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DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH

**CONNECTING READING AND WRITING IN EFL COURSES :
FROM THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES TO INSTRUCTIONAL
PRACTICES**

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FULFILMENT OF THE DEGREE OF DOCTORATE IN DIDACTICS OF FOREIGN LANGUAGES

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ABSTRACT

The current study is intended to primarily explore the link between reading and writing, and hence, point at the possibility of integrating reading and writing in English as a foreign language instruction with reference to both first- and second-year LMD English students at the English Language Department of Djillali Liabes University of Sidi Bel Abbes. Indeed, it investigates the impact of connecting reading and writing – through a set of writing-to-read and reading-to-write instructional practices – on EFL students’ reading and writing performances in the target language. Four distinct chapters constitute the present research work. Chapter one provides the reader with a general description of the target teaching-learning situation of the case under investigation. The research instruments used for collecting data are also described in the same chapter. Chapter two provides a thorough review of the different theoretical, research, and pedagogical aspects related to the integration of reading and writing. Chapter three analyses and interprets data gathered from the researcher’s observations, the students’ answers to questionnaires, and the results of a variety of tests. The findings reveal a positive effect of an integrated reading and writing instruction in improving students’ reading and writing abilities and motivation and confidence to read and write in the target language. And thus, the last chapter is mainly concerned with a set of recommendations and suggestions for a more appropriate connection and teaching of reading and writing in the context of English as a foreign language in higher education. A process which implies the work of both the teacher as an agent of change and the learner as the one subjected to this change. The conclusion will open new avenues of research related to the topic investigated.

DEDICATION

To my mother who has always been my strength.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

EAP	English for Academic Purposes
EFL	English as a Foreign Language
ESL	English as a Second Language
ESP	English for Specific Purposes
L1	Learners' First language
L2	Learners' Second or Foreign Language
LMD	Licence-Master-Doctorate
TOEFL	Test of English as a Foreign Language

GLOSSARY

- **Academic Reading:** Purposeful and critical reading of a range of lengthy academic texts for completing the study of specific major subject areas.
- **Academic Writing:** It refers to the forms of expository and argumentative prose used by university students, and researchers to convey a body of information about a particular subject.
- **Analytical Reading:** It involves breaking a text into its component parts, in order to understand its meaning and relate it to other texts.
- **Analytical Writing:** It breaks down an issue or an idea into its component parts, evaluates the issue or idea, and presents this breakdown and evaluation to the audience.
- **Analytic Scoring Rubric:** A scoring rubric that rates a piece of writing by considering a set number of components and providing a separate score for each of those components.
- **Argumentative Writing:** It makes a claim about a topic and justifies this claim with specific evidence. The goal is to convince the audience (readers) that the claim is true based on the evidence provided.
- **Background Knowledge:** The knowledge and experience that readers bring to the text.
- **Comprehension:** To understand and attribute meaning to what is read. It is the ultimate goal of all reading activity.
- **Comprehension Questions:** Questions that address the meaning of text, ranging from literal, inferential to analytical.
- **Critical Reading:** It involves exercising your judgment about what you are reading. It involves you evaluating the arguments or positions presented by the writer. You ask questions of the claims or statements made by the writer, and then seek to provide answers for those questions.
- **Expository Text:** Text written to explain and convey information about a particular topic (also referred to as informational text). Expository text tends to be more difficult for students than narrative text for example, because of the density of long, difficult, and unknown words or word parts.
- **Explicit Instruction:** Making the purpose and process of learning visible to students.

- **Extensive Reading:** Reading in quantity for information or enjoyment, without bothering to focus on every unknown item which occurs.
- **Graphic Organizer:** A visual framework or structure for capturing the main points of what is being read, which may include concepts, ideas, or events. It allows ideas in text and thinking processes to become external by showing the interrelatedness of ideas, thus facilitating understanding for the reader. The structure of a graphic organizer is determined by the structure of the kind of text being read.
- **Guided Practice:** Students practise newly learned skills with the teacher providing prompts and feedback.
- **Holistic Scoring Rubric:** It involves assigning each piece of writing a single score based upon an overall impression.
- **Instructional Practices:** Effective practices that have been identified through research on student learning, and which are like vehicles used by teachers to efficiently move students forward in their learning.
- **Intensive Reading:** Reading a passage in depth for complete comprehension and/or analysis.
- **Modeling:** Teacher overtly demonstrates a strategy, skill, or concept that students will be learning.
- **Pedagogy:** How instruction is carried out or the method or practice of teaching.
- **Reader-Response Theory:** A theory that focuses on the reader reaction to a particular text, perhaps more than the text itself.
- **Reading-to-Write:** An instructional task in which students use textual sources to produce their own new texts.
- **Refutation:** Addressing opposing arguments in such a way to prove them to be false or erroneous or to challenge their accuracy.
- **Rhetorical Reading:** Reading a material carefully and actively thinking about your own purpose for reading the source as well as the writer, the writer's purpose, the writer's intended audience, and the way the writer constructs or frames the topic.
- **Scoring Rubric:** A matrix that describes the various score points of an assessment scale.
- **Skill:** A skill refers to any ability acquired by training or practice, allowing individuals to perform well in multifarious types of tasks.
- **Strategy:** A particular technique of approaching a problem or task, a mode of operation for achieving a particular goal.

- **Teacher Education:** Formal programmes designed to equip teachers with the knowledge, attitudes, behaviours and skills required to perform their tasks effectively in the classroom.
- **Text Annotating:** Adding notes to a text giving explanation or comment.
- **Text Mining:** Examining written sources in order to generate new information.
- **Text Structure:** The way in which a text is organized (e.g., cause/effect, compare/contrast, process analysis, etc.)
- **Writerly Reading:** Reading to learn about writing.
- **Writing-to-Read:** An instructional task in which students use writing to assist their reading comprehension.

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

Reading and writing are among the most important skills for foreign language learning in higher education settings. Undoubtedly, it is through reading that university students studying English as a foreign language can extend their grasp of the target language and, therefore, enhance their academic performance. Even more, reading is not only a source of information and a key tool for consolidating their knowledge of English, but a valuable opportunity for them to learn about writing. Similarly, writing in the target language is students' key means to make their thoughts visible, to display their acquired knowledge, to express and organize their ideas, and to recall and respond to materials they read.

Yet, it is often felt that the progress which learners reaching university are making in reading and writing appears minimal, and this, if true, is clearly a serious problem. As a teacher of English in the English Language Department of Djillali Liabes University of Sidi Bel Abbes since 2009, the researcher had noticed semester after semester the difficulties that students of English had and have in reading and especially, in writing not only at the beginning but at more advanced stages when they are close to graduating. Students enrolled in the department seem to increasingly lose their skill and passion to read and write in the target language either inside or outside the classroom. The researcher's conversations with colleagues confirmed that they have observed the same weaknesses in their students and that they share her concerns about this problem.

With such a frustrating underperformance in EFL reading and writing, one might wonder who is to blame and what the solution is. One potential reason for such a lack of progress might be the way reading and writing were and are instructed both at the secondary school and at higher education levels. Indeed, most often than not the teachers' approach to teaching EFL reading and writing shows a poor understanding of the process involved in both reading and writing and of its interactive nature. And the instructional practices adopted were and are still far from being effective.

While teaching reading, teachers usually provide their students with a text, explain some of its difficult vocabulary items, translate some of them to Arabic or French, and then get different students to read the passage aloud. This is followed by silent reading on the part of the learners who will be engaged in a battery of activities which often focus on the vocabulary and the structure of the text on one hand, and require them to seek answers that are usually supplied by lifting a few sentences straight from the text on the other hand.

Such an instruction disregards the contribution of the reader in the creation of meaning and neglects the cognition and metacognition aspects of reading. Further, students are not trained nor are they used to read actively and critically in English – they are not accustomed to question what they read, they do not know how to analyze, evaluate, and respond to texts' content, and they do not have the habit of writing about their readings. Simply put, they are often encouraged to accept information contained in the text as it is – relying on a bottom-up approach to the task of reading.

Moreover, many, if not all, EFL reading classes do not provide adequate opportunity for the development of reading. Indeed, students do not read much in reading classes; texts and time are, of necessity short, and the conditions (i.e., how, when, how long, what for) of reading are controlled by the teacher, not the students-readers. Classes, then, do not offer enough practice in the business of real reading.

In fact, reading is a basic language skill that needs to be taught and learned, and teachers could not expect students to develop their reading capability by osmosis and without help. Furthermore, teaching students to read is a highly skilled work, and teaching them to read in a language that is not their native language is particularly challenging. Many EFL learners are not equipped with the awareness or the strategies to overcome the obstacles that they face when reading, such as their lack of English language mastery, and they, accordingly, display a very limited ability to read systematically and with full comprehension in the target language. Therefore, they find reading English texts difficult, laborious, and time consuming. Hence, their reading practices are little, and consequently, their competence remains insufficient.

As far as the teaching of EFL writing is concerned, many classroom instructional practices focus merely on the written product rather than on how students approach the process of writing. Structured written exercises continue to be a central feature of writing instruction, which causes students to perceive writing simply as a task that is abode by rules, and a certain structure. There is a clear absence of students' personal voice in writing as they lack critical thinking and just restate what has already been written. Teachers do not train (and do not even expect) students to reflect their voice in writing through their judgments, display their knowledge, and give their opinions.

Even worse, some teachers count on students to just catch the writing skill by giving them topics to write about, and engaging them in frequent opportunities to write. According to them, inviting EFL students to write at length about whatever they want, will magically morph them into good writers.

It is true that writing as a skill (and as any other skill) needs enough and frequent practice to be mastered, but practice alone is not enough to make it effective. In other words, these teachers forget that if they expect students to learn to write, they need to teach them how first.

Furthermore, as reading might be the ultimate source of exposure to English language input in an EFL context, one might come to the conclusion that the main cause of EFL students' writing problems (i.e., lack of vocabulary, lack of grammatical knowledge, lack of cohesion, word-for-word translation, etc.) is primarily their lack of conscious reading practice.

The weaknesses in reading and writing instructions reported so far, displayed also a reality that was and is still present in many EFL classrooms today: the reading component is absent in EFL writing instruction, and writing is not an integral part of EFL reading instruction.

New insights gained from the development of research in literacy learning and teaching, have directed our attention, however, to the powerful connection between reading and writing, how learners can benefit from the interaction between reading and writing, and therefore, how teachers can benefit from an integrated reading-writing instruction to foster EFL students' reading and writing in the target language.

From this view of things, the present research work seeks to look for some evidence that reading and writing complement and enhance each other, and hence, argue that connecting writing to reading in EFL reading instruction, and linking reading to writing in EFL writing instruction strengthen EFL students' reading and writing skills and reduce achievement gaps.

The study was designed to address the following main question:

How does a reading-writing connection impact on EFL students' literacy development?

The main question was sub-divided into three questions below:

1. Does EFL students' comprehension of texts read increase when they write about them?
2. Would EFL students enhance their writing ability if engaged in assigned reading for writing purposes?
3. What are EFL students' affective responses toward integrated reading and writing tasks?

Out of the above questions sprung the following hypotheses:

1. EFL students' writing about materials they read might assist their reading comprehension process.
2. Involving EFL students in some targeted pre-writing reading would positively affect the quality of the text they are required to write.
3. Integrating reading and writing tasks in EFL instruction would foster students' motivation and confidence to read and write in the target language.

The research used two main instructional phases, each with its sample of participants, own objective, and sequence of steps. The writing-to-read instructional phase – undertaken in the academic year (2013-2014) – aimed at proving whether or not having students write about materials they read would improve their comprehension of such texts, and it involved a sample of sixty (60) first-year EFL students enrolled in the English Language Department at Djillali Liabes University of Sidi Bel Abbes. The main objective of the reading-to-write instructional phase, undertaken in (2014-2015) with a sample of eighty-six (86) second-year students enrolled in the same department, however, was to determine the effects of reading on the writing performance of students.

A variety of research tools was used all along the data collection phases in the present investigation (classroom observations, instructional treatments, and a collection of questionnaires and tests) to make the results more reliable. Of course, the results obtained will be analyzed and interpreted in relation to the research questions and hypotheses set by this work.

CHAPTER ONE

DESCRIPTION OF THE TEACHING/LEARNING SITUATION AND RESEARCH METHODOLOGY TOOLS

1.1 Introduction

This introductory chapter gives a general idea about the teaching / learning situation that the researcher is trying to investigate. A description of the status of the English language in Algeria and English language teaching in the Algerian curriculum is first presented. Then, the objectives of the English Language Department in Djillali Liabes University of Sidi Bel Abbes – where the current study took place – are evoked. Further, some details about the LMD system in general and LMD English in particular are discussed. And as the present research work focuses primarily on two basic language skills, namely, reading and writing, the chapter sheds light on what university-level reading and writing demand in general and look at the challenges EFL university students face in particular in relation to reading and writing in the target language. Moreover, the status given to both reading and writing skills as well as the teaching methodology adopted in the same department for the ‘Comprehension and Written Expression’ module are emphasized. In the last part of the chapter, the subjects who participated in the investigation, their needs’ analysis, the research methodology used, and the research instruments employed for data collection are described.

1.2 English and English Language Teaching in Algeria

The English language has firmly established its position and role not just as an international language but as the world’s leading language of the present time. It is used on all continents and is almost always relied on as the mediator language (a so-called ‘lingua franca’) by people who need to talk with each other but have different mother tongues.

Graddol (1997) identified three types of speakers using English today, each with a different relationship with the language: those who speak it as a first language (around 375 million speakers), those who speak it as a second or additional language (again, some 375 million speakers), and those who learn it as a foreign language (about 750 million learners).

What can be noted from this classification is that the number of non-native speakers of English already outnumbers that of its native speakers, and their numbers continues to grow (McArthur, 1998; Ur, 2012), so as Crystal (1997, p.139) commented, “There has never been a language so widely spread or spoken by so many people as English.” In fact, a recent estimate

even puts the number of English speakers all around the globe close to two billion (Schneider, 2011).

Referring to the situation just described, Ur (2012, p.4) said:

Perhaps the most dramatic development that has taken place in the field of English language teaching in the last 50 years has been the shift in its primary function: from being mainly the native language of nations such as UK or USA, to being mainly a global means of communication... For most of its learners, English is therefore no longer a foreign language (i.e., one that is owned by a particular 'other' nation or ethnic group) but first and foremost an international language (one that has no particular national owner).

Becoming increasingly used as a tool for interaction among nonnative speakers, English is not frequently learned today as a tool for understanding American or British cultural values. Instead, it has become a means for international communication in transportation, commerce, tourism, banking, technology, diplomacy and scientific research (Brown, 2007). Such an indisputable status was referred to by Crystal (1988, pp.6-7) saying:

English has become the dominant language of world communication... It is the main language of the world's books, newspapers, and advertising. It is the official international language of airports and air traffic control. It is the chief maritime language. It is the language of international business and academic conferences, of diplomacy, of sport. Over two thirds of the world's scientists write in English. Three quarters of the world's mail is written in English. Eighty per cent of all the information stored in the electronic retrieval systems of the world is stored in English... Statistics of this kind are truly impressive, and could continue for several paragraphs.

In a similar vein, Graddol (1997) also identified twelve major international domains where English is particularly visible today as shown in the following table:

English Language International Domains of Use
1. Working language of international organizations and conferences
2. Scientific publications
3. International banking, economic affairs and trade
4. Advertising for global brands
5. Audio-visual cultural products such as film, TV, popular music
6. International tourism
7. Tertiary (university) education
8. International safety (airline and maritime travels)
9. International law
10. A 'relay language' in interpretation and translation
11. Technology transfer
12. Internet communication

Table 1.1: International Domains of English (Graddol, 1997, p.8)

Accordingly, if illiteracy's definition was restricted in the few past decades to those who do not know how to read and write; it refers today and with no exaggeration to those who do not master English at least to know about its basic rules, as Burshfield claimed: "Any literate, educated person on the face of the globe is deprived, if he does not know English." (as quoted in Louznadji, 2003, p.78).

Algeria, just as the other countries of the globe which have realized the utility and universality of English, has imposed it as an important component of the curriculum at nearly all levels of the state educational system. As Hemche-Bereksi Reguig (2014, p.134) commented:

The privileged languages in Algerian education and administration have always been Arabic and French. However, the vital role played by the English language as well as its paramount importance at an international scale made Algerian decision makers implement and promote English language teaching as part of the official curricula at almost all levels of education. Such a process stems from a real awareness of its multiple roles in the prevailing widespread complex and thoughtless globalization process.

Indeed, the Algerian National Charter (1976) considered English together with other foreign languages as “a means to facilitate a constant communication with the world, to have access to modern sciences and technologies and encourage creativity in its universal dimensions.”

Ourghi (2002) presented the roles performed by the English language in the Algerian society under the headlines below:

- The Educational-Scientific Role: it prepares learners through a knowledge-base acquisition process so as to facilitate their access to science and technology, and promote their professional development.
- The Economic Role: it helps the economic development since it is the language of international banking, economic affairs and trade, and it guarantees effective communication with foreign partners as it is the language of international organizations and conferences.
- The Cultural Role: it aims essentially at making Algerian students open-minded towards international norms, encouraging their empathy towards other people's cultures and promoting interaction with them without any apprehension of misunderstanding or cultural shock.

At the age of twelve, generally, Algerian pupils start getting in touch with English. The latter is implemented in the first year of the middle school and its teaching is carried out till the last year of the secondary school. English curriculum and materials of Algerian middle and secondary schools are enrolled by the National Ministry of Education. Textbooks are designed and written by a commission in accordance with a syllabus approved by the Ministry of Education; and teachers have to follow them strictly. Therefore, in these schools, language teaching materials and methodology tend to be identical throughout the country.

The purpose of English lessons, whether in the middle or secondary schools is to equip learners with a basic knowledge of English. Thus, these schooling years are devoted to the presentation of the basic grammatical resources of the target language, its categories of form and meaning, its fundamental inventories of syntax, lexis, and verbal functions; and their development in practical skills in reading comprehension, listening comprehension, speaking, and writing.

In higher education, English is taught either as a ‘main subject’ in the different English language departments or as an ‘additional’ but ‘compulsory subject’ in almost all institutes

such as that of: engineering, medicine, economic sciences and management, political sciences and international relations, mathematics, chemistry, and physics. Indeed, an offshoot of teaching English as a foreign language in Algeria has been the emergence of English for Specific Purposes (ESP). Thus, most higher education institutions in Algeria have incorporated ESP into their graduate and post graduate programmes. Accordingly, new brands of courses like English for medicine, English for science and technology, English for business and economics, English for aviation, petroleum English, etc, were featured in the academic programmes of most universities.

Most educational policy makers, as well as curriculum designers, were supportive of the move. They believe that students in their different areas of specialization need a different recipe of English to meet their academic and professional needs. Yet, at this level of instruction, Algerian teachers most of the time have a free hand in planning what they are going to teach in the absence of an official programme; and this is a real challenge for many among them.

English in Algeria is also learned outside the traditional educational system, with numerous private language courses, and even government offices and private businesses providing English language instruction for different levels and different ages.

From another angle, it is undeniable that the English language in Algeria has always been in a perpetual competition with the French language at least in respect to three points:

- Unlike French which is considered as a first foreign language, English has the status of a second foreign language in Algeria.
- English is latterly introduced to the Algerian learners during their schooling comparing to French which is inserted like Arabic in the primary school.
- Though politically considered as a foreign language, French fulfils the criteria of a second language in the Algerian context. Indeed, French still constitutes an undeniable part of the Algerian learners' daily life since they use it in their ordinary speech and it is present in their direct environment in media like newspapers or on television, and even in the official speeches of the Algerian authorities. This is due to Algeria's colonial history as argued by Ayoun (2008, p.186) who stated that "The relationship between the Maghreb and the French language is complex, the result of a long and fraught shared history, particularly in the case of Algeria." An Algerian linguist, Sebaa (1999) even claimed that the situation of the French language in Algeria is unquestionably unique in the world.

Yet, it is worth noting that compared to years ago, a big portion of the Algerian society today (students, engineers, teachers, doctors ..., etc.) is eager to learn English rather than French. In fact, the use of the global language seems to be growing relentlessly in Algeria, despite the efforts of Francophones to put a half to it (Abid-Houcine, 2007). French domination has lessened due to the urgent need to use English as a means of communication in a would-be globalized Algeria. This was confirmed by Mami (2013, p.243) who noted that disparities in the use of French in Algeria "... started to fade away at the cross-roads leaving more space to the teaching of English as a second foreign language.", and Zughoul (2003, p.122) who argued:

In Arab North Africa, and despite the fact that French has had a strong foothold in Tunisia, Algeria and Morocco, it has been retreating and losing a lot of ground to English. In fact the tendency of what can be termed a shift from French to English in these countries cannot be cancelled.

In Algeria, today, French is no longer the only window to the world, to 'modernity', and to technology and science, and English has emerged as a new valuable linguistic option. In this respect, Benrabah (2013, p.124) explained:

There are at least three indicators that point to the eventual decline of French in Algeria. First, the spread of Arabic monolingualism through arabization and 'elite closure' have produced a weak form of bilingualism as well as linguistic insecurity among the country's new generations. Second, unlike English, French remains irredeemably tainted by its colonial provenance. Third, ... a growing number of Algerians feel that Arabic monolingualism, Berber – French or Arabic – French bilingualism are not enough.

It must be noted, however, that in the case of an EFL environment like the one under investigation, and where opportunities for transferring what have been learned in class to outside the classroom are usually limited, the classroom does no more than provide a modest basis for the learning process. In fact, the competence or knowledge that learners achieve in any school subject results not only from the teaching that goes on in the classroom, but also and mainly from their extra-school influences (i.e., the use to which they put the classroom input). And, the Algerian learner of English can rarely have the opportunity to practise the target language outside the classroom as noted by Bouyakoub (2012, p.88) who stated that:

Direct contact with the language does not exist except through networks via satellite television or the internet and through the written literature available in university libraries and some bookshops. Consequently, except for the

possibility of mailing through the internet, the Algerian learner of English has a unidirectional type of contact with the foreign language which is not sufficiently motivating for him to learn English successfully.

In other words, Algerian learners of English do not have ready-made contexts for communication beyond their classroom. Out of the classroom setting, the majority of them are provided with no opportunity to use the target language and, therefore, no chance to interact with members of the target community. Most of them simply do not speak, write or read English outside the classroom or even know about the culture of the target language.

This limited exposure to English through several hours of teaching in a school week, is reflected on the kind of the Algerian learners' English language proficiency that may vary between average and poor. In other words, their listening, speaking, writing and reading skills as well as their knowledge of language components (vocabulary, phonology and grammar) do not totally match with that required for real-life situations. In this concern, Brumfit and Johnson (1979, p.117) said:

The problem is that students, and especially students in developing countries, who have received several years of normal English teaching, frequently remain deficient in the ability to actually use the language, and to understand its use, in normal communication, whether in the spoken or the written mode.

One may, therefore, come to the conclusion that the phenomenal increase in the use of English has not been matched with an increase in the English language proficiency of Algerian students whether at the secondary school or at the university level. Part of the reason may be that English is taught as the second foreign language in Algeria by teachers who are not trained in contemporary techniques in language pedagogy.

Indeed, knowing that the quality of teaching is the greatest determinant of students' learning, the importance of teachers' training or the professional preparation of teachers cannot be underestimated. In this concern, Jackson (1992, p.64) wrote:

Surely, the most obvious way to contribute to teacher development is to tell teachers how to teach or, if they already know how, by telling them how to teach better than they are presently doing...In any event, help of this kind takes the form of advice that basically says 'Do this' or 'Don't do that' or 'Do this rather than that'.

And, of course, teaching methods and means cannot be improved unless it is ensured that initial and ongoing training of teachers is of a high quality, thereby granting teachers the level of professionalism they deserve. Whether we admit it or not an EFL context is, then, a greater challenge for students and teachers alike. Fortunately, the lack of ready-made communicative situations outside the classroom can be compensated to some extent. Here are some guidelines proposed by Brown (2007, p.135) for teachers in EFL settings:

(a) Use class time for optimal authentic language input and interaction, (b) Don't waste class time on work that can be done as homework, (c) Provide regular motivation-stimulating activities, (d) Help students to see genuine uses for English in their own lives, (e) Play down the role of tests and emphasize more intrinsic factors, (f) Provide plenty of extra-class learning opportunities, such as assigning an English-speaking TV or radio program, getting an English-speaking conversation partner, doing outside reading (news magazines, books), writing a journal or diary, in English, on their learning process, (g) Encourage the use of learning strategies outside class, (h) Form a language club and schedule regular activities.

Besides, in a non-English-speaking country like Algeria, motivation is often claimed to be a big issue for many EFL learners. And as teachers are supposed to have a crucial role to play in increasing their students' motivation to learn in an EFL setting, Ur (2012, p.11) noted:

We can influence learners' motivation in three main ways: (1) By taking every opportunity to show them how important it is for them to know English... (2) By fostering their self-image as successful language learners... (3) By ensuring that classroom activities are interesting."

What follows is a broad view of the English Language Department of Djillali Liabes University of Sidi Bel Abbes – the department where the current study took place.

1.3 The English Language Department in Djillali Liabes University of Sidi Bel Abbes and its Objectives

The present study took place in the English Language Department in the Faculty of Letters, Languages, and Arts at Djillali Liabes University of Sidi Bel Abbes. The Department provides students holding the Baccalaureate with a pedagogical training accomplished under the reign of the three-tier 'LMD: Licence-Master-Doctorate' system adopted since 2007 and deemed to be more internationally compatible compared with the classical (old) system (i.e., four years licence, two years magister, four years doctorate system).

The LMD system consists of a study framework based on three cycles of qualification leading to a Licence degree, a Master's degree and a Doctoral degree. First, Baccalaureate holders are prepared for the 'Licence degree' equivalent to the 'Bachelor degree' in the Anglo-Saxon system of education. The time devoted for this purpose in the LMD system is three years (involving six semesters of study) during which learners are presented with the necessary knowledge needed, consolidating their linguistic knowledge already required in Middle and Secondary schools.

The modules students are concerned with, deal mainly with the teaching of the language-oriented skills, i.e., grammar, comprehension and written expression, and comprehension and oral expression. In addition, other modules like phonetics, linguistics, literary studies, culture and civilization, study skills, research methodology, educational psychology, sociolinguistics, social and human sciences, computer sciences, French, and translation are studied.

English lectures in the department are taken in charge by full-time teachers holding a Magister or a Doctorate degree and "having a long teaching experience which allows them to have insights and a professional and methodological know how that is very necessary in such a demanding context" (Kies, 2010, p.25), or part-time teachers in preparation for a magister degree.

The following tables provide the modules taught during the three years of instruction, i.e., six semesters, with the coefficient and the time devoted to each per week:

MODULE	COEFFICIENT	TIME ALLOWANCE
Comprehension and Written Expression	4	4 hours 30 mn ⁽¹⁾
Comprehension and Oral Expression	2	3 hours
Grammar	2	3 hours
Social and Human Sciences	1	1 hour 30 mn
Linguistics	1	1 hour 30 mn
Articulatory and Corrective Phonetics	1	1 hour 30 mn
Culture and Civilisation	1	3 hours
Literary Texts	1	1 hour 30 mn
Study Skills	1	1 hour 30 mn
French	1	1 hour 30 mn

Table 1.2: First-Year LMD English Modular Courses

The same modules are taught to second-year students except the omission of ‘Social and Human Sciences’ and the inclusion of ‘Translation’ and ‘Computer Sciences’.

