting. First, Korean EFL students find it difficult to work on writing tasks that had to be created as the final output by using the grammar and vocabulary in the written English. However, students positively self-evaluated that their grammar and vocabulary skills required for writing improved even though they felt that their writing skill had not improved much. This result could partially be supported by previous studies that demonstrate that writing has a function of language expression (Joe, 2003; Kara, 2013; Scott, 1996), and thus, it could activate the students' previously acquired English knowledge and in organizing their ideas on a given topic. The students self-evaluated that their overall speaking skill had improved despite feeling that their pronunciation skill had not improved much. According to previous studies, the repeated reading aloud activity could help students check their segmental and supra-segmental features, such as pronunciation, stress, tone, and speed, when they speak, and it may eventually help improve their overall speaking skills (Chol & Lewis, 2018; Gabrielatos, 2002; Gibson, 2008; Griffin, 1992; Huang, 2010). It can be assumed that the students placed emphasis on their pronunciation skill while reading aloud rather than on the completeness of their overall speaking skill, which is the final output; thus, they felt that they had not pronounced as perfectly as native speakers.

**TABLE 8**  
**Frequency of Teacher's Evaluation on Students' Recorded Speaking**

Exam	Score										Total	Max	Min	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
	5	10	15	20	21	22	23	24	25						
Mid	2	1	4	1	4	13	36	1	0	62	23.50	0.00	20.55	4.95	
	(3.2)	(1.6)	(6.5)	(1.6)	(6.5)	(21.0)	(58.0)	(1.6)	(0.0)	(100.0)					
Final	2	0	0	1	2	17	39	1	0	62	23.50	0.00	21.56	4.02	
	(3.2)	(0.0)	(0.0)	(1.6)	(3.2)	(27.4)	(63.0)	(1.6)	(0.0)	(100.0)					

The evaluations of the teacher in Table 8 and Figure 2 indicate a similar trend for the changes in the frequency of students' scores from mid-term and final exams. Students were given five topics for each exam, five points per topic,

for a total of 25 points. If a student failed to submit a voice recording, a zero point was given for the failed topic, and no student received a perfect score of 25 points.

**FIGURE 2**  
**Teacher’s Evaluation on Students**

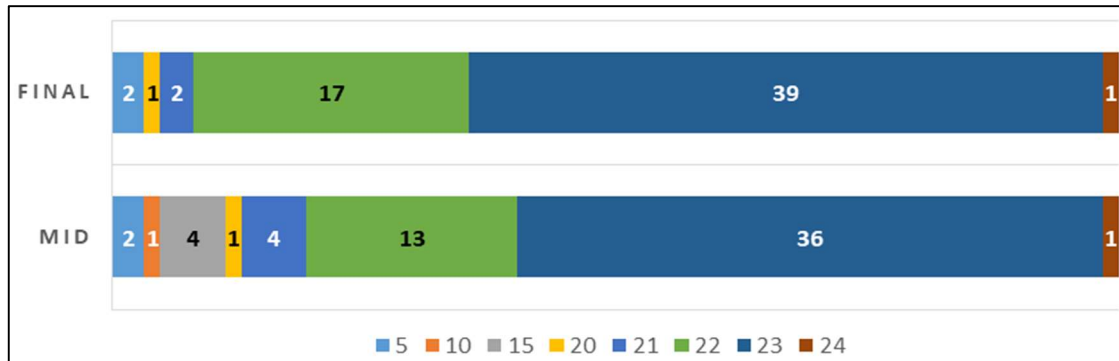


Table 8 and Figure 2 show that the teacher’s evaluation of the students’ voice recording scores gradually increased between the mid-term and final exams. Excluding the two students who did not take the exams, five (8.1%) students, who earned less than 20 points on the midterm exam, moved to higher score distributions in the final exam. Students who received less than 20 points did not complete one or two of the five topics during the midterm exam because they could not finish the speaking recording within the time allotted.

The aspect that stands out is that the students, who were not able to complete all of the topics in the mid-term, were able to complete them in the final exam. It can be assumed that by the end of the semester, most students had become familiar with the integrated output activities and were able to complete voice recordings for all topics. It is also believed that their reluctance to try to make recording outputs according to the topic had decreased. Apart from the evaluation scores by the teacher, it can be noted that it was a great learning achievement for all students including novice students to complete the process of brainstorming for writing tasks and voice recording for all given topics on the final exam.