MODULE	COEFFICIENT	TIME ALLOWANCE
Comprehension and Written Expression	4	3 hours
Comprehension and Oral Expression	2	1 hour 30 mn
Grammar	2	3 hours
Linguistics	1	1 hour 30 mn
Articulatory and Corrective Phonetics	1	1 hour 30 mn
Culture and Civilisation	1	3 hours
Literary Texts	1	1 hour 30 mn
Study Skills	1	1 hour 30 mn
French	1	1 hour 30 mn
Translation	1	1 hour 30 mn
Computer Sciences	1	1 hour 30 mn

Table 1.3: Second -Year LMD English Modular Courses

Other modules are introduced in the third-year curriculum as well:

MODULE	COEFFICIENT	TIME ALLOWANCE
Sociolinguistics / Psycholinguistics	3	1 hour 30 mn
Civilization	3	1 hour 30 mn
Literature	3	1 hour 30 mn
TEFL	1	1 hour 30 mn
ESP	1	1 hour 30 mn
French	1	1 hour 30 mn
Comprehension and Written Expression	2	1 hour 30 mn
Research Methodology	2	1 hour 30 mn
Translation	2	1 hour 30 mn
Cognitive Psychology	1	1 hour 30 mn
Comprehension and Oral Expression	2	1 hour 30 mn

Table 1.4: Third-Year LMD English Modular Courses

The Licence degree opens door for students to move to the second phase of the system, i.e., the ‘Master degree’, which encompasses four semesters (two years of study). After completing the Master degree, Master holders are required to pass an examination to be admitted to the third phase of the system, i.e., the ‘Doctorate’, and therefore, pursue their Doctoral studies within six semesters (three years of research).

Broadly speaking, the English Language Department is supposed – through the instruction it offers to the enrolled students throughout their academic years – to graduate EFL students who have:

- the reading skills necessary to examine literature from multiple eras, cultures, and genres with critical understanding;
- the ability to express themselves clearly and comprehensively, orally and in writing;
- an appropriate knowledge of relevant fields within the discipline;
- research skills which enable them to expand, from a variety of perspectives, their own readings and understanding of language.

To put it another way, Djillali Liabes University English Department as Bouhass (2008, p.96) said:

consists (or rather should consist) of providing students with the most advanced and specialized proficiency in English. It is at the university that most students 'complete' their English language learning experience in the sense that the university language department represents, for the majority, the final stage of education.

Up to now, thousands of EFL students have graduated from this department. Some of them have been recruited by the Ministry of Education either in middle or secondary schools after having passed the regional examination for access to the available teaching jobs. Others have joined different institutes for occupational purposes, while a minority of them has pursued post-graduation studies either in the country or abroad.

Though the primary function of the Department is to train qualified teachers of English - that are expected to make the English language accessible to all types of learners in Algerian schools and institutes, it is not and could not be seen as a teacher-training center. In other words, the English Language Department could serve its community at a time when English has become indispensable in conducting diplomacy, business, and other practical transactions with the whole world. Therefore, it could, for example, provide export-import companies, translation offices, the tourism sector, media and other commercial foundations with employees possessing a certain level of accuracy and fluency for an appropriate and acceptable communication in its various forms.

Moreover, those trained students can contribute to the economic development of the country which is greatly in need of the scientific and technological knowledge carried out mainly in English, and which takes time before being translated into French, and much more time before being available in Arabic.

Nevertheless, the teaching situation at the English Language Department is not that enviable since the lack of teaching materials, and teachers' professional training as well as the non-existence of phonetic laboratories, audio-visual aids, computer section with internet access, photocopying and printed facilities is still paralyzing the learning / teaching process.

Some of these impediments and others were reviewed by Bouhass (2008) who provided an account of the most common problems facing Djillali Liabes University English Department in particular and which are supposed to influence in one way or another the learning / teaching situation:

- Most of the teaching in the Department is lecture or seminar oriented whereby the teacher provides information while students listen and take notes;
- Language is neatly divided into isolated skills and taught accordingly which makes students see skills as separate, independent curriculum subjects rather than different aspects of the same communicative system;
- Many teachers do not know what to include or what to give priority to in their classes;
- There is a lack of teaching materials, and it is generally recognized that even a motivated, qualified teacher cannot do without some material.

Further, it is worth saying that the faculty has a well-sourced library having a wide variety of educational and research materials for the benefits of all its five departments' teachers and students alike. Yet, no reading room (in the real sense) is available for students to read, study, or seek out intellectual interaction and informational exchange.

Much details about the LMD system in general and LMD English in particular are to be discussed below.

1.4 LMD English and its Objectives

One of the strong impacts of globalization as a universal process today is the increased pressure on higher education to improve its performance. In fact, as Hemche-Bereksi Reguig (2014, p.81) pointed out, it is worth noting that:

Just as globalization has imposed English as the world's international language and favoured its expansion as a vehicle of communication in the different scientific, technological, political and economic fields, it has affected the educational systems throughout the world, as well. At the level of higher education, the phenomenon of globalization is, in fact, omnipresent and considered as an external economic and political process to which universities are exposed... higher education is currently expected to meet a wide range of needs for evolving knowledge societies and economies. Such demands encompass educating increasing numbers of students, creating new opportunities for them, developing research and innovation, responding to local and regional economic challenges, and acting to improve quality and efficiency in all aspects of the higher education mission.

Higher education today is, thus, no longer on the margins of the social and political preoccupations, it has been rather brought centre stage as a key factor in national competitiveness and modernization. Indeed, "there is a strong belief from researchers and

academics that higher education could be the key for developing countries to catch up the developing ones.” (Meziane, 2011, p. 530).

Due to a number of imbalances in the functional performance of higher education in Algeria, the European model of higher education known as LMD (Licence, Master, and Doctorate) has been adopted in Algeria. According to Mebitil (2013, p.33), such a model of tertiary education that covered the European countries, is regarded as:

a system whose main components are integrated together for the sake of reaching a well-defined objective which is the better professionalization of prospective Algerian workers, teachers, scientists, researchers and so forth, to meet both the needs and the requirements of the working life and the different markets.

The LMD system has been introduced into the English Language Department of Djillali Liabes University by the academic year 2007-2008. The main objective of this innovation based on the reformulation of programmes and diversification of courses is to establish a training system characterized by flexibility and international comparability. In other words, it is intended to let the Algerian educational system and research go hand in hand with the international ones. The syllabus offered by the department covers major areas in the English language but also in literature and civilization.

Theoretically, the new system is supposed to meet some of the concerns of the Algerian universities pursuing the following aims:

- Ameliorating the pedagogical quality, information, orientation and student support;
- Promoting learning autonomy;
- Facilitating the employability of students by opening the university to the outside world;
- Encouraging transversal competences learning (mastering foreign languages, computing, and internet);
- Unifying the system (architecture, diplomas, duration ...) in all disciplines at national and international levels;
- Benefiting from exchanges and international diplomas recognition.

Brown (2007, p.70) stated that “successful mastery of a foreign language will depend to a great extent on learners’ autonomous ability both to take initiative in the classroom and to continue their journey to success beyond the classroom and the teacher.” Under the LMD

system, EFL learners are supposed to be given opportunities to focus on their own learning process through raising their awareness of their own styles of learning (preferences, strengths, and weaknesses) and through the development of appropriate strategies they can rely on for production and comprehension. The aim is to develop autonomous learners capable of continuing to learn English beyond the classroom and the course. This was contended by Ghout-Khenoune (2015, p.3) who noted:

Learner autonomy has gained importance within the Algerian language learning context since the implementation of the LMD reform by the Ministry of Higher Education. The LMD as an educational system emphasizes that the language learning process is based on the learner adopting an active role in and outside the classroom. Thus, effective language learning goes through continuous evaluation of learner's progress in the classroom and through discussions on the learning process in tutorship sessions. This is supposed to help learners gain some skills in controlling their learning and becoming more autonomous. Moreover, a lot of credit is given to learner's research projects and classroom presentations which require a certain level of autonomy from the learner. It is clear that the implementation of the LMD system in Algerian universities was an attempt to bring change and shift from traditional to more contemporary teaching and learning practices that take the learner as the central focus of all the pedagogical practices. Therefore, its underlying principles seem to support the promotion of autonomous learning procedures in Algerian universities.

Nevertheless, it is not an easy task for learners in formal education contexts to accept responsibility immediately for their learning. Thus, such a call for learners' autonomy does not deprive teachers of their responsibility. EFL teachers have a lot of influence on students' achievement indeed. Sarnou et al. (2012, 182) explained:

The recent pedagogical procedures that were born out of many reflections tend to transform the student, the docile "object" and the passive agent into a principal active agent as the learner in the learning process. Consequently, the role of teachers has been modified for the reason that it suits the freedom given and prescribed for the learner. Thus, teachers have to accept now their role as a mediator, a facilitator of the knowing and the learning processes. Teachers, therefore, are no more the only, exclusive omnipotent of knowledge. They are called to master not only the discipline they teach but also the methodological competencies that allow them to clearly define the objectives of the learning process as well as the referential of the competence on which the control of the learning process is based.

The functions associated with such alternative roles of teachers were classified under the headings of technical and psycho-social support by Voller (1997). The key features of technical support include:

- helping learners to plan and carry out their independent language learning by means of needs analysis, objective setting, work planning, selecting materials, and organising interactions;
- helping learners to evaluate themselves;
- helping learners to acquire the skills and knowledge needed to implement the above.

The key features of psycho-social support, however, entail:

- being caring, supportive, patient, tolerant, empathic, open, non-judgemental;
- motivating learners (encouraging commitment, dispersing uncertainty, helping learners to overcome obstacles, being prepared to enter into a dialogue with learners, avoiding manipulating, objectifying or interfering with, in other words controlling, them);
- raising learners' awareness (de-conditioning them from preconceptions about learner and teacher roles, helping them perceive the utility of, or necessity for, autonomous learning).

And, probably, teachers can most fruitfully reach such goals and meet the challenges that lie ahead as well, if they continuously work on their professional growth. Brown (2007) enumerated what he saw as key attributes of a successful EFL teacher today in the upcoming table.

Good Language-Teaching Characteristics	
Technical Knowledge	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Understand the linguistic system of English phonology, grammar, and discourse. 2. Comprehensively grasps basic principles of language learning and teaching. 3. Has fluent competence in speaking, writing, listening to, and reading English. 4. Knows through experience what it is like to learn a foreign language. 5. Understands the close connection between language and culture. 6. Keeps up with the field through regular reading and conference/workshop attendance.
Pedagogical Skills	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 7. Has a well-thought-out, informed approach to language teaching. 8. Efficiently designs and executes lesson plans. 9. Understands and appropriately uses a variety of techniques. 10. Monitors lessons as they unfold and makes effective mid-lesson alterations. 11. Effectively perceives students' linguistic and personal needs, along with their various styles, preferences, strengths, and weaknesses. 12. Gives optimal feedback to students. 13. Stimulates interaction, cooperation, and teamwork in the classroom. 14. Uses appropriate principles of classroom management. 15. Uses effective, clear presentation skills. 16. Creatively adapts textbook material and other audio, visual, and mechanical aids. 17. Innovatively creates brand-new materials when needed. 18. Uses interactive, intrinsically motivating techniques to create effective tests.
Interpersonal Skills	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 19. Is aware of cross-cultural differences and is sensitive to students' cultural traditions. 20. Enjoys people; shows enthusiasm, warmth, rapport, and appropriate humor. 21. Values the opinions and abilities of students. 22. Is patient in working with students of lesser ability. 23. Offers challenges to students of exceptionally high ability. 24. Cooperates harmoniously and candidly with colleagues, including seeking opportunities to share thoughts, ideas, and techniques.
Personal Qualities	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 25. Is well-organized, conscientious in meeting commitments, and dependable. 26. Is flexible when things go awry. 27. Engages in regular reflection on one's own teaching practice and strives to learn from those reflective practices. 28. Maintains an inquisitive mind in trying out new ways of teaching. 29. Sets short-term and long-term goals for continued professional growth/ 30. Maintains and exemplifies high ethical and moral standards.

Table 1.5: Characteristics of a Good Language Teacher (Brown, 2007, p.491)

Nevertheless, and as noted by Kies (2010, p.25), “not all teachers seem to be ready to abandon their role of ‘supremacy’ over the classroom, the students, the contents and the evaluation.” Many among them still rely on the same eternal teacher-centered methods. In other words, they are not convinced yet by the notion that “...learners should be involved as much as possible in the development of their own instruction.” (Tarone and Yule, 1989, p.46), and that a pedagogy which involves learner participation is likely to save the teacher a tremendous amount of time as it permits the learners to become the experts on their own language learning needs. As expressed by Richards (2006, p.2): “Teachers who are the products of the old educational system may find it difficult to manage the role reversal required in the new classroom where learners are the main players.”

As far as English language instruction is concerned, the modules, the scoring, and the assessment are all distinct in the LMD than in the classical system. The new reform has introduced some new notions for the pedagogical management. These can be summed up in:

- **Semestrialisation:** For a better organization of the training courses, the studies are broken down into semesters. Each semester includes fourteen to sixteen weeks of effective teaching through a time table made of twenty to twenty-five hours a week involving a set of modules ranging from linguistic subjects to cultural subjects. To assess students’ progress, a final examination takes place after each semester, and students who have not validate a semester will be allowed, with conditions, to be registered in the next semester.
- **Teaching Units:** In each semester the courses are grouped into four coherently articulated teaching units, namely; the fundamental unit where the basic subjects of the discipline are grouped; the discovery unit where students can get acquainted to new subjects in new fields like psychology to broaden the scope of their academic culture, the thing that facilitates the passage from one discipline to another be it one of the facilities offered by the LMD system; the methodology unit which includes study skills that is primarily destined to prepare students to acquire skills to carry out a research; and the transverse unit through which students are exposed to other foreign languages and social sciences as well.
- **Credits:** Each teaching unit has a number of credits that will allow assessing students whole study semester. Credits represent the time size of the work that the student must have done under the received training that is divided into two parts. The first part contains collective and attending work that can be exemplified through lectures, practical and class works. The second part of the work is individual which means that

the student does it alone through the exposes, practicum, reports and dissertations. The total number of credits for each semester is equal to 30. Accordingly, the Licence curriculum corresponds to a validation of 180 credits (6 semesters) while the Master degree corresponds to a validation of 120 credits (4 semesters). Students can move automatically from the first year to the second year when accumulating credits for two first-year semesters. In case students do not get all necessary credits, they subsequently need to complete the missing credits in order to pass from the first to the second year, and students who obtain a Bachelor degree with 180 credits are automatically admitted to the first Master year. Progress from the first to the second year of the Master cycle depends on the successful completion of two first-year semesters.

The training is thus organized in semesters including teaching units evaluated at the end of the semester by a final mark and measured by credits. Whilst the LMD system has brought some innovative ideas in terms of pedagogy and educational procedures, it is worth mentioning that the quality of teaching and learning expected from its implementation is still far from being achieved knowing that higher institutions in Algeria suffer from the absence of some basic conditions and educational resources requirements (libraries, qualified teachers, enough classrooms, and so on.). This was confirmed by Benboulaid (2014, iv) who stated:

Many faculties in Algerian universities agree on the fact that the implementation of the new LMD curricula is still in progress and in continuous mutations due to the additional challenges in terms of university infrastructure, pedagogical needs and most relevant resources for students to better achieve the LMD outcomes.

Moreover, it is widely reported that with the implementation of this reform, “the emphasis is observed to be mainly put on the form and structure of the model rather than the quality of its content.” (Meziane, 2011, p.253).

Instructors tend to use traditional tools, namely chalk/white boards and handouts, rather than modern technologies as a matter of accessibility and availability. Some make personal efforts by using their own laptops in the lectures since these are convenient and easy to carry anytime anywhere, which shows that teachers have the aptitude to use technology in class if these are within reach. This is not to say that handouts and chalk/white boards are not efficient as tools, they are always helpful and never go out of date, but there is plenty of room to improve the experience of teaching and learning a foreign language.

Also, Maoui (2011, p.161) added:

The LMD in Algeria faces difficulties including the lack of syllabus; teaching aids and manuals for the majority of scheduled courses; insufficient supervision of students; absence of feedback following the assessment of students' work; scarcity of material for the conduct of practical and guided work; overcrowded classes which makes problematic the implementation of active teaching methods."

More than that, even though the LMD system calls for coordination and cooperation between the teachers, students are usually taught the same module differently. Accordingly, the input learners are exposed to is not homogeneous the thing that varies their output. Many teachers, also, rely on different evaluation techniques where a learner obtained a very elevated mark in one subject and an extremely poor outcome in another (Idri, 2005).

Besides, there is in fact, a lack of information about the specificity of the LMD system and its requirements not only for students, but for their teachers and even their parents who often complain about not really knowing what the future of their children will be after graduation. Their vision of the system is restricted to its form rather than its content as they are not aware of its goals and the positive outcomes it may bring.

Moreover, the large number of students remains one of the main problematic issues facing the LMD English at the present time in addition to the lack of pedagogical means needed for the fulfillment of the training of those students. Large classes often make classroom management a difficult task for teachers, and can even badly affect teacher-student relationship. Indeed, students in large classes may feel anonymous and interpersonally distant from the teacher, and this can be harmful to them, especially to those struggling with course material. Even teachers find it hard to encourage and involve students' interests in large classes.

Even more, Kies (2010, pp.18-19) pointed out:

There is a need to determine the professional fields our LMD English graduates could have access to in the future and this is a major lack in the objectives set in this context. Indeed, the students who will not have access to Master and Doctorate, i.e., the majority, are not even allowed to teach at the level of the secondary school according to the Minister of National Education. What will those graduates do after university then? It is clear that there is an urgent need to fill in this gap and think of possible orientations in different fields that are surely in need for those graduates.

Having defined the role of the English Language department where the current study took place and the objectives of as well as the issues facing the implementation of the LMD

English in the same department, the status given to both reading and writing skills under the ‘comprehension and written expression module’ taught to first- and second-year EFL students – the core of the present research work – will be emphasized. Yet, before that, it seems important to shed light on what university-level reading and writing demand in general and look at the challenges EFL university students face in particular in relation to reading and writing.

1.5 Reading and Writing at University

Broadly speaking, much of the learning done at the pre-university institutions is reproductive. In other words, students are usually told what to learn, they memorise it, and then reproduce it in tests (Cooper, 2003). At university, however, students are expected to work and to think by themselves, functioning as independent learners. They are more concerned with developing high level critical skills than with accumulating factual knowledge. This is probably the biggest change students encounter at university. Cooper (2003, p.7) made this point clearer stating that “...at university, memorization and reproduction are much less important than understanding and the skills of critical thinking, analysis, interpretation and evaluation.”

Learning in higher education, thus, requires learners to adapt to new ways of knowing: new ways of understanding, interpreting and organizing knowledge, and this can be challenging if students have difficulties reading and writing. In fact, reading and writing skills play an essential role in university-level studies (Quick, 2013).

It is worth noting, however, that despite their importance for academic success, instructors generally take them for granted, as they tend to presuppose that all students already acquired these skills (i.e., reading and writing) either as part of their secondary schools education or elsewhere (Erickson, Peters, and Strommer, 2006). The reality, as noted by Clughen and Hardy (2012, p.46), is that:

Students come to university these days hampered by a lack of earlier training in the importance of accurate reading and accurate writing... They are the products of a school system that has robbed them of initiative and an internet culture that works against depth and seriousness.

Many of them lack academic reading and writing skills, especially because university-level reading and writing greatly differ from secondary school reading and writing. Many students do not, for example, question what they read, are unfamiliar with the conventions of written discourse, and have a limited understanding of the reading and writing processes

necessary for academic success (Barroca et al., 2003). Simply put, many university students today rely on non-university strategies to read and write, which results in students taking a surface approach to reading and writing.

Studying at university requires lots of reading, even when teachers assign students no work to do outside the classroom and supply no handout for the lectures. Indeed, most university teachers either supply their students with a reading list at the year's start, or simply point them to the library for further readings. However, most students may feel utterly confused and discouraged when they know the bulk of readings they are supposed to do and the difficulties to grapple with some difficult texts (Guendouzi and Ameziane, 2012).

As Ay (2009, p.441) commented: "University students have to read a large number of academic texts, however many of them enter university unprepared for this kind of reading tasks." Many students are unable to read selectively, that is, extracting what is significant for the purpose of reading and discarding what is unimportant (Benson, 1991). They often show a low level of reading strategy knowledge (Dreyer, 1998). Even more, they show a severe lack of autonomy as readers in accomplishing the goals of their readings. In fact, many among them approach the task of reading with no idea of why they are studying or what they are supposed to learn, relying on what they were told by their teachers (Kletzien and Bednar, 1998).

Reading at university is often complex and features higher levels of analysis (Andreatta, 2010). And the materials learners read at university will probably be different from those they used to read in their previous schooling stages. As Creme and Lea (2008, p.51) noted:

Many, if not most, students find reading difficult when they first begin to study at university. This is partly because the material can seem rather unfamiliar, both in terms of the terminology that is used and because of the ways in which ideas and concepts are written. This can make reading academic texts seem very different from the kinds of reading that students are used to.

Besides, why and how they read at university will also be different. Indeed, McCaw (2008) specified three main purposes for reading at university: reading to gather material that must be understood and recalled in details, reading to understand and evaluate the author's purpose in writing and the supportive arguments or evidence presented, and background reading. Also, reading at university requires more independence in deciding what to read, higher levels of concentration and more questioning of the material (Godfrey, 2013). And

thus, if students want to be able to make the best of what they read, they will need to learn new strategies for university.

Hermida (2009, p.21) made a clear distinction between surface and deep approaches to reading noting:

A surface approach to reading is the tacit acceptance of information contained in the text... This leads to superficial retention of material for examinations and does not promote understanding or long-term retention of knowledge and information. In contrast, a deep approach to reading is an approach where the reader uses higher-order cognitive skills such as the ability to analyze, synthesize, solve problems, and thinks meta-cognitively in order to negotiate meanings with the author and to construct new meaning from the text. The deep reader focuses on the author's message, on the ideas she is trying to convey, the line of argument, and the structure of the argument. The reader makes connections to already known concepts and principles and uses this understanding for problem solving in new contexts.

Simply put, surface readers move their eyes across words and sentences from the beginning to the end of a text but process little cognitively. Deep readers, however, focus on the meaning of the text rather than on the text itself, and this is what university students are supposed to do while dealing with academic reading materials. Since reading is comprehension, students who fail to reconstruct the author's main idea, supporting ideas and supporting facts as well as some critical evaluation of those things appropriately, cannot read for the purposes of their course, regardless of what types of material they read outside of class. Watkins (2004, p.55) referred to such an annotative approach to reading that students need to adapt to in contemporary higher education noting:

Reading is not just to walk on the words, and it is not flying over the words either. Reading is re-writing what we are reading. Reading is to discover the connections between the text and the context of the text, and also how to connect the text/context with my context, the context of the reader. But for me, what is indispensable, is to be critical. Criticism creates the necessary intellectual discipline, asking questions to the reading, to the writing, to the book, to the text. We should not submit to the text or be submissive in front of the text. The thing is to fight with the text, even though loving it, no?

Even more, McCaw (2008, p.10) referred to this broadening scope of reading at university-level saying that it "... should be exciting and dynamic; it should lead to creative reading, with fresh, incisive perspectives on texts of all kinds, an activity releasing the same energies as (for instance) writing a poem, moulding a piece of clay, or figuring out a particular chord pattern on a guitar."

Similarly, writing at university level can seem strange and unfamiliar for many students. This situation was thoroughly described by Creme and Lea (2008, p.14) who reported:

When you come to write at university you may find that there is a gap that you have to bridge. On one side there is you, with your background, sense of identity and ideas about the world, and on the other hand there is the subject you have to write about, based on academic disciplines. It can seem like a foreign country, far away from you and your familiar setting. This new place can open up interesting new ways of seeing and understanding for you but it can also present problems of how to behave, and how to speak and write. It is rather like joining a group of people involved in a particular activity, who have been talking together for some time. You have to feel your way into what the group is talking about: they seem to share ideas that they don't even mention, and you don't seem to be able to take part in the way they use language. If you do join in you may be saying something that doesn't fit with what else is said. You don't know if they may have discussed it already. In any case, you can't find the right words and you expect to be met with silence and puzzlement and to look foolish. However, usually after listening for a while, once you do start to take part you can adjust to what is going on and start to contribute in your own way. You feel awkward at first but if you don't mind this, it gets easier. The more you take part the more you are bridging the gap between what you came with and a different way of thinking and speaking. It can feel the same way with your university writing.

Adopting a deep approach to writing is, therefore, required at university. Students are not supposed to view writing as simply a passive unreflective process of reproducing information or arranging facts as this will probably result in texts that are descriptive or lacking coherence and interpretation. Instead, they are supposed to treat writing as a process of transforming knowledge. That is, they are required to perceive the process of writing as a deep search for meaning leading progressively to the construction of logically organized analytical texts that develop argument and discussion on content issues (pieces of writing that are well argued and supported by evidence). This is what Wilson (2015, p.273) referred to, saying:

Students must progress from surface understanding ('knowledge telling') to a deep understanding that reflect critical engagement with the subject matter ('knowledge transforming') if they are to progress successfully at university.

To put it another way, as learners make transition to university learning, changes in the way they write are apparent. Murray (2012) reviewed some of the major differences between writing at secondary school and writing at university.

Ten main differences were identified as will be shown below:

- a. **Different philosophies, different writing styles:** While secondary school learning aims at building up a body of knowledge that will prepare learners for the studies they may choose to undertake as undergraduate students, university learning aims at developing students' intellect and powers of analysis. And this shift of emphasis is reflected in the expectations teachers have of students' writing.
- b. **Shifting the balance (reproduction versus critical thinking):** Whereas at secondary school the main emphasis is on absorbing and applying information appropriately (i.e., the simple reproduction of information or the displaying of knowledge), at university the focus is on analysing and thinking critically about that information.
- c. **Originality, creativity and voice:** As university exists to push the boundaries of knowledge in the various fields of research, students must be given opportunities to express themselves, to question, to disagree, to form their own ideas and suggest new ways of looking at things. Writing at university is then a vehicle that helps students sound their own 'voice'.
- d. **The emphasis on research and reading extensively:** In order to provide a strong basis for their ideas while writing, university students will first need to read around the subject they intend to write about. Only then are they really able to write usefully and with authority. Indeed, doing well in undergraduate writing assignments requires students to go beyond the standard readings they are assigned and the information they absorb in lectures. They need to engage in their own process of inquiry, in part by reading extensively.
- e. **Depth of analysis and dept of argument:** At university, students are supposed to present ideas in much greater details than they may well be used to. They will need to research ideas more thoroughly and to see them with a critical eye. Superficial writing is then – or should be – a thing of the past.
- f. **Sound reasoning and the importance of evidence:** Without ample supporting evidence to justify them, any statements students make in their writing are simply opinions. At university, where students are supposed to be more creative in their thinking, more opinionated and more critical of the information they hear or read, the importance of evidence becomes even greater.
- g. **Transparency, clear organization and accessibility:** Students' ideas must not only be well reasoned, they must be transparent (easy to understand) as well.

Students are supposed to be thoroughly explicit in their presentation of ideas when writing university assignments. Besides, their writing must be coherent, concise, and well organized through a clear system of headings and sub-headings.

- h. References and bibliographies:** To support their ideas, students will inevitably need to refer to or quote other writers they have read. Using the ideas of other writers in their own writing requires students to list in a bibliography all the works (such as articles and books) they have cited in those assignments.
- i. Appendices:** Students may need to create appendices for information too large or incidental to be included in the main body of their text. This additional information placed at the end of their assignment is relevant to the main body of their piece of writing.
- j. Length:** Although students have had some experience of writing long projects at secondary school, broadly speaking undergraduate assignments will be longer than those they have become accustomed to. Besides, students will often be required to write to word limits, and this can be challenging as they have to decide what to include and what to omit in their writing.

All this reveals that writing changes at university. Creme and Lea (2008) even listed some structures that are commonly used in university writing in particular. By 'structure' they mean both the way a piece of writing is organized and – more importantly – what work it is doing (its function). Here are some of these structures and what it may entail:

- a. Chronology writing:** What happened?
- b. Description writing:** What is something – or someone – like? What are its characteristics or what are the different parts that make it up?
- c. Cause-effect writing:** Why did something happen? What are the consequences?
- d. Compare/contrast writing:** How are two things different from and like each other?
- e. Summary writing:** What does the writer say? What is this idea about?
- f. Analysis writing:** Going deeper: What is it all about? What does this mean? Why is this important? How does this work? How is this put together?
- g. Evaluating writing:** What is the value of this? How is this important?

University students write for a number of purposes, thus, based on the particular requirements of their courses. According to Coffin et al. (2003), the reasons why university students carry out writing activities may include the following:

- to be assessed;

- to improve their critical thinking skills;
- to assist their understanding and memory;
- to broaden their learning beyond the classroom;
- to enhance their communication skills;
- to be prepared as future professionals in different spheres of knowledge.

In their turn, McCormack and Slaght (2009) listed the following reasons for writing at university:

- to develop and express their ideas;
- to provide evidence to support their ideas;
- to show they can dispute or support existing theories (which involves demonstrating their critical thinking ability);
- to display knowledge.

Besides, whatever form of writing students are expected to do at university, McCormack and Slaght (2009) explained that the process will usually involve the following steps:

- gathering information from various sources;
- organizing this information so that it appropriately answers the needs of the task that they have to complete;
- planning the text;
- drafting and redrafting the text until it communicates the information and ideas fully and clearly.

Based on all the points discussed above, one may jump the conclusion that at university as Kress (1986, p.99) expressed it:

Writing is not just a means of recording but of learning how to write in different forms and understanding what kinds of meaning those forms represent. Reading is not just a means of comprehension but of becoming aware of how writers express meaning and becoming able to reconstruct those meanings for our own understanding.

Moreover, recent thinking about the nature of reading and writing views the two skills as active, constructive processes (Zamel, 1992; Reid, 1993) that are so closely linked, and that mutually reinforce each other. Indeed, writing motivates students to read and re-read in that it

provides a purpose for reading and requires them to actively engage with a text. Besides, through writing, students can organize and clarify their thoughts on a reading.

On the other hand, reading is an integral part of students' writing and without enough reading, students cannot write effectively. In fact, while exposure to reading allows students to see and experience how the written language works, writing allows them to practise and apply what they have learnt through reading. As Creme and Lea (2008, p.52) pointed out:

One of the techniques of writing successfully in an academic environment is to be able to integrate the important points of what you have read into your own writing. To do this it is necessary to have a clear picture of what you have read, and this in itself entails active and focused reading.

Students can use readings as a model for their writing as they can respond to and write about their readings (Reid, 1993). And through their writings, they can also practise skills related to reading such as summarizing and paraphrasing.

Accordingly, it is commonly assumed today that integrated reading and writing activities help students cope in university courses (Grabe, 1991; Reid, 1993; Spack, 1993; Zamel, 1993). Gear (2014, p.12) even commented saying:

As a teacher, it is no longer enough for me to teach reading and writing as separate subjects; I need to guide students to recognize that these actions are intimately linked through the power of thinking. I can't imagine teaching a writing lesson now without discussing the importance of writing to engage and invite the reader to think. I can't imagine teaching a reading lesson now without emphasizing the importance of how writing invites our thinking. Reading and writing are intimately linked through thinking.

Before dealing with the teaching of reading and writing in the target English Language Department of Sidi Bel Abbes University (i.e., having an idea about EFL teachers' instructional approaches as far as these two basic language skills are concerned), some common EFL university students' challenges in reading and writing in English are to be reviewed in the next section.

1.6 EFL University Students' Challenges in Reading

In the context of foreign language learning like the one under investigation, the reading skill is of central significance in extending learners' grasp of the target language and therefore, serves as an indispensable tool for academic success. As Anderson (1999, p.2) argued:

Reading is an essential skill for English as second/foreign language (ESL/EFL) students ... and the most important skill to master. With strengthened reading skills, ESL/EFL readers will make greater progress and attain greater development in all academic areas.

Reading is, therefore, central to the process of both learning a foreign language and learning through it, it is “the most important activity in any language class, not only as a source of information and a pleasurable activity, but as a means of consolidating and extending one’s knowledge of the language and its related aspects such as culture, civilization, and history.” (Benettayeb, 2010, p.21).

As EFL learners move through their educational journey (making the transition from secondary school education to university), they are supposed to be involved in the processes of learning-to-read and reading-to-learn simultaneously and continually. Both processes are crucial. Without a capacity to read effectively in the target language, foreign language learners cannot extend their learning outside the classroom (Maguine, 1997). And if they cannot extend their learning outside the classroom, they will not reach their independence as learners, especially in advanced educational settings. Supporting this notion, Pritchard (2008, p.28) stated:

Reading will be a crucial element of your study in higher education. In previous study your reading may well have been directed and supported by teachers and tutors, and this may continue to be the case for you now, initially at least, but there is a much greater expectation and requirement, if you are to be successful, to read more independently and more widely than you may have previously. Some say that there is an art to reading effectively at tertiary level.

Indeed, reading plays a primary role in independent learning whether the goal is performing better on academic tasks, learning more about a subject matter, or improving language abilities (Grabe and Stoller, 2001).

EFL learners reaching university may be overwhelmed by the amount of reading they are expected to do, and the difficulty of reading materials they have to struggle with and concentrate on to grasp their meaning. And instead of reading to pick up information, or to be entertained, with higher education studying, students’ aim is to introduce themselves to new ideas and ways of thinking. Accordingly, their need for reading efficiently and independently may increase, as explained by Pritchard (2008, p.29):

While your reading techniques may have been adequate in the past, tertiary level study often requires a new and better approach if you are to cope

efficiently with the quantity of reading material with which you will be presented... What is required is effective reading. You will be more likely to achieve this if you take an active approach to reading and do more than simply acknowledge the words on the page.

Due to different reasons, however, many EFL university students (and EFL students at Djillali liabes University are no exception) are poor readers who are not able to read and understand well material in the English language.

According to Gough (1996), when difficulties with reading comprehension are observed, there are invariably deficits in language comprehension. This was confirmed by Lu (1999) who found that linguistic proficiency in EFL played a decisive role in determining EFL readers' ability to generate inferences as well as to process text meaning at the sentence and discourse levels. In fact, EFL students' insufficient linguistic knowledge of the target language is often one of the most common factors affecting their reading performance. Linguistic knowledge as defined by Alderson (2000, p.80), includes:

phonological, orthographic, morphological, syntactic and semantic information, but it also includes discourse-level knowledge, including that of text organization and cohesion, text types and associated conventions, as well as metalinguistic knowledge.

Such a deficiency in their linguistic repertoire leads them, then, to experience problems in reading and understanding, which in turn may encourage reading avoidance among EFL students (Chen, 1998).

It was also maintained that the reading difficulties EFL students face may be largely related to their inaccurate knowledge of the reading process (Miller and Yochum, 1991). Weaver (1988, p.161) defined reading as, "...the process of constructing meaning through the dynamic interaction [transaction] among the reader's existing knowledge, the information suggested by the written language, and the context of the reading situation." Yet, EFL students are often not trained or told how to use their schemata to construct meaning and they, accordingly, think that meaning lies only in the print. Mourtaga (2006) referred to this notion reporting that many EFL students pay too much attention to the phonological, morphological, syntactic and semantic clues at one time, which makes their reading reduced to deciphering instead of following a process of meaning construction. Moreover, he added, it is hard for the brain to attend to all these things simultaneously. As Smith (1988, p.70) put it: "the harder we try to look, the less we may see."

Besides, the lack of appropriate schema or background knowledge has also been proved to be an obstacle to EFL readers' comprehension of texts in the target language (Davies, 1995). Reading is a top-down and bottom-up interactive process, and with no background knowledge, EFL students may find themselves unable to anticipate meaning and interact with the text, which makes reading more laborious, frustrating and non-motivating.

Furthermore, many EFL university students learn English but rarely read in it, a situation which results in poor reading ability in EFL. Indeed, lack of exposure to EFL reading materials and lack of practice on the part of the students delays the development of automaticity and speed at the word recognition level. Moreover, lack of wide reading affects readers' growth of vocabulary, knowledge of the world, use of reading strategies, which will in turn affect their reading comprehension and even their motivation to read. Therefore, their reading sub-skills remained underdeveloped. Mc Cormick (1995, p.73) summarized all this as follows:

Less text reading leads to lack of development of automatic word recognition. Lack of automatic word recognition leads to slow and laborious reading. Slow and laborious reading leads again to less text covered when students are required to read in instructional settings, and to lack of motivation to engage in independent reading (and therefore, again to less text covered). Less text covered also means fewer word meanings learned from the context of reading material, less understanding of written syntactic structures, and less background knowledge base built from comprehending text. Limited knowledge of word meanings inhibits comprehension. Lack of familiarity with written syntactic structures inhibits comprehension. Lack of a sufficient background knowledge base detracts from comprehension. Less text covered leads to slower progress in general reading achievement.

Reading is, then, mainly a matter of concentrating on the import of the written words, and not on the words themselves. Words are mainly the medium whereby the message of the writer is conveyed to the reader. Thereby, a reader is said to have acquired correct reading habits when he or she treats a text as a familiar form of discourse and not as a task in a deciphering.

Accordingly, learning to read is learning a skill, and learning to read in a foreign language in particular is a highly skilled task, involving a very closely integrated succession of sub-skills which may take years to master and a lifetime to bring to perfection – knowing that foreign language learners have a less extensive stock of target language resources to call upon compared to learners reading in their native language.

Reading proficiency in EFL requires students to "... be motivated and engaged enough to use their knowledge and thinking ability to understand and learn from the text." (Torgesen et al., 2007, p.1).

Moreover, reading proficiency is determined by reading skills. As explained by Wassman and Rinsky (2000, p.2):

To understand all the printed materials in English, high reading proficiency is of paramount importance without which the information will not be comprehended. However, it takes an 'effective reader' to make sense out of the print with which EFL students are bombarded daily. Thus, becoming an effective reader means the reader has the reading skills and knows how to use them effectively.

In other words, for students studying English for academic purposes in particular (as it is usually the case in higher education settings), an important purpose in reading is to develop skills. Many researchers have attempted to identify the skills critical to reading development. Heaten (1991), for instance, viewed the sub-skills involved in EFL reading as manifold, and defined them as the ability to:

- a. Recognize words automatically without being consciously aware of the process (associating sounds with their corresponding graphic symbols rapidly).
- b. Recognize vocabulary.
- c. Figure out or deduce the meaning of unfamiliar words by: understanding word formation (roots, affixation, derivation, compounding), using contextual clues (context refers to the sentence or paragraph in which a word occurs).
- d. Recognize grammatical word classes: nouns, adjectives, adverbs ...etc.
- e. Detect sentence constituents, such as; subject, verb, object, prepositions ...etc.
- f. Recognize basic syntactic patterns.
- g. Understand complex sentences (identifying main and subordinate clauses).
- h. Understand text organization (the cohesive ties in a passage).
- i. Use both knowledge of the world and lexical and grammatical cohesive devices to make the foregoing inferences, predict outcomes, and infer links and connections among the parts of the text.
- j. Identify the main idea and other salient features or information in a text.
- k. Grasp and retain details.
- l. Generalize and draw conclusions.
- m. Understand information not explicitly stated by; making inferences (i.e., reading between the lines), understanding figurative language.

- n. Skim and scan (i.e., reading for the general meaning and reading for specific information).
- o. Evaluate the text (i.e., reading critically). Fluent readers are able not only to comprehend the text, but to make judgments about the information, the author's purposes, and the usefulness of the text.
- p. Adopt a flexible approach and vary reading strategies according to the type of material being read and the purpose for which it is being read.

Similarly, Nuttall (1996), classified reading skills into three main categories namely efficient reading skills (involving sub-skills as: identifying the reason for reading, choosing the right material, making use of all the resources in the text, etc.), word attack skills (divided into sub-skills like: the interpretation of both syntactical and morphological clues, inference from context, the use of the dictionary), and text attack skills (comprising: recognizing text organization, recognizing and interpreting cohesive makers, etc.). McWhorter (2002) added other important reading skills namely distinguishing between fact and opinion, paraphrasing and summarizing.

In their turn, Pressley and Afflerbach (1995) and Aebersold and Field (1997) have found that more EFL proficient readers exhibit the following types of reading behavior:

- Overview text before reading;
- Employ contextual clues such as titles, subheadings and diagrams;
- Look for more important information while reading and pay greater attention to it than other information;
- Attempt to relate important points in text to one another in order to understand the text as a whole;
- Activate and use prior knowledge to interpret text;
- Reconsider and revise hypothesis about the meaning of text based on text content;
- Infer information from the text and determine the meaning of the words unknown;
- Monitor text comprehension;
- Identify main ideas and use strategies to remember text like paraphrasing, summarizing and making notes;
- Understand relations between parts of text and recognize text structure;
- Change reading strategies when comprehension is perceived not to be proceeding smoothly;

- Evaluate the qualities of text, and reflect on and process each part at intervals;
- Anticipate or plan for the use of knowledge gained from the reading.

Even more, De Chazal (2014) pointed out that skills required by EFL university students in reading includes not only identifiable reading skills like intensive reading to work out the main points in a text, but also wider study skills like using library databases to search for texts relevant to a given assignment. Another purpose that is closely related to this is to synthesize information to be used in new texts (i.e., locating materials to be used in their speaking and writing). In such a way, reading becomes part of a wider communication cycle. Being involved in activities like these requires students to develop their critical thinking skills – evaluating sources, identifying and challenging assumptions in a passage, and working out the writer’s stance. Hynd (1999) asserted that critical thinkers:

- question what they read instead of accepting everything in print as true.
- notice discrepancies across different sources of information.
- place issues in perspective by asking, “how important is this?” and “what are the ramifications of this issue?”
- examine assumptions before accepting them as true.
- look for general agreement across sources before buying into an argument.

In other words, understanding reading materials (i.e., textbooks, documents, articles, etc.) in the target language is not the highest objective to be attained by EFL students along their university education. Indeed, this is “rather an intermediate step, which precedes that which consists of engaging them critically, by evaluating their content and expressing their point of view about them.” (Guendouzi and Ameziane, 2012, p.50). And this gives rise to the term ‘critical reading’. Wallace and Wray (2006, p.7) defined critical reading as follows:

The skill of critical reading lies in assessing the extent to which authors have provided adequate justification for the claims they make. This assessment depends partly on what the authors have communicated and partly on other relevant knowledge, experience and inference.

Simply put, EFL students need to question what they read. Reading will be more effective, indeed, if comprehension is taking place throughout reading (and not at the end of reading). It is this ‘continuous comprehension’ that is sought by questioning the text. As expressed by Robertson and Smith (1987, p.86):

Once the critical reading begins, the process should continue with questions being answered and re-formulated in the light of what you are learning. In other words, by deliberately developing this kind of active reading, you are recognizing that comprehension takes place throughout your reading.

Central to this is readers' ability to understand an author's argument, to identify its strengths and weaknesses, and to challenge any arbitrary assumption that the author might have made. First of all, they have to decide whether the text they are reading is useful. Secondly, they should decide whether they agree with what is said in the text. A third significant critical reading skill is to relate information in the text to what they already know; for example, are there any other materials they have read with similar information that supports or undermines the ideas they are reading? (McCormack and Slaght, 2009).

What follow are important points to be considered by EFL university students while reading critically as listed by Guendouzi and Ameziane (2012, pp.50-51-52):

a. Paratextual Information:

- Is the author a well known author with a specific and consistent ideological affiliation?
- Is the journal known to support/promote an ideological/artistic trend or a school of thought?
- Does the author's background influence his perspective?

b. The Author's Purpose:

- What are the author's objectives in writing his book? Are they explicitly mentioned or are they implicitly stated?
- For what audience is the text intended? Academic community, general public, part of the general public, etc?

c. The Author's Approach:

- What is the author's main thesis statement?
- What philosophy/ideology/school of thought informs his discussion?
- Is there any bias in the author's approach? For example, does he gloss over some source materials on the subject? Check his bibliography.

d. The Text's Content:

- What arguments are used to support the author's thesis statement?
- What are the examples used to illustrate the arguments' points?
- How does the author develop his thesis? Does he proceed inductively or deductively?
- Is the factual evidence (i.e., dates, numbers, figures, etc.) used to support arguments correct and accurate?

- Is the analysis superficial? Which of your questions does it answer? Which ones are left unanswered?
- How does the content relate to your background knowledge on the subject?

e. The Text's Structure:

- How does the author introduce his thesis statement?
- How is the material organized?
- How are the main arguments organized, linked and balanced?
- Is the progress of the analysis coherent and logical?

f. The Text's Style and Format:

- Is the material you are reading taken from a scholarly journal, a book, or a newspaper?
- Is the style formal or informal, simple or complex, descriptive or critical, didactic or persuasive, narrative or analytical?

This critical approach to reading helps EFL students (readers) interact with the text and is generally accompanied by the making of notes, and this in turn aids their understanding of it. Even more, it helps them make important decisions about the material they are reading; for example, whether to skip certain sections of the text, or whether to read a particular section very carefully – they may even decide to make no further use of the text (McCormack and Slaght, 2009). Critical reading is, thus, “at the heart of reading for learning.” (Robertson and Smith, 1987, p.85).

Based on the above criteria, critical reading is a higher order intellectual skill and a demanding task indeed, and research has shown that students from a student-centered learning tradition in particular are at an advantage in learning to be critical readers (Wallace and Wray, 2006).

With the change from teacher-centeredness to learner-centeredness in education, learner autonomy has become an educational goal for EFL students. Yet, developing the capacity to learn independently cannot be accomplished without supportive environment or context. And supportive environment here includes the teacher's guidance.

Accordingly, to achieve proficiency in reading in the target language, EFL students are supposed to be given the opportunity of practising various types of comprehension abilities. The EFL teacher is, thus, supposed to function as a mediator between the text and the learner-reader; this mediating process brings the learner in touch with strategies for successful reading and serves to pinpoint aspects of the skill that needs learning. Then, the teacher is expected to get students practise the target skill through a series of suggested exercises, while monitoring

their performance. Students, then, started to use and improve the mastered skill on their own through further practice activities, becoming more independent and autonomous.

Talking about reading in EFL university-level context will be half-done if the notion of ‘reading to learn’ is not tackled. Indeed, “reading is seen as a tool for learning in that the text is used as a catalyst for thinking, and thinking leads to understanding and hence to effective learning.” (Robertson and Smith, 1987, p.87). Besides, reading to learn has long been a feature of higher education (Guthrie, 1982).

Broadly speaking, reading is fundamental to learn from written materials in all content areas, and students are supposed to construct knowledge by navigating multiple forms of text (Cartier, 200; Butler and Cartier, 2004).

Reading to learn may refer to any task involving the process of building a formal representation of a specific, coherent topic through deep processing of concise texts focused on that topic. EFL university teachers routinely expect that students know how to construct new knowledge through reading. Unfortunately, however, research suggested that reading to learn activities can be challenging for EFL students because students are required to identify and adapt active approaches for both reading and learning. This was asserted by Baker, Afflerbach, and Reinking (1996, p.139) claiming that:

Learning information from text appears to involve an interaction between textual factors such as structure and vocabulary and reader factors such as prior knowledge of the text’s topic, reading strategies available for learning, and motivation to learn.”

Reading to learn, then, requires the selection and coordination of multiple strategies not only for building meaning from multiple informational texts but also for active learning. Reading for academic purposes is usually associated with some kind of writing, whether the writing entails summary writing, note taking, paraphrasing, post-reading answers to questions, or making use of text information for an academic task which synthesizes information from multiple sources (Grabe, 2009).

Basically, EFL University teachers can address the academic reading needs by addressing the range skills needed for successful comprehension, helping students become strategic readers by focusing on metacognitive awareness and strategy training, giving them many opportunities to read so that they develop reading fluency and automaticity, motivating students to read, integrating reading and writing instruction, and so forth (Grabe and Stoller, 2001).

1.7 EFL University Students' Challenges in Writing

Writing is an integral and necessary skill when learning a foreign language. And as it "... is needed for taking notes, describing objects or devices and writing essays, answering written questions, writing their compositions, writing experimental reports, etc." (Tahaineh, 2010, p.79), EFL students' writing problems will inevitably hinder their academic progress.

It is worth noting, however, that learning to write in the target language is usually one of the most challenging tasks a foreign language student has to cope with. It is a process "... greater than the writing process itself." (Bratcher, 1997, p.ix). Even native speakers at university level who are supposed to have a more extensive stock of language resources to call upon, very often confront serious difficulties in showing a good command of writing (Tang, 2012).

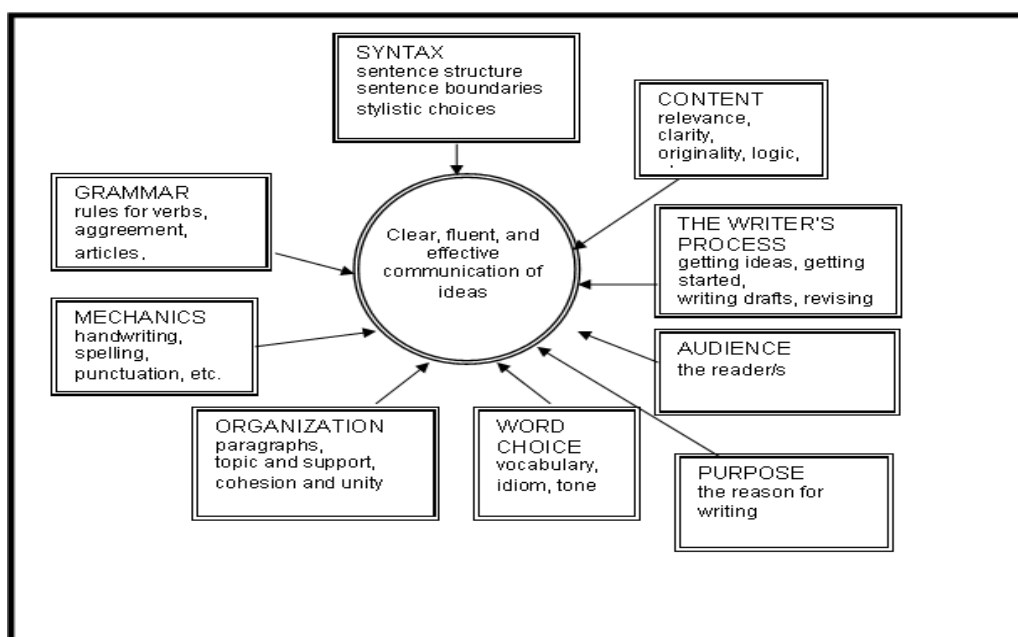
Thus, if writing coherently and clearly is a skill native speakers find difficult, many EFL students (including those studying English in an Algerian context) will inevitably find it a chore that takes considerable time and effort. El-Shafie (1990) even stated that writing is the most difficult skill of all language skills taught to EFL students to the extent that it can be considered as some sort of punishment for them.

Indeed, writing involves many inherently complex characteristics which "range from mechanical control to creativity, with good grammar, know of subject matter, awareness of stylistic conventions and various mysterious factors in between." (Wall, 1981, p.53). Learning to write entails two main sets of skills according to Hougen (2013): composing skills using the writing process (pre-writing, planning, drafting, revising), and transcription skills (punctuation, capitalization, spelling, handwriting / keyboarding).

More precisely, the act of writing requires learners (writers) to handle numerous components at once: content, organization, grammar, syntax, mechanics, word choice, audience, purpose and the writing process.

And it is this combination of all these elements together that makes writing a difficult skill to master, as represented in the following diagram put forwards by Raimes (1983):

Graph 1.1: Producing a Piece of Writing (Raimes, 1983, p. 6)



Writing is, then, a hard task as it appeals to many competences at the same time, and it is even more demanding for foreign language learners as they are faced with the difficult nature of the writing skill itself in one hand and the difficulties inherent to the target language in the other. According to Walters (1983, p.17), writing in a foreign language “is the last and perhaps most difficult skill students learn – if they ever do.”, Widdowson (1983, p.55) found it “... an irksome activity and an ordeal to be avoided whenever possible.” by EFL students, and in her turn, Al-Mahrooqi (2014, p.96) claimed that “EFL students face enormous problems in writing.”

The most common writing challenges that research has identified as being associated with EFL undergraduate and postgraduate students included both linguistic problems such as grammar, vocabulary, and sentence structure (Zhou, 2009; Chan, 2010) as well as mental or psychological issues like attitude, motivation, and culturally-informed schemas (Tang, 2012). Strategy use, cohesion and coherence, writing apprehension, and L1 (first language) transfer were also reviewed as factors influencing EFL writing performance (Brisk, 2011). Besides, Quintero (2008) pointed out that EFL students’ problems with punctuation, spelling, and lexical choice badly affect the content of their writings. Rabab’ah (2003) found that many

EFL students have limited vocabulary, and therefore, they end up repeating the same words in what they compose. This hinders creativity as they cannot give voice to their thoughts.

Moreover, Silva (1993) viewed that EFL students (writers) plan less, revise for content less, write less fluently (use fewer words) and less accurately (make more errors), are less effective in stating goals and organizing material. In her turn, Weigle (2002, p.36) noted that EFL students' (writers) necessity to devote cognitive resources to issues of the target language "... may mean that not as much attention can be given to higher-order issues of content and organization, since the capacity of working memory is limited."

Social and cultural factors can also be disadvantageous to learners writing in EFL, in addition to their limited linguistic resources. In fact, many may not have awareness of the social and cultural uses of writing in the target language and the appropriate ways in which various functions can be expressed in writing. Accordingly, and as contended by Mahrak (2015, p.345):

Achieving success in a written task does not lie solely in learning the grammar and lexicon of the language. Learning to write in a foreign language implies much more than acquiring the linguistic tools needed to communicate meaning, and it is, in fact, not an isolated classroom activity, but a social and cultural experience.

Motivational and affective factors play a role as well in EFL writing. EFL students, who are unmotivated to write, will not devote enough time and effort to learn how to write well in the target language (Weigle, 2002). And this will badly influence their EFL writing performance. Besides, many EFL apprehensive students-writers may feel that they will never be able to reach fluency and ease in writing in English (Celce-Murcia and Olshtain, 2000). And this high level of writing apprehension leads them to write less and avoid writing tasks whenever possible (Hanna, 2010).

Referring to EFL students in particular, Weigle (2002) stated that their writing in the target language outside the classroom is rare compared to their speaking, listening and reading in English. In this respect, Al-Mahrooqi (2014, p.96) reported:

Even highly motivated learners cannot acquire the writing skill on their own. Lack of exposure to writing outside the classroom, and lack of enough opportunities to write in English are key limiting factors.

Since writing in English determines to a great extent the success of EFL learners in their higher education, its complexity places them in an impasse if it is not well-taught.

Talking about the most common drawbacks of EFL university writing instruction, Kim and Kim (2005) referred to four main problems that keep students from reaching their full potential: the heavy emphasis on grammatical forms, the overemphasis on the final product, the lack of genre-specific writing over the curriculum, and the need for more diverse types of feedback.

Indeed, in a foreign language context (as the one under investigation), where EFL students' exposure to English is extremely limited, more effective approaches and teachable skills should be applied to writing instruction. A number of specific principles were proposed by Brown (2007) accordingly. EFL teachers of writing are required to:

- incorporate practices of 'good' writers in their instruction (i.e., make students aware of the various things that efficient writers do, for instance, following a general organizational plan as they write, letting their first ideas flow onto papers, etc.);
- balance process and product as writing is a multi-steps composing process leading to a final product;
- account for cultural/literary backgrounds;
- connect reading and writing;
- provide as much authentic writing as possible;
- frame your techniques in terms of pre-writing, drafting, and revising stages;
- strive to offer techniques that are as interactive as possible (e.g., encourage students to work in pairs and groups to generate ideas and to peer-edit);
- sensitively apply methods of responding to and correcting your students' writing (e.g., minor grammatical and mechanical errors should be indicated but not corrected for the students, comment on the clarity and strength of main and supporting ideas, comment on the strength of the introduction, comment on documentation and citing resources in academic papers, etc.);
- clearly instruct students on the rhetorical, formal conventions of writing (a reading approach to writing is very helpful here).