Moreover, it seemed that the students felt that their English skills had somewhat improved, and that the improvements in their English competence supported Aaron and Joshi’s (2006) claim that repeated training in written language could improve not only literacy skills, but also comprehension and the quality of spoken language. Furthermore, during the process of self-voice recording on the given topic after the activities of writing and reading aloud, they could have a chance to listen back to their own recorded speaking with a somewhat objective viewpoint. This may allow them to notice their mistakes on pronunciation, fluency, accuracy, and naturalness while listening back to their speaking (Brown, 2012; Dlaska & Krekeler, 2008; Swain & Lapkin, 1995; Venkatagiri & Levis, 2007). For the future study, it is necessary to thoroughly evaluate students’ voice recording in detail, such as the correlations and effects for pronunciation, fluency, accuracy, and naturalness.

Overall, during these integrated activities, the students had to spend time editing and revising the flow of the stories they had written. It might have provided them flexibility in changing their ideas and revising the flow of the written story, while repeatedly practicing reading it aloud fluently before submitting their final output product of voice recording. To some extent, it can be assumed that the students got familiar to these output methods and this led them to feel that it might be possible to level up their English skills through this repetitive integrated activity conducted in the class.

### 3. Precautions When Conducting the Integrated Activities in an EFL Class

During the integrated activities in the study, the writing exercise was utilized to activate the students’ possessed English knowledge, which could help them practice speaking on a given topic, as they repeatedly read aloud and voice record themselves. During the study, only a few students were familiar with how to start writing or what to say about a certain topic in the EFL class. Some of them may have felt afraid of making many grammatical mistakes

while writing, or were ashamed of stuttering while reading aloud and voice recording. The survey results in this study indicated that there were factors that had a negative effect on the students during the integrated activities, some of which were identified through the comments and feedback made by the students in class at the end of the semester. In order to induce students to freely write comments and feedback on the integrated activity class, information about students' names was not asked. Some honestly expressed difficulties in the integrated activities, especially in the process of writing exercise and were translated into English as follows. They said, for instance:

It was difficult to express what I was thinking by writing in English as I had a hard time translating my idea into English. (Student A)

It took me a lot of time to write down my ideas because my grammar and vocabulary scope were not rich enough, and I had to spend a lot of time looking for the right words. (Student B)

I had difficulties in grammar and vocabulary, but once I completed my writing, it was much easier to speak on a given topic because I could mostly remember what I wrote down. (Student C)

I'm not sure about other classmates, but it was difficult for me to memorize the flow of my writing. Sometimes, it was also not that easy to speak naturally while voice recording because I had to recall vocabulary and grammar that I wrote down. (Student D)

It can be assumed that the students' writing fatigue and the mistakes attributed to these negative reactions could have affected their attitudes toward the writing task. This result partially supports the claim of Kara (2013), which showed that many students were not used to writing and expressing themselves in written language, which is a complex productive skill, and that the students considered themselves to lack the necessary skills and strategies, such as gathering necessary information, and organizing and combining ideas and information. Satisfactory results on the reactions to the integrated activities were not achieved, partially because writing in English was difficult and required great time and effort for EFL college students.

As speculated by the students' reactions and comments that they were uncomfortable with writing in English, the overall response regarding the integrated activities of reading aloud and writing followed by voice recording was not very positive, mainly due to the task of writing. However, self-evaluated skills related to speaking improved with 15 weeks of practice, whereas writing skills required a far longer period of practice, despite the students believing that their grammar and vocabulary skills had improved. Nevertheless, the relatively negative result for confidence in English writing was distinctive, even when the students felt that their grammar and vocabulary skills significantly improved. This result also supported the comments received from the students mentioning that they had some difficulty in expressing their ideas during writing task. Thus, writing tasks should be applied in a class with discretion based on factors, such as students' English competence, level of writing anxiety, and writing materials. Above all, it might be necessary for teachers to guide and encourage students to use and express their ideas in writing.

## V. CONCLUSION

Some students could be comfortable with expressing their ideas and opinions through writing and speaking in class when they learn a target language; however, some might feel afraid of making grammatical mistakes while writing or ashamed of stuttering while speaking. This study examined activities that every students could be involved in, and chose the activities of writing, reading aloud, and voice recording, which are learning methods that can lead students to get involved in all the learning process, to enable these EFL students use their acquired English knowledge. The study then intended to examine this integrated approach that could assist EFL college students in advancing their English knowledge and creating output using their English skills in class. The integrated activities were conducted during 15 weeks and the students' reactions and the effects of the activities in the Korean EFL context were investigated.