Like reading, writing is a way of learning, and like reading to learn, writing to learn is a feature of higher education. Many are the features that writing and learning share indeed. Burner's (1971) learning theory suggests that one learns in three different ways: through doing, through imagery, and through representational or symbolic means. And through its inherent reinforcing cycle involving hand, eye and brain, writing forms a uniquely powerful multi-representational mode for learning (Emig, 1977).

Students' thought and understanding can grow and clarify through the process of writing. Writing is a powerful strategy that promotes discovery, comprehension, and retention of information (Calkins, 1994). It is a uniquely powerful learning tool as it requires active engagement and the integration of different ways of thinking, like planning, expressing, revising and reflecting. It requires learners (writers) to recall things they have read, heard, and thought and make connections among them by creating language and writing it out. And throughout the sequence of stages learners pass through while engaged in their writing process, they start to reflect on whether or not their words accurately capture their developing understanding and then revise what they have written or were about to write.

This recursive process reinforces learning, as Emig (1977, p.125) explained, because it proceeds from feedback that is "immediately and visibly available" on the page. According to Kern (2000) and Harmer (2004), writing can be a way to promote students' academic learning as it serves to:

- Reinforce language use and enhance understanding and memory, mainly when the writing assignment is given shortly after a vocabulary or a grammar lesson.
- Allow learners create and modify meaning through the manipulation of forms.
- Develop learners' ability to think explicitly how to express thoughts and organize ideas in accordance with the reader's expectations.
- Enhance learning strategies through individual, pair or group work.
- Urge learners use dictionaries and grammar books as they focus on accuracy while writing.
- Develop learning experience as learners go through mental activities in order to write.
- Make learners think as they write; they develop their language and resolve problems which writing poses.

Writing for their studies and learning for their studies are, then, so integrally related that they cannot be separated from each other. Obviously an important goal for EFL students is that they complete their written assignments on time and obtain good grades, but "writing essays and other assignments is about more than that: it is fundamentally about learning." (Crene and Lea, 2008, p.1). In short, as they learn to write in a particular way for a particular subject, learners are learning how to make sense of that subject.

All the EFL reading and writing hindrances discussed so far and others are real challenges for many EFL university students, and the same is to be said about those studying at the English Language Department of Sidi Bel Abbes University. The nature of EFL

teachers' methodology to teaching reading and writing in the same English Language Department will be revealed next.

1.8 Teaching Reading and Writing in the English Language Department of Djillali Liabes University of Sidi Bel Abbas

Since the academic year 2013-2014 (i.e., the year in which the practical side of the current research work has started) reading and writing have been taught in the English language department of Sidi Bel Abbas University under the 'Comprehension and Written Expression' module. The module is one of the most crucial components of the English language curriculum assisting EFL students to better read and write in the target language.

When first introduced, the 'Comprehension and Written expression' module was scheduled for the first year of graduation only, and for four hours and a half per week. In the academic year 2014-2015, however, the hours devoted to the module were reduced to three hours per week for the first-year LMD students due to an increase in the number of students enrolled in the department, and the unavailability of enough classrooms to accommodate them. Besides, the new module was introduced for the first time to the second-year students in the same academic year (i.e., 2014-2015) as an alternative to the 'Written Expression' module for three hours per week as well. And owing to the great importance of reading and writing in the process of EFL learning, the 'Comprehension and Written Expression' module has the highest coefficient in the curriculum, which is four (both for first- and second year EFL students).

Teachers' methodology as far as reading and writing are concerned will be described below to have an idea about the conditions under which EFL reading and writing are developed in the target department.

1.8.1 *Integrated Reading and Writing Instruction*

As its name indicates, the newly introduced module (i.e., 'Comprehension and Written Expression') aims at strengthening EFL students' reading comprehension skills as well as their writing ability in English. Joining these two basic language skills together in one subject of study was, indeed, developed to reinforce the required interplay between reading and writing; the bedrock of literacy.

Not long ago, the aims of English language teaching courses in the department (and of most of the foreign language teaching courses elsewhere) were very commonly defined in terms of four isolated language skills: listening, speaking, reading and writing. Accordingly, linking reading and writing in the EFL classroom was limited, for a segregated-skill

instruction was adopted. Thus, teachers could go on teaching reading and writing in separate compartments, usually on different days of the week, and letting whatever integration is required happen in the minds of students rather than in the practices of the classroom.

Such a segregated-skill-oriented instruction was, in part, not supposed to ensure adequate preparation for later success in academic communication, career-related language use, or everyday interaction in the language (Oxford, 1990; Brown, 2000). Further, teachers frequently focused mainly on skill-linked learning strategies: reading strategies and writing strategies (Peregoy and Boyle, 2001). And very often, they demonstrated strategies as though they were linked to only one particular skill, such as reading or writing (Peregoy and Boyle, 2001).

Yet, it can be misleading to believe that a particular strategy is associated with only one specific language skill. Indeed, many strategies such as asking questions, self-evaluating, analyzing and predicting, are applicable across skill areas (Oxford, 1990). Moreover, it was claimed that teaching students to improve their learning strategies in one skill area can often enhance performance in all language skills (Oxford, 1996).

Nowadays, reading is no longer seen as a passive activity but is regarded as an active process through which readers interact with the written material and participate in creating meaning. Besides, it is worth noting that language learning now places great value on integrated instructional approaches with a focus on meaningful communication and the development of learners' communicative competence (Hinkel, 2006).

The integration of skills can be defined as the combination of two or more skills within a communicative task. In fact, in everyday use of language, we are continually integrating the language skills or switching from one skill to another; that is why, it is best to reflect this integration when teaching a second or foreign language (Davies and Pearse, 2000). Thus, by integrating skills we make classroom work close to real life.

New interest in the relationships between reading and writing has expanded their scope to a consideration of both literacy activities, which are closely connected. Indeed, accumulating research today reveals the reciprocal nature of the reading-writing connection (Miller, McCardle, and Long, 2014). And skills gained in one area have the potential to support the development of the skills in the other and vice versa (Fitzgerald and Shanahan, 2000; Shanahan, 2006). Consequently, there is now strong evidence that an integrated reading-writing approach offers advantages (Grabe and Stoller, 2002).

In this respect, Kucer (1987) maintained that the way in which language is used in the reading lesson should parallel its use in the writing lesson. Thus, each skill fine-tunes the other and supports both literacy activities.

In fact, students involved in reading and writing activities develop a sense of why something they read was written and approach reading with what might be called the eye of a writer (Tierney and Leys, 1986).

Birnbaum (1986, p.42) advocated for teachers to “join the teaching of reading and writing and view one as a mechanism for developing the other.” In courses based on an integrated reading-writing approach, content is explored through tasks that draw upon both language skills – reading and writing. This latter notion is considered in the ‘Comprehension and Written Expression’ courses adopted by the English language department of Sidi Bel Abbes University for the first-, and second-year students alike. In fact, a series of research-supported writing activities that is supposed to facilitate students’ thinking about texts and ultimately the comprehension of such reading materials (Graham and Hebert, 2011), is inserted in classroom instruction.

This involves instructional practices, such as:

- Answering questions about texts in writing.
- Writing marginal annotations on texts being read.
- Summarizing in writing materials read.
- Responding to texts read by writing a personal reaction to it or by analyzing and interpreting it (e.g., defending an opinion relating to information presented in text, providing a solution to a problem discussed in text).
- Drawing and filling in graphic organizers about texts read.

Similarly, students are given opportunities to use reading to improve the quality of their writing. Model paragraphs and essays that exemplify the type of writing students are required to compose themselves are, frequently, used in the classroom as a reading task that precedes writing assignments. Reading and studying those models (with teacher guidance of course) is supposed to give students a framework with which to write (Grellet, 1996; Hirvela, 2004). And for reading to be seen as an integral part of the writing process, students are provided (whenever possible) with a variety of reading materials talking about the same topic they are required to write about (Kroll, 1990). This aims at helping them develop the habit of reading for writing (i.e., using topic background reading to support their writing).

It is worth mentioning, however, that even though the reciprocity between reading and writing is emphasized through the ‘Comprehension and Written Expression’ module, reading and writing still need to be taught separately. And this is considered in teaching the module both to first- and second-year EFL students. This is to be explained in the section that follows.

1.8.2 Reading and Writing as Separate Components of Instruction

The growing evidence that reading and writing are connected to each other in important ways and that each can be leveraged to the benefit of the other, does not mean that reading and writing should only, or even mostly, be taught together (Miller, McCardle, and Long, 2014).

Indeed, research clearly indicates that each requires significant, separate, and focused instruction. As Miller, McCardle, and Long (2014, p.36) stated:

It is not reasonable to assume that, if we just teach writing, students will become good readers, or vice versa. However, time also needs to be dedicated to teaching writing and reading together; it is important to remember that these are not mutually exclusive practices.

Thus, in addition to the various instructional practices linking reading and writing (mentioned above) that EFL students are involved in during the ‘Comprehension and Written Expression’ sessions, an important number of sessions is devoted to separate instruction on each of the two basic language skills (each with a special focus either on reading or on writing).

On what concerns writing, for example, first-year EFL students received a series of courses that focuses on the development of sentences and paragraphs, using a series of activities and sequential instruction to develop the basic skills of writing in the target language. Courses and activities center on and explain sentence structure in a concrete manner, and evolve sequentially from simple to compound to complex sentence-building and ultimately to paragraph composition.

Sentences represent vehicles of communication that are literally miniature compositions (Saddler, 2012). According to Coker and Ritchey (2015, p.73):

Teaching sentence skills, such as sentence construction or capitalization and punctuation, is necessary, but not sufficient for writing development. However, some focus on these skills should be part of a balanced composition instructional programme. Students need to know how to create a complete sentence and use punctuation and capitalization correctly and need to have strategies for editing their own sentences.

Sentence-level writing skills and mechanics are, therefore, an important part of the ‘Comprehension and Written Expression’ module’s instructional programme. This knowledge is needed for first-year EFL students to be able to write sentences that meet conventions of Standard English.

Besides, so much attention is given to paragraph writing as well. Indeed, paragraph writing is an important component of academic writing (Grabe and Kaplan 1996; Duncan 2007). And for EFL students to be skillful, confident writers in the target language, they must understand how a paragraph is constructed and what makes it powerful (Fiderer, 2002). From there, they can move on to analyzing and writing longer pieces. First-year EFL students are, then, introduced to and guided with some significant elements of good paragraph writing, such as:

- identifying parts of a paragraph
- investigating different types of paragraphs
- crafting topic, supporting, and concluding sentences
- applying proven techniques for openings and closings
- enriching a paragraph with strong details
- using smooth transitions

Moreover, students are provided with opportunities to write their own paragraphs putting what they have learned into action. This allows them to practise many important skills of communicating ideas (Ploeger, 2000).

As far as reading is concerned, however, the ‘Comprehension and Written Expression’ module offers a series of intensive reading sessions to first-year EFL students. This type of instruction aims primarily at teaching reading in terms of its components skills. In other words, texts dealt with in the classroom are studied intensively in order to introduce and practise reading skills and strategies such as:

- **Inferring:** recognizing a writer’s intentions, perceiving what is implied but not stated, making connections between the ideas read and other ideas that you bring from outside the text, and drawing conclusions.
- **Scanning:** glancing rapidly through a text focusing on locating specific information, for example; looking for particular details such as a name, a date, a phrase, or certain types of words. It is processing print at a high speed while looking for answers to specific questions. When you scan you begin with a specific question which has a specific answer.

- **Skimming:** passing quickly over a text – as quickly as you can – while getting a general holistic view of its content; to know how it is organized or to get an idea of the intension of the writer.
- **Prediction and anticipation:** making guesses about what is going to be read on the basis of world knowledge and prior information about the text.
- **Guessing from contexts:** using prior knowledge of the subject, ideas in the text, knowledge of words parts, syntax, and relationship patterns as clues to the meanings of unknown words, instead of stopping to look them up in dictionary.
- **Paraphrasing:** stopping at the end of a section to check or monitor one’s own comprehension by restating the information and ideas in the text in different terms or in the reader’s own words.
- **Summarizing:** writing a brief distillation of a passage’s salient points – its main ideas and essential information – that excludes any supporting details, such as examples or illustrations.
- **Visualizing:** building mental pictures or images while reading. Mental images help make connections between words being read and the ideas and pictures they communicate.
- **Self-questioning:** creating questions in your mind, predicting the answers to these questions, and searching for the answer to those questions. It frames the way readers will approach the text, and directs their purposes for reading.

As Nuttall (1982, p.23) pointed out:

Most of the skills and strategies we want our students to develop are trained by studying shortish texts in detail... The aim of intensive reading is to arrive at a profound and detailed understanding of the text: not only of what it means, but also of how the meaning is produced. The ‘how’ is as important as the ‘what’, for the intensive reading is intended primarily to train students in reading strategies.

Thus, intensive study of reading materials can be viewed, in part, as a means of increasing first-year EFL students’ control of reading strategies. Classroom intensive reading activities include skimming a text for specific information to answer true or false statements or filling gaps in a summary, scanning a text to match headings to paragraphs, scanning jumbled paragraphs and then reading them carefully to put them into the correct order, finding synonyms and opposites of words, summarizing and retelling the content of the text, and so

on. Such common classroom activities often aim at check on learners' degree of comprehension of texts dealt with in the course.

Nation (2009, p.27) summarized all the points discussed so far; saying that an intensive reading course focuses mainly on the following aspects:

(1) Comprehension: Intensive reading aims at understanding a particular text. (2) Regular and irregular sound-spelling relations: This can be done through the teaching of phonics, through teaching spelling rules, and through reading aloud. (3) Vocabulary: Learners' attention can be drawn to useful words, and the underlying meaning and the use of these words can be explained. Words from the text could be assigned for later study. (4) Grammar: Difficult grammatical features can be explained and analyzed. (5) Cohesion: Learners can practice interpreting what pronouns refer to in the text, what the conjunction relationships between sentences are, and how different words are used to refer to the same idea. (6) Information structure: Certain texts contain certain kinds of information. Newspaper reports, for example, can describe what happened, what led to the happening what the likely effects will be, who was involved, and when and where it happened. Learners can be helped to identify these different kinds of information. (7) Genre features: The vocabulary, grammatical features, cohesive features and information all contribute to the communicative effect of a text. Intensive reading can focus on how the text achieves its communicative purpose through these features and what this communicative purpose is. (8) Strategies: Intensive reading can be used to help learners develop useful strategies. By working intensively on a text, learners can practise the steps in guessing from context, using a dictionary, simplifying difficult sentences and taking notes. They can also receive training in integrated packages of strategies.

It is worth noting also that each intensive reading course first-year EFL students are involved in, is designed around three complementary phases: the pre-reading phase, the while reading phase, and finally, the post-reading phase.

- **The Pre-reading Phase:** Taking time to prepare students before they read can have a considerable effect on their understanding of what they are going to read and their enjoyment of the reading activity. The following are some of the many uses of pre-reading activities:
 - Arousing students' interest and curiosity to read
 - Setting purposes for reading
 - Activating and building background knowledge on topics or concepts relevant to the selection
 - Relating the reading to students' lives
 - Pre-teaching vocabulary and key concepts employed by the writer and which are vital to comprehending the text

A range of activity types is used possible at this stage such as:

- Asking students to use the title of the passage to predict what the passage would be about. Teachers ask their students such questions as: what does the title suggest to you? Is it a love story, mystery, adventure? Have you read this kind of story before? ..., etc.
 - Asking students to list items of information they already know about in relation to the topic of the reading.
 - Recalling and sharing experiences. Teachers can ask different questions depending on the text's topic, for example; have you ever been on a train journey? Can you remember ever being lost? What was the best party you have ever attended?
 - Providing necessary background information to facilitate comprehension when students do not have any idea about the topic.
 - Presenting some of the new words which will appear in the text by providing students with synonyms, autonyms to familiarize them with word families...etc.
- **The While-reading Phase:** The primary purpose of this phase is to encourage students to be active as they read and be more involved with the text at hand. In other words, this phase aims at: deepening comprehension; prompting students' use of comprehension strategies; enhancing awareness and use of text structures; focusing attention on language; facilitating thinking about topics; and promoting collaborative building of interpretations. Here are some while-reading activities teachers usually employ to guide students' reading process and help them build their own understanding of what they read:
- Asking students to read the text quickly and find another title to it.
 - Providing multiple choice questions to encourage the guessing of meaning from context.
 - Asking students to read for specific purposes, that is, reading selectively by giving them a number of questions, or by creating grids or tables that they could complete while reading.
 - Asking students to locate facts which are expressed in sentences, not single words.
 - Asking students to say briefly what the text is about.
 - Asking them to infer meaning which is implicit in the text.
 - Sentence completion activities.

- Providing definitions for certain words in the text and asking students to match each word to its appropriate definition.
 - Asking students to read the text paragraph by paragraph and stop at the end of each paragraph to discuss the main idea or ideas.
- **The Post-reading Phase:** This final phase is devoted to the following purposes: to encourage students' personal responses to texts being read; to stimulate their thinking, to invite them to identify what is meaningful to them, to promote reflection on texts; to facilitate organization and analysis of information and ideas; to provide opportunities for sharing and building interpretations with classmates; and to prompt connections among texts and with students' lives. Students need to reflect on what they have read in order to extend their thinking, make responsible interpretations and criticisms of ideas from the text. They also need to check and discuss activities done while reading and make use of what they have read in a meaningful way. Thus, well planned activities after reading are just as important as those before and while reading. Teachers employ a variety of questions and activities that will provide students with an array of vantage points from which to reflect upon a text and reinforce their comprehension of it. Some of these classroom post-reading activities include:
- Asking students to write a summary of the main points of the text.
 - Asking them to share their views about the text with a small group of classmates.
 - Giving students a list of events that are scrambled and asking them to sequence them according to the text.
 - Asking students to provide a solution to the problem discussed in the text

In their turn, second-year EFL students receive a series of writing-focused courses under the 'Comprehension and Written Expression' module. The core aim of these lessons is teaching the five-paragraph essay writing. This seems logical as second-year EFL students are supposed to make a transition from sentence and paragraph writing taught in their first year to writing longer compositions in English in their second year of study at the university. Besides, practising the fundamentals of good paragraph writing (e.g., practising topic sentences, learning to support points, dealing with coherence issues, etc.) previously, made them familiar with some necessary writing skills and that makes them, in part, more prepared to create essays – using known skills and knowledge. As explained by Ploeger (2000:4): "Of course, essay writing is more than simply sticking a bunch of paragraphs together, but your

confidence with writing paragraphs will make the task of essay writing easier and more satisfying.”

Instruction second-year EFL students receive focuses mainly on points like: expanding a paragraph to an essay, examining the basic structure and components of an essay, linking the thesis statement to the supporting paragraphs (the process of putting together a coherent essay), introducing different modes of writing, and therefore, several types of essays; namely, descriptive, narrative, expository, and argumentative essays.

Students are also assigned to write a variety of essays throughout the whole academic year (both as classroom activities and as homework). This is required as “essay writing is at the heart of most academic study.” (Warburton, 2007, p.11). Indeed, essays can be answers to exam questions, they can also be compositions in which students express their opinions or try to make certain points, etc. As Strongman (2014, p.1) reported:

The reason writers (students, teachers, researchers) write essays is manifold. First in any academic enterprise it is the fundamental means through which ideas are organized and communicated. Essays reflect comprehension, writing skills, and organizational skills. People write essays for a variety of reasons – to communicate, to persuade, to argue, to pass exams, and to research. Second, writing essays is both a skill in itself (as the product of reading and writing) and also as a life skill – it reflects learning and intellectual, social, cultural integration.

Likewise, Greetham (2013) shaded light on some practical reasons for which EFL students should be introduced to essay writing in classroom instruction:

- Essay writing gives students the opportunity to develop their higher cognitive abilities – to discuss issues, analyze concepts, synthesize ideas from different sources and critically evaluate arguments and evidence.
- Essay writing forces students to organize their thinking and develop their ideas on the issues. It places students at the heart of their ideas, forcing them to pin their ideas down clearly and argue consistently. An essay allows students to express themselves in a more thorough way than just answering a multiple choice or true-false question does (Roy and Haney, 2012).
- Essay writing provides students with the opportunity to get feedback from their teachers not just on how well they have understood the topic assigned, but on how well they have communicated this. This will allow students realize where their strengths and weaknesses are, so they can concentrate their energies more effectively.

Writing an essay is, thus, a valuable opportunity for learning, so it helps if teachers make this notion clear to students from the start. As expressed by Greetham (2013, p.1):

For many students the reason for writing essays is a mystery, even though they might have been writing them for years... if we understand why we do something and the value of doing it, we normally find that we are more confident and positive about tackling it.

On what concerns the skill of reading, however, it is worth noting that no intensive reading courses are planned for second-year EFL students. Yet, reading is still inserted to accompany (and assist) essay writing instruction students are involved in. In other words, as too much focus is put on essay writing in the second-year programme, reading is present in the writing-focused courses, mainly, in the form of model essays (sample reading materials) exemplifying the types of essays students are expected to produce. Indeed, such an assigned reading for writing purposes require students to read critically, and critical reading is acknowledge to be an important feature of learning in higher education (Goodwyn and Stables, 2004).

1.9 Population and Sample of the Study

Research studies are usually carried out on sample of subjects rather than whole populations. As explained by Dornyei (2007, p.96):

The sample is the group of participants whom the researcher actually examines in an empirical investigation and the population is the group of people whom the study is about... a good sample is very similar to the target population in its most important general characteristics (for example, age, gender, ethnicity, educational background, academic capability, social class, or socioeconomic status) as well as the more specific features that are known to be related to the variables that the study focuses on (for example, L2 learning background or the amount and type of L2 instruction received). That is, the sample is a subset of the population that is representative of the whole population.

The population in this study entails both first- and second-year LMD English students studying at the English Language department of Djillali Liabes University of Sidi Bel Abbes, and the actual sample involves sixty (60) first-year and eighty-six (86) second-year LMD English enrolled in the same department and who are from the promotion of 2013-2014 and 2014-2015 respectively.

Therefore, the current research work deals with the two following samples of participants:

- a. Sixty (60) students from the first-year LMD students enrolled in the English Licence degree courses offered by the English Language Department of the Faculty of Letters, Languages and Arts, at Djillali Liabes University of Sidi Bel Abbes, during the academic year 2013-2014.

The first part of the questionnaire addressed to them at the beginning of this investigation gives the researcher some information about their profile (see section one of first-year students' questionnaire, Appendix A). These are baccalaureate holders of mixed gender, aged between 19-36 years old and coming from different streams of secondary school, mainly from the literature and foreign languages stream (twenty-six students (26), i.e., 43% of the sixty (60) participants), the literature and philosophy (eighteen students (18), i.e., 30% of the informants), the literature and human sciences (ten students (10), i.e., 17% of them), the experimental sciences (four students (4), i.e., 7% of them) and the technical mathematics stream (two students (2), i.e., 3% of the respondents).

A minority, however, consists of previous graduate and post-graduate students in other fields and who have been accepted in the English Language Department after they re-passed the 'Baccalaureate' exam (two students have a Licence degree in commercial sciences, one is a chemist, and one hold a magister degree in economics).

Most of the students have, therefore, a literary background that gives much importance to languages and thoughts and perhaps to reading and writing namely in Arabic and French.

The great majority of the participants had completed seven years of English study prior to entering university. Arabic is their first language, French is their first foreign language, and English is their second foreign language. It can be supposed, then, that their mastery of Arabic and French is better than that of English. Therefore, their reading and writing skills in English are more recent, less practised and less mastered than that in Arabic and French. And this might be a possible reason for the difficulties they encounter while reading and writing in the target language.

The choice of the subjects was due to certain reasons indeed. The researcher had taught the 'Reading Comprehension' module for students in the English language department for one year before adopting the LMD system in the faculty, and had taught the 'Written Expression' module for four years already within the new system. And it is worth noting that within the classical system of higher education in Algeria, 'Reading Comprehension' and 'Written Expression' were taught to first-year students of English as two distinct modules. In other words, reading and writing were taught through a segregated-skill instruction. Within the LMD system, however, the module of 'Reading Comprehension' was deleted completely from the curriculum while the module of 'Written Expression' remained. Yet, reading was not an integral part of those written expression sessions. Therefore, no integration between reading and writing was adopted in instruction within the new system too.

It was until the academic year 2013-2014, the year in which the practical side of the present investigation has started, that a new module namely the 'Comprehension and Written Expression' was introduced for the first time to first-year EFL students enrolled in the department, calling for an integrated reading-writing instructional approach.

The choice of that sample of participants was, thus, determined by the fact that the researcher was teaching that module in particular for two groups of students (a total of sixty students) from that promotion in particular, and wanted to investigate the benefits that learners can gain from instructional practices involving a connection between reading and writing. During the whole year of instruction, students were trained and engaged in many practices involving reading and writing. Right from the beginning, it was made clear to them that the core/main objectives of the module are to make them able to understand written language, produce their own pieces of writing, and of course, aware of the relationships between these two basic language skills (reading and writing).

- b.** Eighty-six (86) students from the second-year LMD students enrolled in the English Licence degree courses offered by the same department, during the academic year 2014-2015.

These are the researchers' students that year in particular, and the majority of them (two-thirds of the subjects) were even those same first-year EFL students

the teacher-researcher's had as subjects and as students in the academic year 2013-2014. So it can be assumed that most of them share the same learning background (studying in the same department in their first-year of studies, and having the same instruction in reading and writing by the same teacher). Yet, their challenges in reading and especially in writing in the target language seem to be bigger in the second year knowing that they are required to write longer pieces of compositions in English.

The choice of this second sample of students of that promotion in particular was determined by the fact that the teacher wanted to pursue what has been started in the academic year 2013-2014 in terms of reading and writing instructional practices.

Now that students' profile and learning background have been identified; their needs – as far as the reading and writing skills are concerned – will be identified and analyzed in what follows.

1.10 Students' Needs Analysis

In recent years, there has been a healthy trend in course design with the focus shifting from teacher-centered to learner-centered activities, and in this connection, a lot of credibility is being given to need-based courses in EFL programmes. Nunan (1995, p.140) proposed that "Teachers should find out what their students think and feel about what and how they want to learn."

The understanding of students' needs is an important factor contributing to the teaching process as a whole. Indeed, needs analysis is a device to know learners' necessities, needs, and lacks in order to develop courses that have a reasonable content for exploitation in the classroom. In other words, it helps teachers establish an appropriate selection of topics, themes, language skills, and teaching methods to facilitate learning in an environment that is closely related to the real life situations of the students and, therefore, suit the target situation.

Simply put, students' needs analysis places the teacher at the center of the decision making process to accommodate the learners. Accordingly, Nunan (1988, p.177) pointed out:

No curriculum can claim to be truly learner-centered unless the learners' subjective needs and perceptions relating to the process of learning are taken into account.

Unfortunately, and as noted by Allwright (1984, p.167), “very many teachers seem to find it difficult to accept their learners as people with positive contribution to make to the instructional process.” Besides, Johns (1991) claimed that needs analysis has not yet received sufficient attention in the Arab world. Students’ needs are rarely, if ever, analyzed; they are rather intuited for them, and teachers generally teach as if all students are at the same place in their learning development. To put it another way, learning is viewed as generic or ‘one size fits all’ (Health, 1983), and this is not accepted as an accurate view of learning, reading, or writing processes today.

Trying to identify and analyze learners’ needs in the present investigation without consulting them may be misleading for the researcher, for the latter is neglecting the most important factor in needs analysis: the learner, his/her views and awareness of his/her needs, his/her expectations, difficulties, lacks, etc.

Therefore, all these factors were taken into consideration in the second part of the questionnaire that was administered to the 60 first-year EFL students (who participated in this study) in the beginning of the academic year 2013-2014 (see Appendix A), and in the first questionnaire given at the start of the academic year 2014-2015 to the sample of second-year EFL students (i.e., the 86 informants) involved in the current investigation as well (see Appendix B).

In the field of language teaching/learning, researchers such as Munby (1978) and Hutchinson and Waters (1987) identified the following divisions under the general heading of needs analysis: (a) target situation needs, (b) deficiency analysis, (c) learners’ wants or expectations, and (d) learning needs.

The target situation needs are what the learner needs to learn in order to function effectively in the target situation. This involves investigating what places learners will use English language forms and skills in, so that the latter can be selected by the teacher for that purpose.

However, determining target situation needs alone is not enough to ensure the fulfillment of learners’ needs. Teachers need to know what the learner already knows; as this helps them decide which of the necessities the learner lacks (i.e., the learner’s deficiency analysis). In other words, it is necessary to match the target proficiency against the existing language proficiency, and the gap between them is the learner’s lacks.

Learners’ wants and expectations are what learners prefer to learn, and what they expect the language course to be about and these are very important in determining learners’

needs. They reflect the perceptions, goals and priorities of the learner and are called “subjective needs”.

Finally, learning needs explain how students will be able to move from the starting point (lacks) to the destination (necessities). Indeed, Hutchinson and Waters (1987) claimed that it is naïve to base a course design simply on the target objectives, and that the learning situation must also be taken into account. They argued that the target situation alone is not reliable indicator and that the conditions of the learning situation (i.e. the learners’ motivation for learning, knowledge, skills, strategies that learners need to learn to be able to function effectively in the target situation) are of prime importance too. The target-situation needs, learners’ lacks and wants are often identified before their learning needs.

For most of the students in the present study, the target situation is limited to the use of English in their studies involving different modules and later teaching it in the Algerian middle or secondary schools. Very few, (i.e., four respondents: a chemist, an economist, and two specialized in commercial sciences) however, will perhaps be using the target language and the reading and writing skills, in particular, to have access to information (in English) related to their subject of specialism or to be able to write research papers or articles in relation to their field of study in English.

Accordingly, students’ short term needs seem to be related to the status of learners learning for a licence degree in the English language. These needs can be illustrated in the developments of the four basic language skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing), learning how to develop strategies, study skills, writing longer compositions and reading to get information from different materials (Ouerrad, 2007).

Indeed, in answer to the question that was related to which of the four above language skills is the most important for them to be developed as EFL students, 38 first-year EFL students of the 60 participants (i.e., 63% of them) and 50 students among the 86 second-year EFL students (i.e., 58%) asserted the significance of and their need for all the four macro skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing) alike. However, 10 first-year and 9 second-year EFL students of the respondents (i.e., 17% and 10% of them respectively) believed that ‘reading’ is the most important language skill they need to develop as EFL students, 6 first-year and 10 second-year EFL students (i.e., 10% and 12% of them respectively) thought ‘speaking’, and 6 first-year and 17 second-year EFL students (i.e., 10% and 20%) agreed ‘writing’.

In the space given for the reason of their choice, they tried to justify their answers. The ones who saw that listening, speaking, reading and writing skills are of equal importance in EFL learning (the majority of respondents from the two samples of participants indeed) contended that their success in EFL learning is dependent on the mastery of all of these four basic skills. This was explicitly expressed in their responses as in the following samples:

"If you want to master a foreign language, you have to develop the four skills; you cannot depend on just one of them. They are all related."

"All the four skills are important; we can't choose one of them to be developed because they complete each other."

"All of the skills have a specific effect on our ability to be fluent in English."

"We need reading to improve our writing, and we need to listen to native speakers to be able to speak fluently in English. So, reading, writing, listening, and speaking are linked."

"In order to be a good student of English, you must learn how to read, how to write, how to listen, and of course, how to speak in English."

"I guess that developing the speaking skill is necessary to communicate orally in English; writing is also important to express ourselves; developing listening and reading skills has many benefits too. So we need all the four skills."

Most of the participants are, then, conscious of the inter-connection between the four macro skills. And this shows that they need an integration of skills in the EFL classroom.

Besides, the students who opted for 'reading' as the most important language skill to be developed by EFL learners explained that 'reading' helps them improve the other language skills especially writing and speaking. One respondent even wrote:

"I think that reading is an umbrella term which covers all the other language skills."

For those who opted for 'speaking', however, they mostly claimed that being able to speak English fluently makes them confident, and such confidence will help them feel comfortable while writing as well. Moreover, the supporters of 'writing' held that it is the most important skill to be developed because without a good writing ability, they cannot answer questions in exams and therefore, they will have bad marks.

Concerning their urgent needs as far as the reading skill is concerned; participants (i.e., both first- and second- year EFL students) stated that they needed reading for many reasons as expressed in the following sample responses:

"I need the reading skill to enrich my repertoire of vocabulary in English."

"Reading improves my ability to spell words."

"I need the reading skill to develop my writing."

"As an EFL university student, I need the reading skill to enrich my knowledge and be able to have access to other modules."

"Through reading we learn a lot such as: vocabulary, new expressions, idioms, spelling words in the correct way, and more."

"I need reading to exploit documentations written in English in different fields."

"As an EFL university student, I need the reading skill to improve and ameliorate my level."

"As students of English, we are dealing with a new culture, and reading is the easiest and best way to learn about and understand that culture."

"I need the reading skill to acquire information and deepen my knowledge."

Similarly, it seems that their common urgent needs for the writing skill are:

"... to show the knowledge acquired"

"... to communicate ideas"

"... to transmit information"

"... to express thoughts and opinions"

"... to answer exam questions and get good marks"

Regarding participants' problematic area in EFL reading, their responses (through the same above mentioned questionnaire) revealed that they generally:

- have a deficiency in their linguistic repertoire of the target language which often leads them to encounter problems in understanding;
- do not possess efficient reading strategies;
- find it difficult to comprehend a text for which they have no background knowledge.

Likewise, respondents reported a range of weaknesses in their EFL writing. Indeed, their common writing difficulties in the target language include:

- language difficulties related to vocabulary like spelling, word choice, and word limit;
- a difficulty to produce grammatically correct writing;
- problems with sentence structure and paragraph and essay developments;
- a difficulty in presenting their ideas in a logically organized and coherent manner;
- a problem in making appropriate transitions within and between sentences and paragraphs;
- providing either too much or too little information than required in their writing assignments, and sometimes, including information that is inappropriate to the topic;

- lack of background knowledge of the topic they are required to write about.

When asked about what they want to learn in the ‘Comprehension and Written Expression’ module, both first- and second-year students explicitly expressed their wants in answers like:

“I want to develop a capacity to read different types of texts in English.”

“I want to develop an efficient way to understand any text in English.”

“I want to learn some techniques to read better.”

“I need to learn some strategies to read with comprehension.”

“I need to learn how to analyze what I read.”

“As university students, we need to read a lot for different modules to prepare exposés and sometimes, we find too much information and we don’t know what to take. I think that the teacher should teach us some strategies to help us.”

I think that the teacher should teach us some techniques like: how to summarize a long text, how to find the general idea of a text, how to guess the meaning of difficult words when we read, etc.”

In addition to their needs for enhancing their reading ability in English as shown in the above statements, their wants to improve their writing ability in the target language through the module are also referred to, as seen in the samples below:

“I want to learn how to write correct sentences in English.”

"I hope I'll learn to write good paragraphs in English."

"I want to learn how to express my thoughts in a clear way."

"Our writing should be more organized to be clear, so we should learn how to make an outline."

Besides, many others linked both reading and writing improvements while expressing their wants as revealed through the upcoming responses:

"I want to improve my ability to write different types of essays: argumentative, narrative, etc. I want also to read different texts about interesting topics."

"I hope to learn how to plan and organize my writing, and how to organize my reading too."

"I need courses that will help me read and write effectively in English."

"What I want to get out of this module is to be able to read and write better."

"I want to read and write a lot in the classroom."

"I think we need some guidance on how to read and write in a good way. If the teacher shows us how we do that, we will benefit more from our reading and at the same time our writing will become more appropriate."

All the points identified and discussed so far through the students' needs analysis indirectly reflect students' urgent need for explicit instruction in some useful reading and writing techniques to facilitate their reading and writing processes in the target language. And as seen in many of their responses, both language skills – reading and writing – are mentioned

together in expressing what they want to learn in the ‘Comprehension and Written Expression’ module’s courses which reflects an awareness, on their part, that the two skills are to be taught together.

1.11 Research Methodology

There are many research methods available to researchers in applied linguistics. These research methods are split broadly into quantitative and qualitative methods. Quantitative research is perhaps the simpler to define and identify. It involves data collection procedures that result in numerical data which is then analyzed using mathematical and statistical methods. As described by Brown and Coombe (2015, p.46), quantitative research “deals with numbers, statistics, and probabilities including descriptive, correlational, means comparisons, frequency comparisons statistics, and many elaborations of those four themes.” Qualitative research, on the other hand, is any which does not involve numbers or numerical data. It results primarily in “open-ended, non-numerical data which is then analyzed primarily by non-statistical methods.” (Dornyei, 2007, p.24). Therefore, and as Lunenburg and Irby (2008, p.89) explained:

[It] emphasizes understanding by closely examining people’s words, actions, and records, as opposed to a quantitative research approach that investigates such words, actions, and records at a mathematically significant level, thus quantifying the results of observations. Qualitative research examines the patterns of meaning that emerge from data gathered; such patterns are often presented in the participants’ own words.

For the present research, however, the researcher adopted a mixed methods approach that “involves different combinations of qualitative and quantitative research either at the data collection or at the analysis levels.” (Dornyei, 2007, p.24). This research method paradigm offers a way to lend credibility to the study and triangulate the data while providing rigor to the investigation.

As a result of the growing popularity of mixed methods research, several arguments have been put forward about its value (Dornyei, 2007; Creswell, 2014; Brow and Coombe, 2015). Some of the most important strengths of the mixed methods research were reported by Dornyei (2007) as follows:

- As it combines both quantitative and qualitative methods, the strengths of one method can be used to overcome the weaknesses of another.

- It allows for a multi-level analysis of complex issues. Words can be used to add meaning to numbers, and numbers can be employed to add precision to words.
- It improves the validity of research.
- It reaches multiple audiences. Indeed, its final results are usually acceptable for a larger audience than those of a monomethod study would be.

1.12 Research Instruments

The quality of research depends to a large extent on the quality of the data collection tools. Seliger and Shohamy (1989, p.155) stated:

Once the researcher has decided what data to collect, the next step is to decide how to collect them. At this point the researcher will select the appropriate data collection procedure (s) from a large pool of available procedures.

In fact, designing appropriate research instruments forms an important and time-consuming phase in the development of most research proposals. Hence, a variety of research tools is used all along the data collection phases in the present investigation in order to cross check the results and validate them.

As the core aim of the current research work is to look for some evidence for the positive impact of an integrated reading-writing instruction on EFL students' reading and writing performances, data was gathered through two main instructional phases, each with its own objective and sequence of steps. Of course, the results obtained will be analyzed and interpreted in relation to the research questions and hypotheses set by this work.

The first instructional phase aims at proving whether or not having students write about materials they read would improve their comprehension of such texts. This first stage of the investigation involved 60 first-year EFL students enrolled in the English Language Department at Djillali Liabes University of Sidi Bel Abbas.

The main objective of the second instructional phase, however, is to determine the effects of reading on the writing performance of students. The participants in this second phase were 86 second-year EFL students enrolled in the same department.

The objectives of each of the tools used in each of the two phases will be described in turn in the next sections.

1.12.1 Data Collection Tools for the Writing-to-Read Instructional Phase

The writing-to-read instructional phase devoted to first-year EFL students' sample used a series of tools to collect sufficient reliable data: a set of classroom instructional treatments (or training) supporting the writing-to-read perspective (through the 'Comprehension and Written Expression' module sessions), classroom observation, two questionnaires addressed to students and a variety of tests done at different stages of the study.

1.12.1.1 Classroom Treatment (Training on Some Writing-to-Read Practices) and Observation

All along the course of the 'Comprehension and Written Expression' module instruction, the researcher (teacher) resorted to both classroom observation and training in some writing-to-read strategies.

1.12.1.1.1 Classroom Treatment

The word 'treatment' is most often used to mean a process of modifying or altering something. In the context of language teaching research in particular, Seliger and Shohamy (1989, p.137) stated that the term:

...refers to anything done to groups in order to measure its effect. The treatment is not a random experience which the groups might have, but a controlled and intentional experience, such as exposure to a language teaching method specially constructed for experiment, or materials presented under controlled circumstances.

One of the hypotheses tested in this work is that engaging students in activities that require them to write about materials they read could be a significant factor contributing to their improved EFL reading ability. In order to test this hypothesis and obtain empirical evidence, the researcher resorted to a set of instructional treatments (through the courses involved in 'Comprehension and Written Expression' module) with a sample of sixty (60) first-year EFL students enrolled in the English Language Department at Djillali Liabes University of Sidi Bel Abbes. These writing-based instructional practices are advocated by many language researchers today (Graham and Hebert, 2010; Miller, McCardle, and Long, 2014), in both ESL and EFL learning contexts, to enhance reading comprehension.

What the sample students received as training or treatment will be briefly described below (as it will be discussed thoroughly in chapter three).

1.12.1.1.1.1 *Text Annotating Instruction*

At the beginning of this investigation, the 60 first-year EFL students received an explicit instruction on how to ‘annotate’ texts they read. This was implemented following five main steps. The researcher (teacher), first, defined the strategy of ‘annotating’ while reading (i.e., writing down notes and comments in the margin of the text or inserting them between the lines while reading) , explained its purposes and how it help them become better readers, and identified the forms it may take. Second, the researcher used ‘think aloud modeling’ while reading a sample text to show students how to record responses to a given reading material. Third, each student of the participants was given a copy of the same sample text the researcher has been modeling to study the sample annotations closely. Forth, students were asked to practise annotating on their own while closely reading another sample text using specific guidelines and recording as much annotations as possible. Fifth, students were invited to discuss and compare their written annotations with their classmates, and review any similarities, differences, etc.

Such an instruction lasted three sessions of one hour and a half each, and was the first step in the investigation as it was assumed that the strategy might assist the sample students in the intensive reading courses they would be involved in. The next step, then, consisted in an intensive reading instruction.

1.12.1.1.1.2 *Intensive Reading Instruction*

After receiving an explicit instruction on how to annotate reading materials, the same sample of students (60 first-year EFL students) were involved in a series of intensive reading sessions during which they were required to read and analyze a variety of texts for deep understanding. Besides, such an approach to teaching reading used a variety of classroom activities that drove students to answer reading comprehension questions in writing (while and after reading any passage dealt with in class). Indeed, the researcher saw that as a useful way to systematically incorporate writing in reading instruction and wanted to explore what benefits (if any) students’ written answers to questions about texts might have on their reading comprehension.

Each of such guided reading sessions was divided into three main stages: the pre-reading stage, the while-reading stage, and the post-reading one. Eight reading materials were used with students in the classroom following the same instructional routine (see Appendix C for some samples). And as some texts and activities demanded more than one intensive reading session of one hour and a half to be dealt with, the intensive reading instruction lasted

more than eight sessions of one hour and a half each. Instructing students in summary writing was the next instructional practice.

1.12.1.1.1.3 *Summary Writing Instruction*

Instruction on summarizing took part in the current phase of the study (and with the same sample of participants) to obtain empirical evidence which serves either to support or reject the claim that the reader's ability to summarize a text contributes to his/her overall comprehension of the target reading material. Such an explicit instructional practice used the following steps as adapted from Irwin's model (2006) of direct instruction: (a) explanation, (b) modeling, (c) transferring (guided practice), and (d) application (independent practice).

Explicit instruction on summarizing that participants received lasted four sessions of one hour and a half each. The next instructional practice involved an instruction on using graphic organizers to assist reading comprehension as described next.

1.12.1.1.1.4 *Graphic Organizers Instruction*

In the last stage of 'The Writing-to-Read Instructional Phase' of the current study, the same sample of students (60 first-year EFL students) was divided into: a control group and an instrumental group of 30 students each.

The instrumental group received an explicit instruction on using graphic organizers as a while- or an after-reading strategy that helps them in comprehending passages they read. First, the teacher (researcher) explained what graphic organizers are and how their use while or after reading would help identify relevant information through the structure of the material read. Second, students were exposed to a variety of graphic organizers they could rely on to organize the content of passages they read and illustrate relationships between ideas (see samples, Appendix D). Meanwhile, the teacher modeled the use of some graphic organizers to go with some text structure and showed students examples of information presented in graphic organizers. Students, were, then given an opportunity to present information they read in texts in the graphic organizer form under the teacher's guidance. In the independence practice phase of the instruction, however, participants started creating their own organizers without teacher guidance. Indeed, the experimental group students were given two texts to be read (a compare/contrast text and a cause/effect text) and for which they had to draw and fill in graphic organizers as a post-reading activity that requires writing. Explicit graphic organizers instruction lasted four sessions of one hour and a half each.

1.12.1.1.2 Classroom Observation

It is now generally accepted that studies of language learning in instructed settings also need to employ an observational dimension (Spada, 1990). While implementing the training (that involves the series of writing-to-read instructional practices described above) during the Comprehension and Written Expression module's instruction, the sample participants were observed by the researcher (the instructor) at different times.

Observation is considered as one of a family of procedures used for data collection that is employed to examine a phenomenon while it is going on. It enables the researcher to reflect systematically upon classroom events as they actually occur rather than as one thinks they occur. This idea is reinforced by Mason (1996, p.60) who stated:

Observations are methods of generating data which involve the researcher immersing him or herself in a research setting, and systematically observing dimensions of that setting, interactions, relationships, actions, events, and so on, within it.

Besides, Gebhard (1999, p.35) defined classroom observation as "... non judgmental description of classroom events that can be analyzed and given interpretation." There are two broad approaches to observing foreign language classrooms, quantitative and qualitative. The former generally takes the form of a checklist or a form to be filled in or completed, and the latter is done through a record of all the events that occur in the observed classes providing a rich descriptive data of what happens during an EFL classroom. The approach chosen for the regular and unstructured observation in the present study is qualitative in nature using note-taking as an observation technique.

Indeed, classroom observation attempted to record any of students' reaction, learning behaviour, engagement or de-motivation in relation to the writing-to-read strategies taught and practised, and the content of the reading materials used. The researcher-observer was then, watching what happened, listening to what was said, and in fact, collecting whatever data to throw light on the issues with which the current study is concerned.

1.12.1.2 Questionnaires to Students

In the light of the purpose of this phase of the study two questionnaires were addressed to the sample of students. In fact, the questionnaire might be the only instrument that can serve as a means of collecting a considerable amount of data with a minimum of time and effort. Seliger and Shohamy (1989, p.172) pointed out:

Questionnaires are printed forms for data collection, which include questions or statements to which the subject is expected to respond, often anonymously... In second language acquisition research, questionnaires are used mostly to collect data on phenomena which are not easily observed, such as attitudes, motivation, and self-concepts. They are also used to collect data on the processes involved in using language and to obtain background information about the research subjects, such as age, previous background in language learning, number of languages spoken, and years of studying the language.

In their turn, Richterich and Chancerel (1980, p.59) stated that “Questionnaires are structured instruments for the collection of data which translate research hypotheses into questions.” Yet at the same, it is important to mention that questionnaire construction is one of the most delicate and critical research activities. Indeed, asking the right questions - questions that provide valid and reliable information for making a decision, testing a theory, or investigating a topic is not an easy task.

Nevertheless, it is generally argued that the first stage in constructing a questionnaire is identifying the first thought questions. This is what Naoum (2007, p.64) intended to say when he pointed out:

Before constructing your questionnaire, you should go back to your proposal and the literature file, and start formulating the ‘the first thought’ list of questions. At this stage the order and the wording of the questions are not crucial. Your aim is to write down all possible questions which are related to your research (you will edit and order them latter).

After this stage, the researcher will be ready to formulate the final questionnaire by introducing a number of sections, trying to fit the first thought questions in these sections and giving each section a title or theme that corresponds closely with the objectives of the questions. This is followed by the final stage in constructing a questionnaire which involves the wording of the questions.

As mentioned earlier, data was collected by means of two questionnaires addressed to the sample of first-year EFL students.

The first questionnaire was made of three parts (see Appendix A): a four-items first part, a six-items second part, and finally, a two-items third part.

The first and second parts of it were administered in the first week of the ‘Comprehension and Written Expression’ courses.

The four-item first part was assigned to determine the profile of the participants. It included the four following questions each with its own objective:

- Question one (01) sought to determine the age range of the participants.
- Question two (02) sought to know their branch of study in the secondary school.
- Question three (03) sought to know how long they have been studying English before entering university.
- Question four (04) was for those who are studying English as a second speciality. It sought to know what their first speciality or degree was and why they are studying English now.

The six-item second part was assigned to determine the participants' needs, difficulties, and wants as far as the EFL reading and writing skills are concerned. The questions were asked for the following objectives:

- Question five (05) sought to identify which of the four basic language skills is the most important for them to develop. The respondents were also invited to justify their choice.
- Question six (06) aimed at identifying the reasons why they need the EFL reading skills as EFL university students.
- Question seven (07) aimed at identifying why they need the writing skill in the target language.
- Question eight (08) and nine (09) sought to determine the difficulties they usually encounter in EFL reading and EFL writing respectively.
- Question ten (10) was to know about what they want to learn through the Comprehension and Written Expression module's courses.

The two-item third part of the questionnaire was administered just after the treatment involving both text annotating and intensive reading instructions (that the participants received) was completed. Its aim was to identify the extent to which writing has assisted students' reading comprehension of the materials read in the classroom. This last part involved two main questions:

- Question eleven (11) aimed at identifying the benefits students' thought they got after being involved in a variety of classroom activities that required them to answer questions in writing about texts they read.

- Question twelve (12) sought to know whether or not students have relied on annotating while reading the materials dealt with in the intensive reading courses. Those whose answer was ‘yes’ were required to specify the forms that their written annotations took and to explain why they chose to annotate their readings. Similarly, those who answered ‘no’ were asked to justify their choice.

Unlike the first questionnaire which was addressed to the whole sample of participants (i.e., 60 first-year EFL students), the second questionnaire to students (see Appendix E) was administered to the instrumental group only involving thirty (30) students out of the same sixty (60) participants. These 30 students received a treatment involving an instruction on how to use graphic organizers to support their reading comprehension.

The aim of this second questionnaire was to investigate the effects of drawing and filling in graphic organizers based on the organization pattern of texts read (as a post-reading activity that involves writing) on students’ comprehension of those materials and on their motivation and confidence as readers. And it was made of eleven (11) closed ended (yes/ no / don’t know⁽²⁾) questions:

- Question one (01), two (02), three (03), four (04), five (05), six (06) and seven (07) were meant to determine if students found drawing and filling in graphic organizers was useful in assisting their reading comprehension.
- Question eight (08), nine (09), ten (10), and eleven (11) strived to know about their motivation and confidence as far as reading in English is concerned after engaging in such a writing to read activity.

1.12.1.3 Tests

Tests were also used in this phase of the study. According to Seliger and Shohamy (1989, p.176):

A test is a procedure used to collect data on subjects’ ability or knowledge of certain disciplines... tests are generally used to collect data about the subject’s ability in and knowledge of the language in areas such as vocabulary, grammar, reading, metalinguistic awareness, and general proficiency.

Broadly speaking, and as expressed by Bachman (1990, p.3) tests are used “...to help diagnose student strengths and weaknesses, to assess student progress, and to assist in evaluating student achievement.”

In order to collect more reliable data confirming or rejecting the positive impact of writing on reading, it was necessary for the researcher to rely on a set of tests:

- The first test took the form of a summary writing assignment carried out with the same sixty first-year EFL students after receiving an explicit instruction on summarizing. This writing test required them to read a given expository text and then to write a summary of it (see Appendix F).
- The second one, however, was a post-summary writing assignment reading comprehension test (see Appendix G) based on the same target text (that has been summarized) and carried out with the same sample of students. The reading comprehension test sought to measure students' understanding of the text they have summarized, and it consisted of six questions:
 - Question one (01) and six (06) assessed students' ability to find out the main idea of the passage, and therefore, to provide a suitable title to it as well.
 - Question two (02), three (03) and five (05) assessed their ability to identify specific information in the text.
 - Question four (04) assessed the ability to draw inferences.

Based on each student's performance in the two above mentioned tests, the researcher would explore the correlation between one's ability to write a summary of the target text and his/ her overall understanding of the reading. More precisely, (and as this phase of the study attempted to shed light on the relationship between reading and writing from a writing-to-read perspective) the researcher would investigate the effects of EFL students' summary writing ability in measuring their reading comprehension. This was an attempt to look at the contribution writing makes to reading.

- The third test used was also a reading comprehension one. Indeed, the same 30 students (out of the 60 first-year EFL students) forming the instrumental group - which received an explicit instruction on how to use graphic organizers as an aid to reading comprehension - were given a text for which they had to make a graphic organizer and then answer a series of comprehension questions as a post-treatment test. The target text is expository following a 'classification' text structure pattern. And the test consisted of a series of multiple-choice questions divided into three main categories: text-based questions, local inference questions, and global inference

questions (see Appendix H). The test was meant to confirm or reject the same students' answers to the questionnaire that focused on their reading ability after such a treatment.

The same reading comprehension test was given to the control group (i.e., the rest of the participants) students which received no explicit graphic organizer instruction, and of course, they were supposed to answer the questions only without making a graphic organizer for the target material. This would allow the researcher to compare the reading performance revealed by both groups (the instrument group and the control one), and therefore, evaluate the effects of the treatment on the instrumental group's reading comprehension achievement.

1.12.2 Data Collection Tools for the Reading-to-Write Instructional Phase

Similarly, the reading-to-write instructional phase planned for the second-year EFL students sample relied on a combination of means to assemble data; namely, two mini-questionnaires to the target participants presented at different stages of instruction, a treatment through the 'Comprehension and Written Expression' module supporting the reading-to-write perspective, a set of tests, and classroom observation.

1.12.2.1 Classroom Treatment (Training on Some Reading-to-Write Practices) and Observation

All along the course of the 'Comprehension and Written Expression' module instruction, the researcher (teacher) resorted to both classroom observation and training in some reading-to-write practices.

1.12.2.1.1 Classroom Treatment

One of the hypotheses tested in this work is that engaging students in some reading for writing activities could be a significant factor contributing to their improved EFL writing ability. In order to test this hypothesis and obtained empirical evidence, the researcher relied on some instructional treatments (through the courses involved in 'Comprehension and Written Expression' module) with a sample of eighty- six (86) second-year EFL students enrolled in the English Language Department at Djillali Liabes University of Sidi Bel Abbas.

The training or treatment students were exposed to will be briefly described below (as it will be discussed thoroughly in chapter three).

1.12.2.1.1.1 *Instruction in Essay Writing*

Explicit instruction on how to write essays was necessary as essay writing is the core of second-year EFL students' 'Comprehension and Written Expression' module courses. The teacher (researcher) began this part of the investigation by providing students with a basic explanation of the general structure of essays. The instruction focused too much on the fundamentals of good essay writing:

- All essays begin with an introductory paragraph. The latter consists of some introductory sentences (opening remarks) and a thesis statement. The introductory sentences create a context that makes the topic interesting to the reader. The thesis statement, however, clarifies the specific subject matter to be explored, and it gives the writer's attitude about the topic. It is the central idea of an essay.
- The introductory paragraph is followed by supporting paragraphs. Their purpose is to support, develop, and explain the thesis statement. Each supporting paragraph consists of a topic sentence followed by supporting sentences.
- All essays end with a concluding paragraph. It consists of a concluding sentence and some closing remarks, and its purpose is to bring the essay into a conclusion that gives the reader a sense of completeness.
- Unity, development and coherence are three cornerstones of essay writing. Indeed, an essay is unified when all of its paragraphs relate directly to its thesis statements; it is well-developed when sufficient information are given to make the reader feel the thesis statement has been sufficiently discussed; and it is coherent when all of its paragraphs are written in a clear, logical manner that is easy to follow.