The results of the pre- and post- surveys and self-evaluations revealed that the *p*-values of the confidence in English writing and writing skills were not significant. It was not easy for students to express their ideas in English writing tasks, even when they felt that their grammar and vocabulary skills had improved. However, the results for speaking

painted a different picture. Even though the  $p$ -value of the confidence in speaking did not increase, the  $p$ -value of self-evaluated speaking skills increased significantly. Based on the results, increasing confidence in English writing and speaking may not be easy even when EFL college students believe their skills to have improved significantly. Notably, the students self-evaluated that their listening, reading, speaking, grammar, and vocabulary skills were enhanced after the integrated activities of reading aloud, writing, and self-voice recording despite reporting difficulty and negativity in the writing and pronunciation.

Overall, it can be reasonably assumed that even with some burden and fatigue caused by writing and pronunciation, which could be attributed to students' negative reactions and attitudes toward the integrated activities, students rated that their English skills, such as listening, reading, speaking, grammar, and vocabulary to have improved after the integrated activities. In other words, even though it was not easy to increase the students' overall confidence in using English, the integrated activities were appropriate to activate the students' possessed English knowledge of grammar and vocabulary for writing and improved the students' English-speaking skill. Thus, the methodology can be recommended for use in EFL classes to make students become active participants and be aware of their English competence when properly planned and implemented. Apart from the teacher's evaluation scores, the students, who were not able to complete some of the speaking recordings in the mid-term, were able to complete all of them in the final exam. It can be assumed that their reluctance to try to make recording outputs according to the topic had decreased. It can also be noted that it was a great learning achievement for all students including novice students to complete the process of brainstorming for writing tasks and voice recording for all given topics on the exams. Thus, it is surmised that the integrated activities can be appropriate to provide students opportunities for making language output in spite of the burden and fatigue caused by the writing task.

This study has some limitations. First, the findings may not be representative of all Korean EFL college students because of the limited scope and subject diversity. The sample size of students was not large enough, and they were all from one private university in the southern part of South Korea. Moreover, the number of questions used in the survey of this study was insufficient to derive detailed correlations and effects between the integrated activities and affective variables, such as anxiety about pronunciation and voice recording, so it is necessary to supplement the survey questions to thoroughly investigate the detailed information. In the future study, it is also necessary to evaluate students' voice recordings in detail over a longer period of time in various experimental groups, and analyze the results according to participants' English proficiency levels and participants' school years to accurately support their correlations and effectiveness. Despite the study's limitations, some of its outcomes on using the integrated activities of reading aloud, writing, and voice recording in EFL learning are distinctive, and using these integrated activities in class may be beneficial to activate students' possessed knowledge and to improve students' awareness in their English competence in EFL context.

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## APPENDIX

### Survey Questions and Self-Evaluations

* Major ( )					* School year ( )					
-----										
* English Test Scores: ( ) ( )										
-----										
1. I have confidence in English writing.										
Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither A nor D	Disagree	Strongly Disagree						
5	4	3	2	1						
2. I have confidence in English speaking.										
Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither A nor D	Disagree	Strongly Disagree						
5	4	3	2	1						
3. I worry about making mistakes when using English in class.										
Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither A nor D	Disagree	Strongly Disagree						
5	4	3	2	1						
4. I feel anxious and frustrated when I use English in class.										
Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither A nor D	Disagree	Strongly Disagree						
5	4	3	2	1						
5. I feel positive about taking English lectures or learning English.										
Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither A nor D	Disagree	Strongly Disagree						
5	4	3	2	1						
6. I am willing to keep practicing English to improve communicative skills.										
Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither A nor D	Disagree	Strongly Disagree						
5	4	3	2	1						
7. I know methods to produce English outputs.										
Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither A nor D	Disagree	Strongly Disagree						
5	4	3	2	1						
8. I think it is possible to improve my English skills in Korean EFL context.										
Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither A nor D	Disagree	Strongly Disagree						
5	4	3	2	1						
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<Self-rated Evaluation>										
* How would you evaluate your English skills below?										
(Very Good)			(Very Bad)							
① Listening Comprehension	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1

② Reading Comprehension	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
③ Writing	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
④ Speaking	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
⑤ Grammar	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
⑥ Vocabulary	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
⑦ Pronunciation	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1

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\* Please tell me your comments and feedback after taking this English class.

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Thank you for your time and cooperation.