The researcher then, explained:

- the different methods of development supporting the subject and main points of an essay; namely: description, narration, exposition (cause/effect, compare/contrast, process analysis, definition, classification), and argumentation;
- and the different ways of incorporating coherence: using transitional words or phrases, repeating key words or phrases, etc.

And finally, students were invited to write different types of essays (descriptive, narrative, expository, and argumentative) in the classroom, after receiving some tips on the pattern of organization required for each type of essays, and on what to do and what not to do while dealing with each type of writing (or mode of discourse) in particular.

1.12.2.1.1.2 *Reading Model Essays*

After engaging the sample of students in different assignments that required them to write different types of essays as mentioned above, the researcher has noticed a certain weakness in students' performance in writing compare/contrast and argumentative essays in particular. Accordingly, the next step in the investigation was to invite them to read and study model essays in the classroom (both argumentative and compare and contrast essays) with a writer's eye in preparation for writing an essay of each type. Participants were required to read the sample essays closely and in the process, do a sort of textual analysis. They were trained to approach those samples as critical readers, and the teacher directed such a reading by introducing a set of scaffolding questions. Such a treatment was meant to explore the effects of reading on their post-treatment writing of both types of essays.

1.12.2.1.1.3 *Topic Background Reading*

In another stage of the study, students were also exposed to some reading in the hope of improving the quality of their writing. Indeed, the same sample of students read some materials discussing the topic they were required to write about. This kind of pre-writing reading was supposed to help them build some background knowledge about the target topic before being engaged in writing about it. Most importantly, such a reading treatment aimed at making students develop the habit of using reading as an integral part of their writing process.

1.12.2.1.2 *Classroom Observation*

As with the writing-to-read instructional phase, students involved in the reading-to-write instructional phase were observed at different times during the Comprehension and Written Expression module's courses devoted to the above described trainings. The researcher (as teacher and observer) adopted an unstructured approach to classroom observation observing the context and students' behaviours and reactions to the set of practices dealt with in the classroom, and relied on note-taking as a technique. Data collected then can paint a full picture of what is happening.

1.12.2.2 *Tests*

Tests were also used in this phase of the study involving the eighty-six (86) second-year EFL students. Indeed, in order to collect more reliable data confirming or rejecting the positive impact of reading on participants' writing, it was necessary for the researcher to rely on a set of tests, all of which are essay writing assignments:

- In the pre-model essays reading treatment phase, participants were asked to write a five-paragraph argumentative essay and a five-paragraph compare and contrast essay individually (after giving them two topics to choose from, see Appendix I). These essay writing assignments can be considered as a diagnostic test to assess their ability to write both essay types based on what they have acquired from the essay writing instruction they received only.
- In the post-model essays reading treatment phase, the same participants were asked again to write a five-paragraph argumentative essay and a five-paragraph compare and contrast essay individually. The topics students wrote about were the same as those they chose to write about in the pre-treatment essay tests. The two essay writing assignments were as a kind of an achievement test to measure the subjects' progress in writing both types of essays after such reading treatment.
- A third essay writing test was carried out with the same participants. This was a kind of a diagnostic test. Indeed, students wrote an essay on a given topic without being engaged in any pre-writing reading about the target topic (see Appendix J). Students were invited, then, to write an essay about the same topic again but after doing some topic background reading. It was a kind of an achievement test to see the effects of such a reading treatment on the quality of their writing⁽³⁾.

1.12.2.3 Questionnaires to students

In addition to the above described tools, data was collected by means of two questionnaires addressed to the same sample of second- year EFL students.

The first questionnaire was made merely of the second part of the first questionnaire administered to the sample of first-year students involved in the writing-to-read instructional phase (see appendix B). It was assigned in the first week of the 'Comprehension and Written Expression' courses to determine the participants' needs, difficulties, and wants as far as the EFL reading and writing skills are concerned.

The second questionnaire (a mini questionnaire made of two multiple choice questions) was assigned to the participants in the last stage of the study (after the last test carried out with them). The questionnaire regarded students' personal views on writing both with and without reading about a given topic (see Appendix K). It consisted of:

- Question one (01) aimed at identifying the problems faced by the respondents in writing without topic background reading.

- Question two (02) was meant to explore their views on the ways reading about a topic helped them in writing.

1.13 Conclusion

This first chapter has tried to present the main characteristics of the teaching / learning situation under which the skills of reading and writing are carried out. The samples of the study have also been described. Areas like the nature of teachers' methodology, students' characteristics, their needs for the EFL reading and writings, and their EFL reading and writing difficulties have been revealed. The research methodology was described through the different instruments and the statement of the objective of each step in the investigation. However, the data drawn from them are analyzed in details in chapter three. Meanwhile, before considering the results and testing the research hypotheses addressed in the general introduction, it seems necessary to approach reading, writing, reading and writing connection, and the integrated-skill reading and writing instruction theoretically. This will be provided in the following chapter.

NOTES TO CHAPTER ONE

- (1) It was only during the year in which the practical side of the present study started that the ‘Comprehension and Written Expression’ module was allocated 4 hours 30 mn per week for first-year EFL students enrolled in the English language department of Djillali Liabes University of Sidi Bel Abbas. Time allowance for the module was reduced to 3 hours 30 mn per week later.
- (2) It is advisable to allow respondents to opt out if they ‘do not know’ as it will help increase the response rate and quality of data collected.
- (3) Even though students’ essays (written after doing some background reading about the assigned topic) were collected by the researcher, they were not corrected nor scored. The researcher sought to know about students’ own perception of their own improvement as far as their ability in and motivation and confidence to writing (after reading) is concerned. And that was revealed through the questionnaire administered to them after such a reading treatment.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.1 Introduction

This chapter provides a thorough survey of theory, research, and pedagogy in relation to the connection between reading and writing. An overview of the different theoretical reading models, the instructional approaches to reading in L2 contexts, and the major approaches to L2 writing instruction are first presented. A delineation of the major shifts in the conception of reading and writing and its impact on the relationship between the two language skills is then explored. Certain similarities in the processes of reading and writing are identified next. And after making a theoretical case for perceiving reading and writing as complementary processes sharing a set of similar knowledge domains and involving the use of similar cognitive strategies, some differences between reading and writing are pinpointed. Moreover, three major interrelated hypotheses in favour of the reading-writing link in L1 contexts; namely, the directional hypothesis, the non-directional hypothesis, and the bidirectional hypothesis are described. Besides, the major themes and constructions that have guided L2 reading-writing connections research and instruction are reviewed. In the final part of the chapter, however, three primary modes of reading-writing connections that can be adopted in academic settings – reader-response theory, reading to write, and writing to read – are described each with a variety of classroom activities providing meaningful ways to connect reading and writing.

2.2 Defining Reading

It is difficult to define reading in a word. Reading is too vague in its meaning. It is one of those fuzzy concepts that are not completely understood nor easily described. Hence, many researchers have defined and analyzed it in many different ways. Smith (1978, p.100) noted the uneasiness of giving a single clear-cut definition for reading saying:

Reading is not different from all the other common words in our language; it has a multiplicity of meanings. And since the meaning of the word on any particular occasion will depend largely on the context in which it occurs, we shouldn't expect that a single definition for reading will be found.

Despite this fact, reading is not merely converting written language to spoken language, nor is it the visual recognition of the printed words. Rauch and Weinstein (1968)

commented that reading involves more than the ability to recognize and pronounce words correctly. These are very important aspects of reading, but they are very secondary to the act of comprehension and thinking. This was contended by Smith (1988, p.6) who viewed comprehension as “the basic to reading and learning to read.”, and Leedy (1963, p.8) who pointed out that “reading furnishes the mind only with material of knowledge; it is thinking that makes what we read ours.”

In the most general terms, we may say that the act of reading (whether in L1 or L2 context), involves the reader, the text, and the interaction between the reader and the text read (Rumelhart, 1977). Reading then, far from being passive is a dynamic process. It is the process of simultaneously extracting and constructing meaning through interaction and involvement with written language. This notion is reinforced by Johnson (2008, p.3) who said that “if there is no meaning being created, there is no reading taking place.”

Yet, meaning is not delivered to the reader on silver platters. It is, instead, constructed through multiple and evolving complex transactions between the reader and the material being read. Reading “constantly involves guessing, predicting, checking and asking oneself questions” (Grellet, 1996, p.8). To comprehend, a reader must have a wide range of capacities and abilities. These include cognitive capacities (e.g., attention, memory, critical analytic ability, inferencing, visualization ability), motivation (a purpose for reading, an interest in the content being read, self-efficacy as a reader), and various types of knowledge (vocabulary, domain and topic knowledge, linguistic and discourse knowledge, knowledge of specific comprehension strategies).

Moreover, according to Freebody (1992), an effective reader performs four specific roles, namely code breaker (using a knowledge of phonics, contextual cues, grammar and text structure), text participant (making meaning, relating information to prior knowledge and experience), text user (applying reading skills for authentic purposes), and text analyst (understanding text structure, functions and purpose). And, of course, the specific cognitive, motivational, and linguistic capacities and the knowledge base called on in any act of reading comprehension depend on the texts in use and the specific activity in which one is engaged.

Therefore, full comprehension or genuine reading occurs only if the reader’s representation of the text essentially approximates that of the writer. Accordingly, Nuttall (1996, p.4) regarded reading as the process of “getting out of the text as nearly as possible the message the writer put into it.”

Simply put, reading is like the process of communication involving an interaction between the writer and the reader mediated through the text. This was argued by Ransom (1978, pp.14-15) who viewed reading as ‘a conversation’ between the writer and the reader. He stated that like someone who is talking, “the writer is trying to convey some message to another person.” And a successful reader-writer interaction is possible only if the two interlocutors share the same code language, and certain assumptions and knowledge about the world.

True reading requires both the ability to break down the code and the ability to understand the meaning intended by the writer. The first and prime thing required for reading is the ability to recognize the written forms of the words. Then come the perception and internalization of the meaning or message that a text contains. Dechant (1982, p.335) had summarized the whole thing claiming that ‘complete reading’ involves four steps: “...recognition of the written symbols, understanding the meaning or message of the text, reaction of the reader after completing reading and integration of the whole process.”

An overview of the different theoretical reading models as well as the instructional approaches to reading in L2 contexts will be presented in the next section.

2.3 Theories of and Instructional Approaches to L2 Reading

From a historical perspective, our understanding of reading in a second or foreign language (L2) has changed considerably in the last several decades. Indeed, Reading research has undergone numerous changes, and especially after the 1980’s when first and second language research has resulted in many new insights for reading instruction.

In the mid-to late 1960s, reading was seen as a tool for the reinforcement of oral language instruction. Under the influence of Audio-lingual methodology, most efforts to teach reading were based on the use of reading to study grammar and vocabulary, or to practice pronunciation skills (Silberstein, 1987).

This view of reading was later challenged by the evolving views of reading theory as cognitive psychology paved the way for a renaissance in reading research by licensing scholars to discuss what happened inside the reader’s mind while reading. Indeed, by the 1970s, researchers argued that greater importance should be placed on reading and advocated a psycholinguistic model or theory of reading (Goodman, 1967; Smith, 1971).

While the 1970s witnessed a transition from one dominant view of reading to another, the 1980s was a decade in which much L2 reading theory and practice extended Goodman

and Smith's perspectives on reading (Bernhardt, 1991). At the same time, L2 research began to look more closely at other L1 reading research for the insights that it could offer. Thus, attempts to demystify the black box of the L2 reading process have relied primarily upon explanatory models borrowed from L1 research and theory.

Indeed, just like teaching methodology, reading theories have had their twists and turns. Starting from the traditional view, which focused on the printed form of a text, and moving to the cognitive view that enhanced the role of background knowledge and ending in the meta-cognitive view, which is now in vogue. These metaphorical reading models can largely be placed into one of three main categories: bottom-up, top-down, and interactive.

2.3.1 The Bottom-Up Theory and Traditional Approaches to L2 Reading Instruction

The bottom-up model or the text-driven approach to reading portrayed processing in reading as proceeding in serial fashion. First, the graphemic information enters the visual system and is transformed at the first level from a letter to character to a sound; that is, from a graphemic representation to a phonemic representation. Second, the phonemic representation is converted; at level two, into a word. Words, then, pass on the third level, to form sentences which in turn led finally to meaning and thinking.

Simply put, the bottom-up model of reading saw meaning as something that resides in the text itself (at the bottom). The reader, therefore, extracts information from the printed page to the mind (i.e. the reader depends on the text's linguistic cues only to get meaning). Hence, the brain is thought of as an empty container to be filled with meaning from the text.

One L2 reading instructional approach based on the bottom-up theory is the traditional Grammar Translation Approach which was historically used to teach Greek and Latin, and which dominated the field of foreign language teaching till the beginning of the 20th century. The Grammar Translation method requires that students translate whole texts word for word and memorize numerous grammatical rules and exceptions as well as enormous vocabulary lists. The aim was to enable students to read and translate literary masterpieces and classics into and out of the target language, and therefore, develop an ability to learn the disciplines of reading and writing the language accurately. In an EFL classroom, the Grammar Translation Approach does not allow students to create meaning in English. They do not learn to read, because translation is not reading. Therefore, no effort was made to identify reading as a process.

There was no considerable change later with the Audio-lingual Approach, which was very popular from the 1940s through the 1960s. The approach which was based on

behaviorism and structuralism saw the process of learning to read as a mechanical process where “students developed habitual (eventually automatic) recognition of the written symbols corresponding to familiar (that is, spoken) language patterns.” (Silberstein, 1987, p.28).

Indeed, Behaviorists like Skinner (1957) started from the assumption that teaching a language means nothing more than training the learner into a set of habits. Accordingly, reading was best taught by the use of drillings and repetitions, and was consequently seen as a mere passive activity dependent upon sounding-up words. Besides, the structuralists, such as Bloomfield (1942), Fries (1945) and Lado (1961) viewed language as a system of structurally related elements, wherein phonemic systems led to morphemic systems, and these in turn led to higher level systems of phrases, clauses and sentences.

Taken from this perspective, the implication for reading instruction is that learners need to decode language in a linear way starting from letters then moving to words then whole sentences, and finally overall meaning. The ‘phonics’ movement would best typify this view. Such a movement as Steinberg, Nagata and Aline (2001) explained, focused on reading as a process which converts written forms of language to speech forms and then to meaning. Once speech is obtained, meaning will follow.

In this concern, Cameron (2001, p.149) said that “Phonics teaching focuses on letter-sound relations, building literacy skills from the bottom-up.” Accordingly, the phonics-based view of reading was closely associated with the text-driven or bottom-up model of the reading process.

Even though the bottom-up view of reading helped learners develop some skills like word recognition and understanding word meaning, it was criticized for its failure to account for the contribution of the reader in the process of meaning construction. The knowledge of linguistic features is necessary for reading comprehension to take place, yet the reader might be able to understand every single word in a text without knowing what the text is about.

In short, the text itself is, of course, important for reading comprehension, yet what the reader brings to the text is also of great importance. The latter has been emphasized by the top-down view of reading.

2.3.2 The Top-Down Theory and Whole Language Approaches to L2 Reading Instruction

Diametrically opposed to the bottom-up approach, the so-called top-down model viewed the reading process as driven by higher-level conceptual processes rather than by lower-level input analysis. It depicted reading as ‘a psycholinguistic guessing game’(Goodman, 1967, 1969, 1971, 1973, 1988; Smith, 1971, 1973), in which the reader

makes tentative hypotheses or predictions about the meaning of the text based on what he already knows, and then merely sample the text to confirm or correct these predictions. Only by doing so will the reader be able finally to construct meaning (or reconstruct the encoded message) and assimilate new knowledge.

In other words, the reader uses “general knowledge of the world or of particular text components to make intelligent guesses about what might come next in the text and samples only enough of the text to confirm or reject these guesses” (Barnett, 1989, p.13). The top-down model, thus, focused on the cognitive task of deriving meaning from what lay in the reader’s head. Accordingly, “the skilled reader is far from a passive responder to print stimuli, but rather a questioner, judge, summarizer, comparer, predictor, hypothesizer, and elaborator” (Cobb and Stevens, 1996, p.122).

The role played by background knowledge in the reading process can be explained and formalized in the theoretical model of schema theory (Schank and Abelson, 1977; Rumelhart, 1980; Anderson and Pearson, 1988). Schema was the technical term used by cognitive scientists to describe how people process, organize and store information in their heads. Schemata, therefore, may be described as “the mental frameworks” (Jonhson, 2001, p.275), which individuals hold and brought with them when they read a text⁽¹⁾.

The set of pedagogical practices which followed from that model of the reading process is called Whole Language. This is an approach to the teaching of reading that, in its most extreme form, advocates that reading should not be taught at all (Pressley, 2004). Instead, learners should simply be given lots of opportunities to interact with text. That is, learners learn to read by reading a lot.

In less extreme forms, a Whole Language approach involves giving learners background knowledge on the topic of a text, encouraging learners to predict the meaning of a text using context cues such as titles and sub-titles, images, and so on; it also involves teaching strategies to guess the meaning of new words (Presley, 2004). Besides, learners use their experiences to construct meaning from the text. Learning tasks require higher order thinking and linguistic skills such as arguing on the author’s viewpoint in a discussion and providing reasoning, discussing causes and effects of events in an expository text and so forth. Moreover, reading and writing are integrated in meaningful and functional activities (Freeman and Freeman, 1992) such as writing in response to a reading activity.

Building on the above ideas and in an attempt to give a well constructed description of this approach, Richards and Rogers (2001, p. 110) pointed out:

The major principles underlying the design of whole language instruction are as follows:

- **The use of authentic literature rather than artificial, specially prepared texts and exercises designed to practice individual reading skills.**
- **A focus on real and natural events rather than on specially written stories that do not relate to the students' experience.**
- **The reading of real texts of high interest, particularly literature.**
- **Reading for the sake of comprehension and for a real purpose.**
- **The integration of reading, writing and other skills.**

The top-down model has contributed a great deal to explain the reading process with its emphasis on the reader; nevertheless, it only explains the situation of skillful and fluent L2 readers with a certain level of linguistic proficiency, and it does not give a true picture of the situation of less proficient language learners. In other words, the model has been criticized for its overemphasis on the prediction of meaning at the expense of identifying lexis and grammatical forms (Eskey, 1988; Clarke, 1988).

Indeed, it was remarked that a de-emphasis on bottom-up processing will not promote accuracy, and that, alternatively, a strong emphasis should be placed on a balanced-reading approach (Nunes, 1999).

2.3.3 The Interactive Theory and Communicative L2 Reading Instruction

Since neither the bottom-up model nor the top-down model of reading totally accounted for what occurs during the reading process, an interactive reading model was the typical compromise solution (Rumelhart, 1977). For the interactive model of reading, proposed by reading experts in the 1980's, the term interaction might mean an interaction of both bottom-up and top-down processing working together simultaneously in comprehending a text (Carrell, 1988; Eskey, 1988).

Elaborating how this model works in facilitating reading comprehension, Dubin and Bycina (1991, p.197) noted that, "interactive theory of reading acknowledges the role of previous knowledge and prediction but at the same time reaffirms the importance of the actual words of the text." Consequently, "reading involves an array of lower-level rapid, automatic identification skills and an array of higher-level comprehension/interpretation skills." (Grabe, 1991, p.383).

This indicates that while readers decode the text, they use their reasoning skills based on their background information. Moreover, these two acts interact with each other, and occur simultaneously rather than sequentially (Rumelhart, 1977). As a result, readers have the chance to compensate for deficiencies in one aspect (e.g., vocabulary) by relying more on the

other sources (e.g., background information) (Stanovich, 1980). In sum, the interactive process of reading comprehension is a negotiation between the reader's background knowledge and the textual clues taken up from the printed page through decoding graphic display.

In other words, a text's meaning for a particular reader is gradually constructed through the dynamic flow of information between reader and text, both 'top-down' (reader to text) and 'bottom-up' (text to reader). And, of course, no two readers are likely to construct identical mental models of a given text as they bring to it different knowledge bases, purposes, and information processing strategies.

The interactive theory of L2 reading was advocated by the Communicative Approach to language teaching. The later has put the emphasis on the meaning of language (language is no longer viewed as a system of structures, as in traditional approaches to English language teaching). Besides, it has given instructors a different understanding of the role of reading in the language classroom and the types of texts that can be used in instruction.

When the goal of instruction is communicative competence, everyday materials such as train schedules, newspaper articles, and travel and tourism Web sites become appropriate classroom materials, because reading them is one way communicative competence is developed (Carrell, Devine and Eskey, 1988). Moreover, the communicative approach to language teaching suggests three phases of classroom reading lesson treatments: pre-reading, while-reading and post-reading activities (Williams, 1984).

Furthermore, such approach looks at reading as a process that is greatly motivated by the purpose of reading and comprehension. For instance, a student who wants to understand all issues that relate to a certain phenomenon will require knowing the vocabulary used in that field to understand facts and ideas through reading. The purpose one has for reading a particular text plus the type of text being read usually dictate the skills and specific knowledge that a given reader will need to use for him or her to achieve comprehension.

The three above overlapping approaches to viewing and describing reading reflect, in part, the development of reading research (Chun and Plass, 1997; McDonell, 2006). Moreover, in the early 1990's, many of the variables associated with the reading process were laid out (cross-linguistic influences, background knowledge, affective and motivational considerations, and socio-cultural factors). Yet, there was still no satisfactory integrated model of these traits.

Indeed, theory and studies still were rather unidimensional in nature. Bottom-up features such as text structure (Yano, Long, and Ross, 1994); syntax (Berkemeyer, 1994; Kitajima, 1997), and word knowledge (Lupescu and Day, 1993; Knight, 1994; Laufer and Hadar, 1997; Zimmerman, 1997) were the main areas of investigation as did top-down features such as affect (Davis, 1992). Besides, the interest in phonological aspects of reading led to examinations of reading linked to other language modalities, most specifically writing (Carrell and Connor, 1991; Lund, 1991; Hedgecock and Atkinson, 1993).

It is worth noting that until the decade of the 1980's educationalists and researchers have permitted reading rather than writing to dominate research and literary teaching (Emig, 1982). Indeed, Hedgecock (2005, pp. 597-598) described L2 writing as an "embryonic" field and an "emergent discipline," noting, "Writing research has a comparatively short biography."

A description of the activity of writing and a close look at the major instructional approaches to L2 writing will be dealt with in the two next sections.

2.4 Defining Writing

Writing has been defined in a variety of ways; each researcher tailors it according to his understanding, and no definition can cover all the writing systems that exist and have ever existed.

Many years ago, the single definition people could provide for writing was the use of graphic symbols to record speech or to reproduce in written form something which has been read. A skilful writer, then, was one who had a beautiful hand writing as described by Carstairs (1816, p.12): "When writing is well performed, it gives a beautiful and pleasing effect to the eye..."

Yet, writing is not as simple as it seems to be. Byrne (1979, p.1) made clear this notion claiming that "...writing is clearly much more than the production of graphic symbols, just as speech is more than the production of sounds". Writing involves producing meaningful segments to carry a message in the language. In other words, and as noted by Byrne (1991, p.1): "writing involves the encoding of a message of some kind: that is we translate our thoughts into language." Similarly, Nunan (2003, p.88) pointed out: "writing is a form of communication and a process of expressing and impressing ideas into a product of writing; translating out thought into language."

This means that the graphic symbols have to be arranged in certain ways and conventions to form words, and the latter are arranged to form sentences. Sentences, on their

part, are arranged in a particular order and linked together in certain manners to form a coherent whole: a 'text'. And, of course, coordinating all these aspects is a staggering job that is definitely more than a simple activity of putting symbols together. Writing is a means of communication; it is the activity of producing a piece of written language which is designed to be read. In this context, Leki (1976, p.4) said that "Writing is communicating. Good writing gets your ideas out of your head and into the reader's head without losing or distorting those ideas." Hence, Writing is a process which conveys a meaningful message and has a definite purpose.

Moreover, although the definition of writing, in general terms, includes the use of graphic symbols, it is by no means limited to this narrow sense as it also refers to the process through which a piece of written language is produced.

For Graves (1981, p.4), writing is an intricate process which involves "a series of operations leading to the solution of a problem. The process begins when a writer consciously or unconsciously starts a topic and is finished when the written piece is published". Writing necessitates a set of interwoven perspective activities which make the activity of composing a cognitive demanding act. Writing is a magical and mysterious thinking process in its own right (White and Arndt, 1991). When one actually writes, he thinks of things he did not have in mind before he begins writing. The act of writing generates ideas; it helps the writer to clarify his thoughts. Besides, when one writes, he makes series of choices at the paragraph level, at the sentence level, and even at the level of choice. These choices are interrelated and often intuitive, but in essence, writing is a hard work of decision making. When one writes, he selects and orders ideas so that a reader can digest and see them as he (the writer) does. Making these individual choices requires one to write and rewrite until he feels he has expressed his ideas clearly for the reader.

In terms of pedagogy, writing is a central element in the language teaching setting as students need to write down notes and to take written exams. Yet, Nunan (1995) asserted that writing proves to be a difficult skill to master for a lot of people even for expert writers in L1, let alone learners of a foreign language writing in L2.

Hence, the idea drawn from the previous definitions is that writing is the activity of being able to communicate with language through a graphic representation of ideas. It is also a complex process and an important skill for language learners as well as native speakers.

The following paragraphs sketch a brief chronological development of the major approaches to L2 writing instruction.

2.5 An Overview of the Major Instructional Approaches to L2 Writing

As mentioned before, the field of L2 writing has only a short history as a disciplinary area. For many years, the teaching of writing, in any context, was largely ignored, forever tested but seldom taught. Thus, the focus was on what the students produce, not on how to do it. Writing was a neglected skill; it was argued that language is most important in its spoken form and less important in the written one; and for this reason, writing was not given much attention (Rivers, 1968).

It was only after the 1960's, that writing for academic purposes gained importance and became central to language learning. And, as teaching writing skills has been incorporated into EFL classes, a great number of approaches and methods of teaching have come out. Although none of these approaches can be considered as ideal, they have all proved to be successful in one period or another. Besides, Raimes (1983) agreed that there is no one answer to the question of how to teach writing in EFL classes. There are as many answers as there are teachers and teaching styles, or learners and learning styles.

2.5.1 The Traditional Product-Oriented Approach to L2 Writing Instruction

In the 1950's, when the Grammar Translation Method was in its greatest popularity, writing assumed a rather inferior role in the teaching and learning of English and other languages. Writing received relatively little attention because the emphasis of teaching was only on presenting the rules of a particular item of grammar, illustrating its use by including the item several times in a text, and practicing using the item through writing sentences and translating it both into and from the mother tongue.

With the rise of Audiolingualism in the 1960s, the situation became even worse. According to Richards and Rogers (1986), the Audio-Lingual Method almost led L2 writing to its downfall as writing was the fourth - the least and the last among the four skills taught. Indeed, the approach stressed the notion that language was speech, not writing. Thus, writing was given the role of reinforcing the language patterns practiced orally.

Besides, following the theories of behaviourism, teaching writing was "purely imitative" (Richards and Rogers, 1986, p.58). Student writers were asked to imitate prescribed texts, models, or exemplars in order to give them insights into how to correctly arrange words into clauses, clauses into sentences, and sentences into larger discourse units (Hyland, 2003). Focus, then, was on syntactic and grammatical forms with accuracy being paramount. Thus, as the name of the approach under discussion suggests, the main focus is on final products. This end-product construction was to be achieved through a process characterized by the four

stages of familiarization with grammar and vocabulary through a text, controlled writing exercises featuring manipulation of fixed structures, simple teacher guided writing exercises imitating model texts, and free writing in which students use the patterns they have been taught to create a target text (Pincas, 1982; Hyland, 2003).

The Product-Oriented Approach to L2 writing instruction, thus, emphasizes accuracy and correctness at the expense of the writer, his ideas and decisions, and the process through which texts are produced. Accordingly, Williams (2003, p.2) argued that the product approach "...is mindless, repetitive, anti-intellectual."

However, with the advent of the Communicative Approach to language teaching, writing instruction has taken a new direction.

2.5.2 The Communicative Approach to L2 Writing Instruction

The advent of the Communicative Approach to language teaching in the 1970s gave rise to the notion of communicative competence, which stressed the view that language involves the negotiation of meaning and applies to both speech and writing. The purpose of the piece of writing students produce and the audience to whom they will write are the two major points the Communicative Approach focuses on. That is why; student writers were encouraged to ask themselves two major questions: why are we writing this? i.e., to entertain, inform, instruct, persuade, explain, argue a case, etc. And who will read it? Writing instruction was based on real-life activities such as: writing letters, taking notes, and making lists.

Yet, the approach was criticized for marginalizing L2 writing further as it put little emphasis on writing focusing mainly on oral communication skills. Indeed, some researchers claimed that writing was taught prescriptively, and the complexity of writing was overlooked under such a communicative methodology (Zamel, 1980; Flower and Hayes, 1981), the fact which carried on the tradition of the audio-lingual method.

Such a dissatisfaction resulted in the appearance of the Process-Oriented Approach to L2 writing in the early 1980s.

2.5.3 The Process-Oriented Approach to L2 Writing Instruction

The introduction of the Process Approach to L2 writing in the early 1980s seemed to have been motivated by dissatisfaction with the Product Approach (Jordan, 1997). The Process Approach placed more emphasis on the stages of the writing process than on the final product,

and turned writing from being just a language exercise into an “an ongoing process of discovery” (Raimes, 1983, p.142).

Indeed, Zamel (1983) claimed that writing is a process through which students can explore and discover their thoughts, constructing meaning and assessing it at the same time to be able to arrive at a product of good quality. Thus, attention is paid first to the content and meaning and then to the form. When using a process approach to teaching writing, teachers focus on what students think and do as they write.

Graves (1994) described the writing process as having four stages which are pre-writing, drafting, revising, and editing. Accordingly, the teacher’s role while translating the process approach into the classroom context is “...to help students develop viable strategies for getting started (finding topics, generating ideas and information, focusing, and planning structure and procedure), for drafting (encouraging multiple drafts), for revising (adding, deleting, modifying, and rearranging ideas); and for editing (attending to vocabulary, sentence structure, grammar and mechanics).” (Silva as cited in Kroll, 1990, p.15)

Thus, instead of playing the role of linguistic judge merely, the teacher using a process approach to teaching writing becomes a reader responding to what the students have written. And the students on their turn “rather than merely providing evidence of mastery of linguistic forms, proffer experiences, ideas, attitudes and feelings to be shared with the reader.” (White and Arndt, 1991, p.2).

However, the Process Approach to L2 writing was not without its critics. Indeed, even though the process methodology may have taught students what good writers do, it began to be critiqued for not being able to prepare students for some kinds of academic tasks such as exam writing where students are working under time constraints, and have a limited amount of choice concerning what they write about. Besides, the teaching of the correct usage of forms and of grammar items is neither explicit nor context-related which may lead to the likely increase of grammar errors and irrelevant forms in the final written product. Moreover, Badger and White (2000, pp.154-155) added:

The process approach has a very restricted view of writing, in that the approach presumes that writing proficiency takes place only with the support of the repeated exercise of the same writing procedures. Although it is obvious that the amounts of pre-writing necessary for writing a personal letter and for creating an academic research paper are different, in the process model, the practice of writing is identical regardless of what the topic is and who the writer or the reader is.

The Process Approach has also aroused criticism because it gives insufficient importance to the purpose of writing, and it represents writing as a decontextualised skill by setting of the writer as an isolated individual struggling to express personal meaning (Hyland, 2003). In other words, the approach has been criticized for ignoring the social aspects of writing. This last point gave birth to new approach to L2 writing instruction, namely, the genre-oriented approach.

2.5.4 The Genre-Oriented Approach to L2 Writing Instruction

As writing is a social and communicative act, and since language occurs in particular social and cultural contexts; and because writers don't just write but they write a multiplicity of text types to accomplish various purposes and social functions (Halliday, 1994), a new approach to teaching writing called the Genre Approach has emerged as a response to the Process Approach since the late 1980s. The Genre-Oriented Approach can be called differently such as the "English for Academic Purposes approach" (Silva, 1990, pp.16-17) or the "English for Specific Purposes approach" (Dudley-Evans, 1997, pp.151-152).

Genres, according to Hyland (2004), can refer to professional, academic and even everyday forms of speech acts and writing texts. Genres are descriptions of text structures and language features which are typically used to achieve different social purposes. Accordingly, the Genre Approach to teaching writing offered students explicit and systematic explanation of the way language functions in social contexts (Hyland, 2003), and viewed writing as a way of getting things done. The approach, thus, looked beyond subject content, composing processes and linguistic forms to see a text as attempts to communicate with readers, and it, therefore, emphasized the important role of the writer-reader interaction on a piece of writing (Reid,1995). Moreover, it showed students how different discourses require different structures.

Classroom applications of the Genre Approach to writing following Cope and Kalantzis (1993) consist of three phases: (1) the target genre is modeled for the students; (2) a text is jointly constructed by the teacher and students; (3) a text is independently constructed by each student.

Dudley-Evans (2000, p.156) described these same steps as:

First, a model of a particular genre is introduced and analyzed. Learners then carry out exercises which manipulate relevant language forms and, finally produce a short text.

This is, in some ways, very similar to the classroom technique used in product approaches as they both share a focus on form and a bottom-up construction. The difference lies in the fact that genre approaches take into account the context of the text to be created (Badger and White, 2000).

Indeed, a criticism of the Genre-Based Approach is that it promotes mindless imitation and does not raise students' awareness of how complex the process of writing is (Tribble, 1996). So, creativity is stifled. Another weakness is that teaching, for example, how to write a letter of job application as a type of business letters is fine, but it doesn't help a student write a letter of complaint to a company. In that one cannot teach every possible genre in the limited classroom time available, it seems there must be gaps in the genre approach student's written communicative ability.

The strengths and weaknesses of each writing approach described above show that they all complement each other. Therefore, it is necessary for writing teachers to consider a combination of these writing approaches and see what can work and is applicable in contrast to what cannot function in different learning situations and knowledge fields.

After reviewing the major instructional approaches to L2 reading and writing, a delineation of the major shifts in the conception of reading and writing and its impact on the relationship between the two language skills will be explored.

2.6 A Delineation of the Major Shifts in the Conception of Reading and Writing and its Impact on the Relationship between the Two Language Skills

Historically and currently, reading and writing are often taught separately. This happens despite the fact that reading in academic settings involves some kind of writing, and vice versa. Using different decades as a guiding time frame, this section will delineate core shifts in the conception of reading and writing and describe how those conceptions were reflected in the relationships between reading and writing in classroom instruction.

In the 1960s, when literacy instruction was dominated by Behavioral Psychology advocated by Skinner (1957), reading was conceived as a sequential process – proceeding from identifying words to assembling words into bigger meaningful chunks (e.g., phrases, clauses, sentences, etc.), to getting meaning from the text. Writing at that point in time was regarded as secondary to reading, and the two elements of literacy were conceptualized as separate entities. Indeed, research on the reading-writing relationship was nonexistent; that is, reading research was kept separate from writing research. A common belief among teachers was writing teachers teach writing, and reading teachers teach reading. Accordingly, during

classroom reading instruction, writing was rare: during writing time, reading was usually not there (Tierney, 1992).

The first half of the 1970s still considered reading and writing as distinctly separate processes thought of and taught as flip sides of the coin – as opposite; “readers decoded or deciphered language and writers encoded or produced written language” (Tompkins, 2006, p.46). This was inspired by the neuropsychologists who hold that comprehension is located in one area of the brain and production in another, and that the receptive skill of reading can be much more easily acquired and retained than the productive skill of writing. This was contended by Brown (1987, pp.26-27) who said that “...both observational and research evidence point to the ‘superiority’ of comprehension over production”.

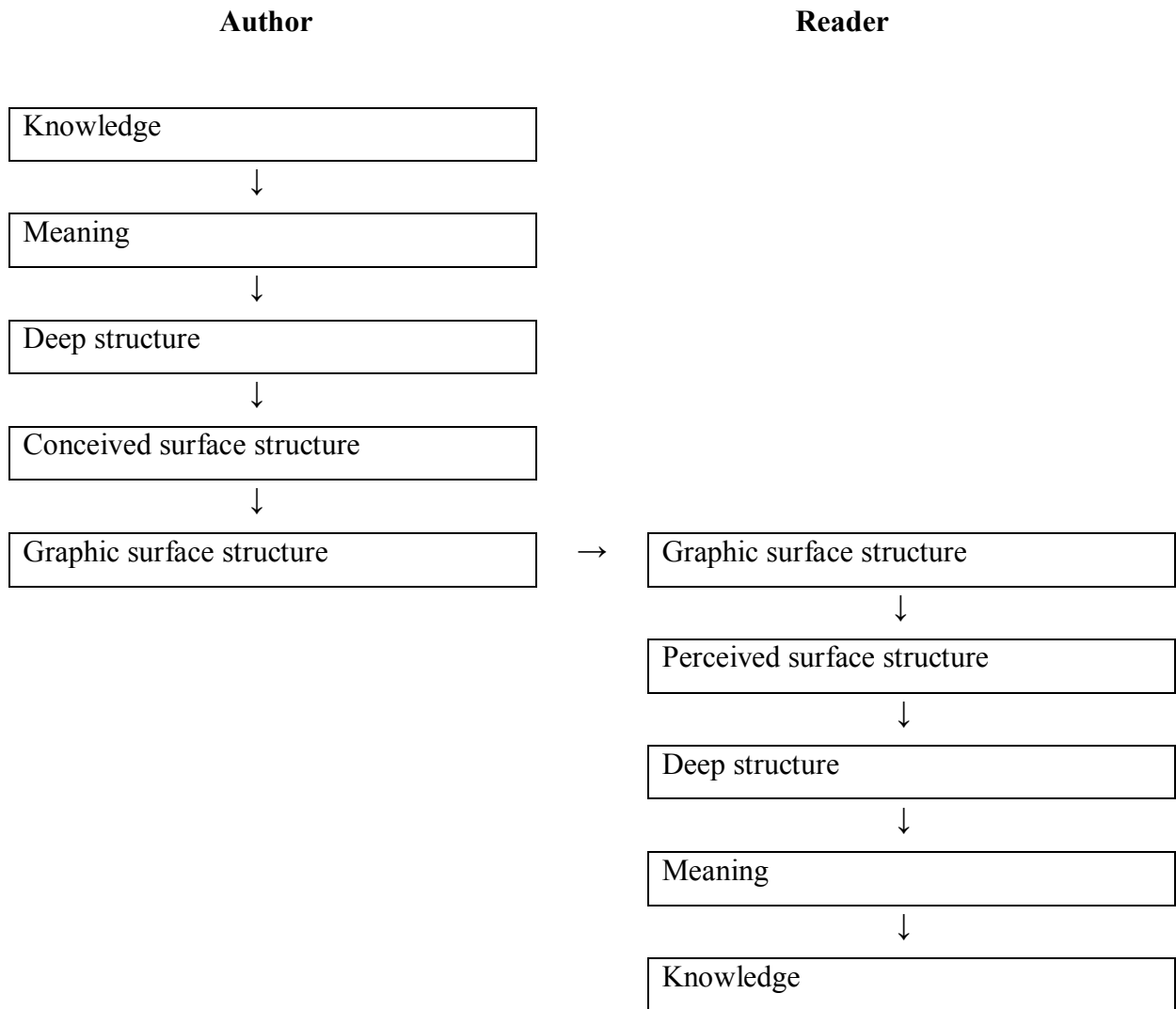
Accordingly, a learner may be able to understand a sentence, for example, without being able to produce one. Bialystock and Ryan (1985, pp. 224-225) made clear this notion pointing out:

The primary difference between the two activities [reading and writing] is that writing depends on more analyzed knowledge. The required degree of analyzed knowledge about the sound-spelling relationships is greater when expressively spelling words than when receptively recognizing them. Similarly, vague notions of discourse structure may be adequate to interpret written texts but are decidedly inadequate to produce it.

Indeed, in the early 1970s, a linear-stage model of reading (Gough, 1972) was paired with a linear-stage conception of composing (Rohman and Wlecke, 1964). Accordingly, it was assumed that a writer and a reader of a text rely on inverse cognitive processes (Beaugrande, 1979), viewing reading as a bottom-up phenomenon and writing as a top-down process.

The following diagram stands for Page’s (1974) view in this point:

Graph 2.1: Page's Concept of Reading and Writing (Page, 1974, p. 176)

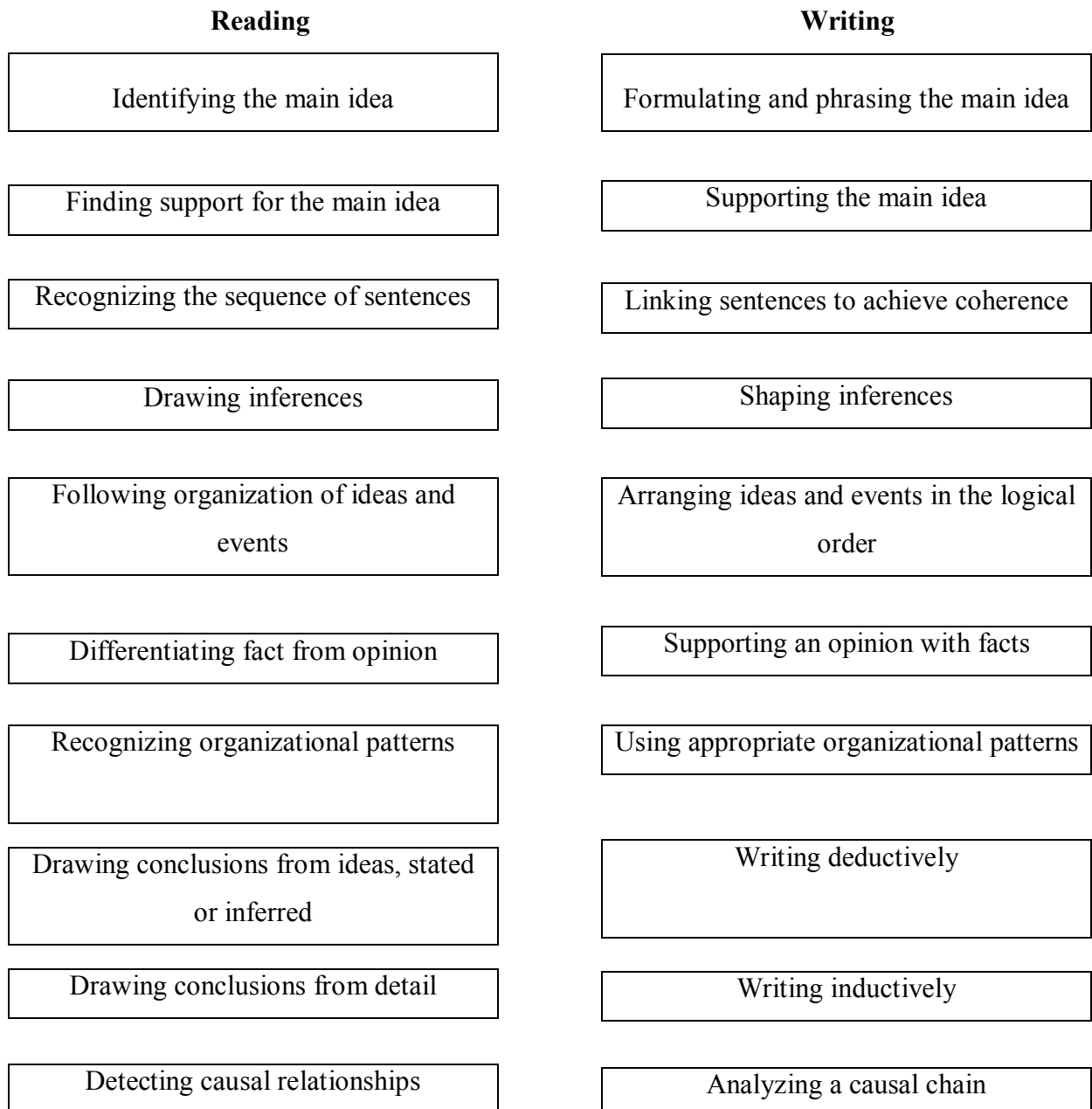


In summary, the writing process proceeds from knowledge to print, while the reading process goes from print to knowledge (comprehension). It was common practice then to teach reading separately from writing which resulted in isolated skill instruction. In other words, the processes of composing and comprehending were viewed as inverses of each other (page, 1974), and they were kept separate in both theory and practice.

However, with the advent of ‘cognitive mode of learning’ in the mid 1970s, reading was perceived as consisting of a complex set of coordinated mental processes, involving perceptual, linguistic, and conceptual operation; and the information the reader brings to the text and the information found in the text influence each other to produce comprehension.

This new conceptualization was later known as ‘schema theory’. Inspired by this schematic notion, research in a number of disciplines have contributed to view the sub-skills of both reading and writing as virtually the same (Simmons, 1977; Hill, 1979; Taylor, 1981). The diagram below stands for Taylor’s 1981 view in this concern.

Graph 2.2: Taylor’s Sub-Skills of Reading and Writing (Taylor, 1981, pp.30-31)



In the same vein, some educators described reading and writing as reciprocal acts of comprehending and composing (Petrosky, 1982; Moffet and Wagner, 1983), as similar patterns of thinking (Janopoulos, 1986), and as aspects of the same activity (Singh, 1989) in that they both require the active construction of meaning being dependent on prior knowledge structures or schemata (Squire, 1983; Tierney and Person, 1984). Moreover, Rosenblatt (1988) contended that writers compose a meaningful text, while readers compose an interpreted meaning. Indeed, enthusiasms during the period from the mid 1970s to the 1980s led some researchers to conduct correlational studies on reading and writing which gave birth to three somewhat interrelated hypotheses.

The first hypothesis is that the reading-writing connection is directional suggesting two lines of research direction: reading-to-writing model and writing-to-reading model. The first model assumes that reading affects writing but the writing knowledge is not particularly useful in improving reading (Stotsky, 1983; Taylor and Beach, 1984), while the second model claims that it is writing that influences reading (Belanger, 1987).

Due to further research on cognitive processes involved in reading and writing (Squire, 1983), the conceptualization of reading and writing processes and the relationship between the two have been further refined. Reading and writing have been perceived as stemming from a single underlying proficiency, the common link being the cognitive process of constructing meaning, suggesting that both reading and writing represent a process of interactive and dynamic activation and refinement of schemata.

This led to the second hypothesis which suggests that the reading-writing connection is non-directional. Thus, any cognitive proficiency underlying reading and writing is likely to improve reading and writing alike. Writing, therefore, became an adjunct for reading in instruction. The teaching of reading at that point in time involved the teaching of writing and vice versa, as argued by Goodman and Goodman (1983, p.592), “ people not only learn to read by reading and write by writing but they also learn to read by writing and write by reading.”

The second half of the 1980s and the early part of the 1990s was marked by the transactional conception of reading and writing resulting from Rosenblatt's (1988) transactional theory. Indeed, instead of using the term ‘interaction’ which means a relationship in which separate entities act on one another, Rosenblatt (1988, p.2) suggested the term ‘transaction’ to designate “relationships in which each element conditions and is conditioned by the other in a mutually-constituted situation”.

In the light of the translational theory, reading was perceived as a transaction involving a particular reader and a particular text, and occurring at a particular time in a particular context. This means that in comprehending the text the reader actively creates meaning, and in so doing he brings into the text his background knowledge about the topic, about sociolinguistic conventions, his intentions, expectations and purposes of reading, and his values and beliefs that he already has in mind (Musthafa, 1994).

Likewise, writing was also perceived as a transaction, as explained by Rosenblatt (1988, p.7):

Writing, we know, is always an event in time, occurring at a particular moment in the writer's biography, in particular circumstances, under particular pressures, external as well as internal. In short, the writer is always transacting with a personal, social, and cultural environment.

One major theoretical construct of this transactional conception of reading and writing is that, as a process, reading and writing mutually condition each other, and in transaction, each of the transacting elements conditions and is conditioned by the other. This third hypothesis about the reading-writing relationships was called 'the bidirectional hypothesis' (Shanahan, 1984), and was translated in practice through integrated language arts classes where reading and writing were learned and taught together. These three major hypotheses of reading-writing relationship will be discussed with much more details in section 2.8.

Tierney (1992), in his turn, tried to compare the main beliefs and pedagogical practices regarding reading and writing in the 1970s and 1990s. Though these perspectives and the changes they reflect centered on reading and writing within the L1 context, they played an important role in the development of ideas about L2 reading-writing connections.

Indeed, Tierney (1992) constructed two tables. In the first of these tables, he focused on changes in viewpoints about reading and writing relations as shown next:

1970s	1990s
Reading is receiving: writing is producing.	Reading and writing are composing, constructing, problem-solving activities.
Reading and writing are means of translating or transmitting ideas.	Reading and writing are vehicles for thinking.
Reading involves understanding the author's message; writing involves making your message clear for others.	Reading and writing involve interaction among participants as communicators, as well as the pursuit of self-discovery.
Reading and writing occur in a social context.	Reading and writing involve social processes.
Reading is a precursor to writing development.	Reading and writing development go hand in hand. Early writing is an avenue for reading development.
Writing development requires mastery of spelling conventions; reading development begins with mastery of skills and subskills.	Writing development involves invention as students pursue temporary spellings, negotiate conventions, etc. Reading development occurs naturally as students explore meaningful literacy experiences.

Table 2.1: Changing Viewpoints about Reading and Writing Relations (Tierney, 1992, p. 248)

Thus, by the 1990s, reading was no more considered as a passive activity, but rather an active one. Consequently, it was being seen as an equal partner with writing in the co-construction of meaning. Furthermore, the shift to a view of reading and writing working together in pursuit of other aims was also striking.

In his second table, however, Tierney (1992) showed how the above shifting viewpoints were reflected in significant changes in classroom practice:

1970s	1990s
Reading and writing are taught separately.	Reading and writing are taught together.
Reading and writing skills are listed separately.	Reading and writing programs are developed from a list of skills and behaviors that apply to both.
Writing is excluded from reading; reading is excluded from writing.	Writing and reading occur together in collaboration.
Single texts are used to read and write.	Multiple texts are used to write, synthesize, pursue projects, develop reports, or analyze.
Beginning reading involves reading readiness activities.	Beginning reading involves shared reading and opportunities to write.
Early writing involves dictated stories and activities focused on mastering conventions.	Early writing involves allowing students to approximate and pursue conventions based on emerging hypotheses about language and how it works.

Table 2.2: Changing in Reading and Writing Classroom Practices (Tierney, 1992, p.249)

Accordingly, the 1990s witnessed an emphasis on the idea that in teaching one skill (reading or writing), we are directly or indirectly teaching the other. Besides, it was noted that the focus on reading and writing was based on multiple source texts as opposed to a single text – a shift toward intertextuality and a resulting need to use reading to help writing, and vice versa.

2.7 Writing and Reading Processes: Similarities and Differences

Fitzgerald and Shanahan (2000) viewed reading and writing as constellations of cognitive processes that rely on analogous types of knowledge. In other words, like readers, writers set out to reach goals and create mental representations of meaning, and they reread and rethink to revise these presentations. Besides, like readers, writers call upon various types of knowledge to compose meaning.

2.7.1 Shared Knowledge between Reading and Writing

There are many types of knowledge that are commonly believed to be shared by reading and writing (Olson, 2011). Research in this area suggested that readers and writers share four essential types of knowledge, namely; metaknowledge, knowledge about universal text features, procedural knowledge and skill to negotiate reading and writing, and finally, domain knowledge (Fitzgerald and Shanahan, 2000; Miller, McCardle, and Long, 2014).

2.7.1.1 Metaknowledge

Metacognition refers to several subcategories of knowledge including knowledge about the functions and purposes of reading and writing, being aware of the interactions between readers and writers, metacognitive skills during reading and writing (monitoring one's own meaning-making, monitoring word identification or production strategies, and monitoring one's own knowledge), and motivational factors related to success in reading and writing (Fitzgerald and Shanahan, 2000). Moreover, research has shown that metaknowledge entails the knowledge of the pragmatics as well (Langer, 1986). Pragmatic competence involves the ability to comprehend and produce a communicative act, and it often includes one's social knowledge, cultural knowledge, and explicit and implicit knowledge.

2.7.1.2 Knowledge about Universal Text Features

Knowledge about universal text features is another area of shared knowledge between reading and writing. This type of knowledge also covers many subcategories of knowledge including graphophonics, syntax, and text format. Graphophonics involves phonological awareness, grapheme awareness and morphology, while syntax includes the understanding of the grammatical rules for constructing sentences (Kellog, 1994). Text format includes the understanding of the relations between pictures and print, the structural organization of a text such as cohesion and coherence devices, and so forth.

2.7.1.3 Procedural knowledge

Procedural knowledge refers to “knowing how to access, use and generate knowledge in any of the areas previously mentioned, as well as the ability to instantiate smooth integration of various processes.” (Fitzgerald and Shanahan, 2000, p.40). Automatic processes such as recalling relevant information from memory, or more intentional strategies such as questioning, predicting and summarizing are relatively included in this area (Kellogg, 1994). In other words, procedural knowledge involves the knowledge and skills needed to negotiate reading and writing (Langer, 1986).

2.7.1.4 Domain Knowledge

Domain knowledge (also referred to as world knowledge or prior knowledge) was identified as another shared area between reading and writing, and it refers to the background knowledge that a reader or a writer brings to the experience of meaning-making, or the new knowledge that is gained through a reading or writing experience. According to Spivey (1997), such a type of knowledge plays an important role in reading and understanding at the word, sentence, and text level as well as underlying the ability to organize, infer and remember information. Besides, Flower and Hyes (1984) asserted that domain knowledge is important to writers too.

2.7.2 Cognitive Strategies that Underlie Reading and Writing Processes

Research asserted that reading and writing are both meaning-making activities (Anderson, Spiro and Montague, 1997; Gregg and Steinberg, 1980). When one reads and writes, the mind anticipates, looks back, and forms momentary impressions that change and grow as meaning is continually in a state of becoming.

La Berge and Samuels (1974, p.292) noted that reading is “one of the most complex skills in the repertoire of the average adult”; besides, Flower and Hayes (1981, p.39) classified writing as “among the most complex of all human mental activities”. Hoyt, Mooney, and Parkes (2003) went on to describe reading as writing in the head, and to characterize writing as reading through the pen. Accordingly, both reading and writing are complex acts of critical thinking, and “underlying these mental activities are powerful cognitive strategies that are fundamental to the construction of meaning. This is the core of the reading/writing connection” (Olson, 2011, p.9). In other words, an analysis of the cognitive processes involved in reading and writing is essential for understanding how reading and writing are related.

Many models have been proposed to capture the similarities between the skills of reading and writing. And although they used different terminology, they listed common cognitive strategies readers and writers rely on to construct and refine meaning, namely, planning and goal-setting, tapping prior knowledge, asking questions and making predictions, constructing the gist, monitoring, revising meaning (reconstructing the draft), reflecting and relating, and evaluating (Olson, 2011). From this perspective, both reading and writing are conceptualized as composing activities.

2.7.2.1 Planning and Goal-Setting

Tierney (1985, p.115) suggested that purpose plays an important in the composing process asserting that “both reading and writing are tools in accordance with purposes they serve; they can not be extracted from context”. In other words, both reading and writing require the learner to identify a goal and specify steps toward achieving it (Aulls, 1986). Readers and writers set goals for their readings and writings relying on two types of plans – procedural plans and substantive plans (Flower and Hayes, 1981; Tierney and Pearson, 1983). The procedural plans – also called the “how-to” plans – offer a continuing structure for the composing process. These refer to how a reader or a writer initially approaches the act of composing; for instance, plans for generating ideas through brainstorming and outlining. Substantive plans, on the other hand, are content-based plans focusing more directly on the specific topic at hand. Through planning and goal-setting, reading and writing become purposeful, and this allows readers and writers to determine priorities. Yet, it is worth noting that as a reader reads (just as when a writer writes), plans and goals may be elaborated, revised or changed (Flower and Hayes, 1981).

2.7.2.2 Tapping Prior Knowledge

The goals that readers and writers set have a symbiotic relationship with the knowledge they mobilize, and together they influence what is produced or understood in a text (Anderson, Pichert, and shirey, 1979; Tierney and Mosenthal, 1981). The construction of meaning in both reading and writing does not happen at random. Meaning is created as readers use their background knowledge together with the author’s cues, and in the same way, writers tap prior knowledge to generate ideas in order to produce a meaningful text.

In other words, readers and writers draw on long-term memory to access a vast storehouse of background information (i.e., they search their existing schemata) to make sense of information from or for a text. Schemata can be considered as mental file cabinets (Tompkins, 2006), “one might have a personal experience file cabinet, a cultural expectations

file cabinet, a knowledge of topic file cabinet, a knowledge of genre file cabinet, and so forth.” (Olson, 2011, p.11). All these file cabinets are usually resources for readers and writers as they read and write, yet such knowledge can be a limiting factor when there is little information to mobilize (Flower and Hayes, 1980).

2.7.2.3 Asking Questions and Making Predictions

As readers read or writers write, their brains go through what Langer (1989) called envisionment building. In other words, they are moving through a variety of stances that allow them to gather information, make personal connections, reflect upon their own lives, and so forth. As they immerse themselves in the text, readers and writers start to tap prior knowledge, and they will naturally begin to ask questions. Asking questions about the topic, genre, author or audience, purpose, and so forth will help them find a focus and therefore, direct their attention while composing. Similarly, making predictions about what will happen next “foster their forward momentum and become a focal point for confirming or revising meaning.” (Olson, 2011, p.11).

2.7.2.4 Constructing the Gist

Olson (2011, p.11) defined the envisionment mentioned above as “the text you are creating in your mind as you read or write”. Such an initial envisionment constructed by readers and writers is, in essence, a first draft or the gist of the text. An early stage in creating a “personal text-world” (Langer, 1989, p.2) is to visualize it. In other words, engaged readers see what they are reading, and good writers draw what they want to write.

Visualization is often referred to as mental imagery, mental pictures, or simply making pictures in your head. Psychological research suggested that our brain stores information in long-term memory in two ways: the linguistic mode and the image mode (Paivio, 1971, 1986). The linguistic form can be thought of as words and statements, whereas the image mode can be thought of as mental pictures (including visions, sounds, smells, taste, and touch). Indeed, creating mental images of the text enhances reasoning and thinking.

Besides, readers and writers personalize what they are reading and writing about by drawing on their own real-world experiences to make meaning and enrich what they are constructing. Moreover, “as the reader and or writer constructs the gist of this first draft, he or she will also identify main ideas and organize information, sequencing and prioritizing the events or ideas into main and supporting details ; into beginning, middle, and end; from most to least important; or in some other structural format” (Olson, 2011, p.12). The ability to

summarize key information is also a key in making readers remember what they read, and convey it to others in writing.

Furthermore, as readers and writers make the transition from being outside a text to stepping into a text, they “push their envisionments along” (Scholes, 1985, p.10). They form preliminary interpretations to formulate meaning. According to Tierney and Pearson (1983, p.572), adopting an alignment (the reader’s/writer’s stance toward the author or audience, and the extent to which they immerse themselves in a range of roles during the construction of meaning) “can have an overriding influence on the composer’s ability to achieve coherence”. Tierney and Pearson (1983, p.572) further explained this notion saying:

A writer’s stance toward her readers might be intimate, challenging or quite neutral. And, within the context of these collaborations she might share what she wants to say through characters or as an observer of events. Likewise, a reader can adopt a stance toward the writer which is sympathetic, critical or passive. And, within the context of these collaborations, he can immerse himself in the text as an eyewitness, participant or character.

Monitoring, another cognitive strategy that readers and writers rely on to construct meaning, will be described next.

2.7.2.5 Monitoring

As readers and writers strive to construct meaning, they not only select and implement cognitive strategies but also direct their cognitive process by monitoring and regulating the use of these strategies. Monitoring which is a metacognitive process involves checking, verifying or correcting one’s comprehension or performance in the course of the composing task (Tierney and Person, 1983).

In fact, “the monitor may send the reader or writer signal confirming that he or she is on the right track and should proceed full steam ahead, or may raise a red flag when understanding or communication has broken down and the composer needs to apply fix-up strategies and clarify meaning. Experienced readers and writers are keenly attuned to their monitors” (Olson, 2011, pp.12-13). However, it seems that younger and less experienced readers and writers often have difficulty in operationalizing their monitors. They lack awareness of how to monitor their cognitive activities; and/or they may fail to react or take action when the monitor does tell them they need to revise (Paris, Wasik, and Turner, 1991).

Monitoring is a critical step in self-regulation (Block and Pressley, 2002). Thus, the greater readers and writers are aware of their thinking as they read and write, and use that thinking to regulate what they are doing, the better they are able to create meaning.

2.7.2.6 Revising Meaning: Reconstructing the Draft

When a breakdown in the construction of meaning happens, readers and writers often activate their monitors. They accordingly clarify misunderstandings by stopping and backtracking, “to return to reread bits of text in order to revise meaning and reconstruct the draft” (Olson, 2011, p.13). Experienced readers and writers do that recursively to seek validation for their interpretations (Paris, Wasik, and Tuner, 1991).

2.7.2.7 Reflecting and Relating

In the latter stages of the meaning-making process, the reader/writer who has immersed in the text world steps back to think carefully not just about “What does the text mean?” but, “What does it mean to me?”. While constructing the gist, readers and writers make connections by bringing their own personal experiences and background knowledge to the text at hand to enrich their understanding of it and create their own personal meaning. Accordingly, they “use their envisionments to reflect on and sometimes enrich their real world” (Langer, 1989, p.14).

2.7.2.8 Evaluating

Evaluating was defined by Langer (1989, p.14) as “stepping out and objectifying the experience” of reading and writing. In other words, in this stance, readers and writers distance themselves from their envisionments, review the mental or written text they have developed, and evaluate the quality of their experience with the text and the meaning they have created (Olson, 2011).

2.7.3 Differences between Reading and Writing

Even though they are so closely related, reading and writing do not overlap each other and they are “at least as different as they are similar” (Shanahan, 1988, p. 637). If it is not the case, why don’t students receive instruction only in one or the other skill? If reading and writing are identical, why is it possible to encounter good readers who are poor writers and good writers who are poor readers?

Researchers have pointed to specific differences between reading and writing. Although Emig (1983, p.124) defined writing and reading both as acts of creation, she distinguished between the two by noting that “writing is originating” while reading is not. Besides, Langer (1984) hold that the processes involved in reading and writing are different in that students are slightly more concerned with bottom-up matters such as syntax, text and lexical choices when writing than when reading, and students are more conscious of the

strategies they use to reach meaning when writing than when reading. In another study, Langer (1986) found that while reading and writing are cognitively related efforts with regard to meaning making, they are markedly different with regard to activity, strategy and purpose. The study showed that Readers and writers prioritize and use the knowledge and skills involved in reading and writing differently. Indeed, it was found that writers focused on grammar and goal setting, whereas readers were more concerned with content and validation.

More than that, Tierney and Leys (1986) claimed that the relationship between reading and writing is not a given. The data collected from their research revealed that good readers were not necessarily good writers and vice versa. In their turn, Fitzgerald and Shanahan (2000) identified choice as the essential difference between reading and writing. In other words, writers choose from an unlimited number of words while writing, whereas readers are constrained by the author's words.

The above studies and others demonstrated that just because reading and writing are similar, they are not necessarily the same thing.

2.8 The Reading-Writing Relationship in L1 Research

The L1 reading-writing relationship has been explored by a number of seminal studies in the two past decades and has been characterized by a complex set of approaches and conceptualizations. Broadly speaking, researchers suggested three major interrelated hypotheses in favour of the reading-writing link in L1 contexts: the directional hypothesis, the non-directional hypothesis, and the bidirectional hypothesis (Carson 1990, Grabe 2003, Ferris and Hedgcock 2004).

2.8.1 *The Directional Hypothesis*

The directional perspective, also known as the input-based view, presupposes that the connection between reading and writing is directional. That is, "reading and writing share structural components such that the structure of whatever is acquired in one modality can then be applied in the other." (Carson, 1990, p.89). For example, when a learner reads a passage in his first language and recognizes a rhetorical pattern such as argumentation or narration in that text, he will be able to use this knowledge and reproduce that pattern in his writing.

Accordingly, knowledge from one of these skills can be transferred to and thus inform the other. Yet, the key feature of this model is that the transfer of structural information only proceeds in one direction, that is, either from reading to writing or from writing to reading. That is, reading provides input for writing or writing provides input for reading. And this theoretical construct suggests two lines of research direction: reading-to-writing model and

writing-to-reading model. However, a great number of studies indicated that reading has a more positive impact on writing than vice-versa.

Stotsky (1983) provided the first major review of reading-writing scholarship. By the early 1980's, then, a clear picture of reading-writing connections had not yet emerged. In her review, Stotsky focused on three themes of research: (1) Correlational studies, (2) Studies examining the influence of writing on reading, and (3) Studies examining the influence of reading on writing.

The first area of investigation looked at possible relationships between reading ability or achievement and writing ability. Indeed, Stotsky's (1983) survey of L1 correlational studies investigating reading-writing relationships from the beginning of 1930's to 1981 suggested that:

1. There are correlations between reading achievement and writing ability. Good writers tend to be good readers.
2. There are correlations between writing quality and reading experience as reported through questionnaires. Skilled writers read frequently and extensively than poor writers.
3. There seem to be correlations between reading ability and measures of syntactic complexity in writing. Effective readers tend to produce more sophisticated (syntactically mature) texts than do weaker readers.

And with regard to the two other areas of her review, the influence of each of the two skills on the other, Stotsky (1983) reported mixed results. The use of additional reading was more effective in improving writing than either grammar exercises or extra writing practice. Yet, based on her synthesis of the studies, she reviewed that using direct reading instruction to improve writing (in general and not in paraphrasing what is read) was not found to be effective. Therefore, Stotsky (1983, p.636) contended that "reading instruction is...probably best undertaken for the purpose for which it was designed." Moreover, Stotsky (1983) found a number of studies suggesting that writing activities such as summarizing, paraphrasing, and outlining can be useful for improving reading comprehension and retention of information.

The reading-to-writing directional model claims that "reading influences writing, but that writing knowledge is not particularly useful in reading." (Carson, 1990, p.89). In support of this claim was a study by Eckhoff (1983) which examined the influence that instructional reading material had on the writing development of primary schoolchildren – second grade

learners. The study found that children's writing reflected features (i.e., the style and structure) of the materials (i.e., basal readers) read in the classroom.

Further support for the reading-to-writing direction was gained from Taylor and Beach (1984) who looked at the effects of instruction in using text structure to recall expository text and instruction that emphasized writing that type of texts. The two researchers contended that seventh grade learners improved not only their recall of content but also their expository writing quality after seven weeks of reading instruction in informational text structure accompanied by opportunities to write hierarchical summaries of the materials being read. Accordingly, and contrary to what Stotsky (1983) found in his review, Taylor and Beach's (1984) study indicated that "instruction in writing influenced neither writing nor reading, but that instruction in reading influenced both." (Carson, 1990, p.89).

Furthermore, Smith (1983) claimed that a person can become a good writer only if he reads like a writer. He argued that "writing requires an enormous fund of specialized knowledge which cannot be acquired from lectures, textbooks, drill, trial and error, or even from the exercise of writing itself." (Smith, 1983, p.558). In other words, only through reading can a writer learn all the intangibles he should know. The knowledge of writing can only be acquired from a particular kind of writing, e.g., if one wants to write for a newspaper, he should read the newspaper as a 'writer' for that specific purpose.

The second basic direction, the writing-to-reading directional model, however, acknowledges the important influence of L1 writing on L1 reading. For example, Taylor and Berkowitz (1980) found that grade six students who wrote a one-sentence summary after reading a passage from a social studies textbook did better on measures of comprehension and memory than students who answered questions after reading the passage, or students who simply read the passage.

Glover et al. (1981) also found that college level students instructed to paraphrase or write "logical extensions" of an essay they were asked to read re-called significantly more ideas from the essay than students instructed to write only key words or nothing at all while reading the essay. Besides, Belanger (1987) showed that direct instruction in sentence, paragraph, and discourse structure for writing results in significant improvement in reading.

It is important to recognize, then, that most of the research that supported the directional hypothesis focused on transfer resulted from instruction (Belanger, 1987). Therefore, transfer of structural components from one domain to the other is not necessarily automatic. Although the directional model has its strong advocates, research offered an

alternative means of describing how reading and writing may be related in L1 namely the non-directional hypothesis.

2.8.2 The Non-Directional Hypothesis

This hypothesis can be viewed as an interactive model, where “reading and writing are said to derive from a single underlying proficiency, the common link being that of the cognitive process of constructing meaning.” (Carson, 1990, p.90). The model was supported by Squire (1983) who described reading and writing (comprehending and composing) as two sides of the same basic process of meaning construction. The educator pointed out that writing actively engages the writer “in constructing meaning, in developing ideas, in relating ideas, in expressing ideas” (Squire, 1983, p.582), while reading requires the reader to “reconstruct the structure and meaning of ideas expressed by another writer.” (Squire, 1983, p.582). Thus, reading and writing are processes that supplement each other. Squire (1983) illustrated the processes involved in reading and writing in the following table:

Before writing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Securing ideas - Organizing ideas - Determining point of view - Considering audience
Before reading	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Preparing to comprehend - Relating to prior knowledge - Establishing purpose
During reading and writing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Composing or comprehending - Actively engaged emotionally and intellectually
After writing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Evaluating - Editing and revising - Applying outside standards of correctness
After reading	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Evaluating - Studying parts in relation to whole - Analyzing how effects are achieved - Applying independent judgments (preferences, ethics, aesthetics).

Table 2.3: Reading and Writing Processes (Squire, 1983, p.28)

The non-directional model considers reading and writing as mutually reinforcing interactive processes. They interact with each other and their skills can be transferred to each other. Therefore, unlike the directional model, transfer can occur in either direction (i.e. from

reading to writing or from writing to reading). Accordingly, training in one skill will necessarily result in the refinement of the other for the reason that they work with the same resources.

Tierney and Shahanan's (1991) comprehensive review of reading-writing literature reflected significant changes in the directions that reading-writing connections research and pedagogy had taken. As the two researchers (1991, p.274) explained in comparing earlier research (1970s) with more recent research (1980s): "In terms of methodology, research on reading and writing has moved beyond comparing global measures of reading with global measures of writing to consider their underlying constructs and the ongoing thinking that readers and writers pursue". This is seen through their focus on the "interactions" and "transactions" between reading and writing. In fact, the primary areas of discussion in their review: (1) what do reading and writing share? (2) How do readers and writers transact with one another? (3) What do readers and writers learn when reading and writing are connected? (Hirvela, 2004).

The first area of concentration focused on the nature of and extent to which reading and writing involve similar, shared, and overlapping linguistic, cognitive, or social resources. The second area considers how readers and writers transact with one another while negotiating the making of meaning. The third topic, however, explored the thinking and learning that occur as learners shift back and forth from reading to writing according to goals they pursue in different subject areas (Tierney and Shahanan, 1991).

Indeed, Tierney and Shahanan (1991, p.275) came to the following conclusion: "We believe strongly that reading and writing, to be understood and appreciated fully, should be viewed together, and used together."

One worthy point to consider drawn upon the two hypotheses (the directional and the non-directional) presented above according to Carson (1990, pp. 91-92) is that:

In a directional model, what is transferred from reading to writing or from writing to reading is understood to be a separate system or knowledge base that is acquired in one domain (reading, for example) and then is transferred to the other (in this case, writing). In a non-directional model, what is transferred from reading to writing and from writing to reading is understood to be a single underlying system or shared knowledge base that is acquired in either domain (reading or writing) and then is transferred to the other (writing or reading).

Another model which offers an important perspective on the reading-writing connection in the first language is the bidirectional hypothesis.

2.8.3 *The Bidirectional Hypothesis*

The bidirectional hypothesis is the most complex of the three. It claims that reading and writing are interactive as well as interdependent. The main contentions of the bidirectional hypothesis are that there exist multiple relations between the two processes and that the nature of the relationship changes depending on one's proficiency in reading or writing. In other words, the reading-writing relationship is developmental and “what is learned at one stage of development can be qualitatively different from what is learned at another stage of development.” (Shanahan, 1984, p.467).

Goodman and Goodman (1983) outlined some characterizations, showing that the interrelationships of reading and writing can be much more complicated than being regarded as directional or non-directional:

1. Most people need to read a lot more often in their daily lives than they need to write. That simply means they get a lot less practice in writing than reading.
2. Readers certainly must build a sense of the forms, conventions, styles, and cultural constraints of written texts as they become more proficient and flexible readers. But there is no assurance that this will carry over into writing unless they are motivated to produce themselves, as writers, similar types of texts.
3. Readers have some way of judging their effectiveness immediately. They know whether they are making sense of what they are reading. Writers must depend on feedback and response from potential readers which is often quite delayed. They may of course be their own readers, in fact it's impossible to write without reading.

So it is important to accept the existence of multiple relations between reading and writing, as well as the possibility that ontogenetic changes occur.

Taking together, the three theoretical models of the reading-writing relationship outlined earlier can be used as guidelines for striking an appropriate balance between providing input (the directional hypothesis), promoting the construction of meaning (the non-directional hypothesis), and tapping into learners' evolving and interdependent reading and writing proficiencies (the bidirectional model). In other words, teachers can adopt an eclectic approach that includes a variety of activities designed to take advantage of the structural and cognitive similarities in reading and writing. Besides, they can adjust the weight given to reading tasks and writing practice according to the needs and expectations of their learners (Shahanan, 1984; Shahanan and Lomax, 1986).

2.9 The Reading-Writing Relationship in L2 Research

The models of reading-writing connections discussed above have been centered on reading and writing within the L1 context. We will now look briefly at the major themes and constructions that have guided L2 reading-writing connections research and instruction. Here we need to note from the beginning that L2 reading-writing scholars have been influenced heavily by the L1 perspectives we have just looked at. Indeed, these perspectives have served as the foundation from which much of the L2 research has been conducted.

However, Carson (1993, p.86) claimed that although there is undeniably great value to L2 from studies of L1, “we should be cautious about applying L1 findings to L2 situations.” And in accordance with the fact that L2 readers and writers are subject to some different influences than those influencing L1 readers and writers, differences in reading-writing relationships in L2 are to be expected. Therefore, L2 reading-writing scholarship has branched off in a number of new and intriguing directions.

Indeed, for second and foreign language learners the interaction between reading and writing may not be so straightforward, and other factors, like proficiency in the target language and L1 literacy skills may also play a relevant role.

L2 research on reading-writing connections can be traced back to the 1980s. Two early topics of research involved the Interdependence Hypothesis and the Language Threshold Hypothesis (Cummins, 1979; Durgunoglu and Verhoeven, 1998; Connor, 1996). The former approach suggests that literacy transfers from the L1 to the L2, while the latter hypothesis argues against supportive transfer until a certain variable level of L2 proficiency is attained. Two further topics of research have also been identified; one being the argument that extensive reading directly improves writing abilities (Krashen, 1984, 1993), and the second to be the role of directionality between reading and writing (Is it better to go from reading to writing or from writing to reading for the most effective teaching?).

2.9.1 *The Interdependence Hypothesis*

The *interdependence hypothesis* was first proposed by Cummins (1979, p.233) to indicate that “the level of L2 competence which a bilingual child attains is partially a function of the type of competence the child has developed in L1 at the time when intensive exposure to L2 begins”. Accordingly, there is a positive and significant relationship between learners’ first language development and their second language development.

This also applies to L2 literacy development. Indeed, the *interdependence hypothesis* implies that when children develop literacy skills in Irish, English or another language, they

are not just learning how to read and write in a particular language. They are also developing a common underlying proficiency that enables the transfer of literacy skills and learning strategies to other languages. Consequently, developing literacy skills in a second or subsequent language will be affected by the literacy skills developed in a first language. In other words, “there is an underlying cognitive/academic proficiency that is common across languages which allows the transfer of literacy-related skills across languages” (Carson, 1990, p.95).

This conclusion, however, is not restricted to children learners. Indeed, Murray and Christison (2011, p.126) pointed out that “for postsecondary learners who are already literate and have acquired academic language proficiency in their native languages, the acquisition of literacy in English will be affected by L1 academic literacy”. Some empirical studies have supported Cummins’ claim. For instance, Mace-Matluck et al. (1983) studied English literacy among students of Cantonese language background, and found a significant correlation between the literacy level achieved in English and training in Cantonese literacy prior to English instruction. Besides, Goldman, Reyes, and Varnhagen (1984) found that higher order skills involved in comprehending stories in L1 appeared to transfer to comprehension of stories in students’ L2.

Moreover, it must be noted that even though most of the studies supporting Cummins’s claim have been with the development of L2 reading skills (Grabe, 2003), the generalization, based on Cummins’s claim, has been that the same pattern would be seen with L2 writing skills. For example, Edelsky’s (1982) qualitative study of elementary school Spanish-English bilingual children’s writing offered strong evidence of transfer across languages. Similarly, Canale, Frenette, and Belanger (1988) found a significant relationship between the L1 and L2 writing of French- English bilingual high school students.

Yet, it appears that transfer of literacy skills from L1 to L2 is not the only major influence on L2 literacy development and that L2 proficiency has been proved a crucial factor.

2.9.2 The Language Threshold Hypothesis

According to the *language threshold hypothesis*, learners must develop a reasonable L2 language proficiency before they will transfer L1 literacy skills to L2 (Grabe, 2003). This was confirmed by a number of studies. Clarke (1978) suggested that some threshold level of language proficiency is necessary for good L1 readers to maintain their good reading skills in the L2. Cziko (1978) also found that only those most proficient in the L2 could take

advantage of semantic cues when reading meaningful L2 texts, thus providing additional evidence that a language competence threshold is needed before transfer of skills can occur. Alderson's (1984) review of the relationship between L1 and L2 reading ability noted considerable support for the view that a language competence threshold is a prerequisite for the transfer of L1 reading skills.

Moreover, the language threshold hypothesis has been persuasively supported by amassed research evidence in the 1990's. Indeed, a wide range of studies has converged across different student populations, tasks, texts, and general proficiency levels to show that L2 proficiency is a far more powerful predictor of student reading performance up to a level of reasonable L2 proficiency (Carrell, 1991; Bernhardt and Kamil, 1995). And more specifically, it has been proved that "the relationship between L2 proficiency and L2 reading abilities is about twice as strong as the relationship between L1 reading abilities and L2 reading abilities." (Grabe, 2003, p.248). Yet, it is important to note that no one knows exactly what that *threshold level* of L2 may be as "L2 researchers do not assume that there are specific structures or vocabulary that represent a fixed threshold for all settings and learners." (Grabe, 2003, p.248).

As for L2 writing, Johns and Mayes (1990) investigated the summarization behaviors of forty students, each of low and high proficiency university-level ESL students. They found that more proficient learners produce higher quality summaries than do learners with lower L2 language proficiency levels. Less proficient L2 learners, however, do more copying and less combining of ideas.

Besides, Sasaki and Hirose (1996) conducted a study to examine factors that might influence Japanese university students' expository writing in English. Seventy students of low- to high- intermediate English proficiency participated in the study to identify possible explanatory variables for L2 writing through the aspects of their L2 proficiency, L1 writing ability, writing strategies in L1 and L2, and metaknowledge of L2 expository writing. Quantitative analysis of the results revealed that (a) students' L2 proficiency, L1 writing ability, and metaknowledge were all significant in explaining the L2 writing ability variance; and (b) among these 3 independent variables, L2 proficiency explained the largest portion (52%) of the L2 writing ability variance, L1 writing ability the second largest (18%), and metaknowledge the smallest (11%).

L2 language proficiency is, thus, a crucial element of L2 literacy abilities. Moreover, this language proficiency factor is central to L2 reading-writing relations (Grabe, 2003).

2.9.3 The Extensive Reading Hypothesis

Extensive reading is generally defined as the practice of improving reading and other language skills through extensive exposure to comprehensive texts. One of the benefits of extensive reading, implementing other skills, occurs when reading and writing interact with each other. Indeed, the *extensive reading hypothesis* assumes that extensive reading can improve writing skills (Grabe, 2003). A large number of studies have indicated that Extensive reading correlates highly with improved writing performance in L1 (Belanger, 1987; Stotsky, 1983) and in L2 (Krashen, 1984, 1993).

Regarding L2 reading and writing relations, Flower and Hayes (1980) theorized that “extensive reading affects a person’s ability to write: a well-read person simply has a much larger and richer set of images of what a text can look like”. In the same line of thought, Krashen (1984) contended that L2 learners’ writing competence derives from large amounts of self-motivated reading for interest and/or pleasure remains largely untested and unsubstantiated. Besides, Reid (1993, p.43) claimed that “good writers are often good readers”. And if acquiring effective writing skills requires acquiring a high level of reading proficiency; then how do learners become good readers?

According to Grabe and Stoller (2001, p.198), “one does not become a good reader unless one reads a lot”. Thus, we can reasonably presume a sequential relationship in which extensive reading practice develops effective reading skills and effective reading skills eventually lead to the growth of proficient writing skills (Ferris and Hedgcock, 2004).

Overall, the positive impact of extensive reading on L2 literacy development is as strong as that made by the language threshold hypothesis.

2.9.4 The Directionality Issue

L2 research does not usually address the relationship between reading and writing in the ways L1 does (with the exception of the effect of exposure to print on writing) (Grabe, 2003). Yet, L2 reading-writing relationship can be seen in terms of directionality: reading improves writing or writing improves reading (the directional hypothesis); there is no direct relationship between reading and writing (the non-directional hypothesis); or reading and writing improve each other (the bidirectional hypothesis).

Indeed, while no complete model of the L2 reading-writing connections can be cited, “we can draw from ideas and findings presented in the L1 literature” and “from sources of input” discussed in L2 research (Hirvela, 2004, p.37). To date, L2 research seems to have reached a consensus on this issue supporting the notion of directionality (Asencion, 2008;

Plakans, 2008; Yoshimura, 2009); and mainly the reading-to-writing directional model which suggests that reading can positively impact written performance.

In fact, Tsang (1996) conducted a study of 144 secondary-level students across four grade levels, utilizing the directional model. The participants were divided into three groups and each received 24 weeks of instruction: group one regular writing instruction, group two regular writing instruction with additional writing activities, group three regular writing instruction with extensive reading practices. Tsang's (1996) post treatment findings showed that students who received additional extensive reading instruction wrote significantly better and better understood the content information they read.

2.9.5 Additional Perspectives

As mentioned before, the 1980s witnessed a quite large amount of interest in the reading-writing connections field among L2 teachers and researchers. However, according to Hirvela (2004), it was not until 1993, with the publication of John Carson and Ilona Leki's landmark book 'Reading in the Composition Classroom: Second Language Perspectives', that L2 reading-writing connections work was brought into a larger or more meaningful perspective. The book is a collection of 18 papers and provided a comprehensive view of approaches being taken to explore L2 reading-writing connections.

Indeed, Carson and Leki (1993) structured their book focusing on two major themes:

- Cognitive perspectives
- Social perspectives

Accordingly, they made it clear that L2 teachers and researchers need an understanding of both the reading-writing processes at work inside students as they compose (the cognitive dimension) and the external / outside factors that must be accounted for in the development of L2 reading and writing abilities, such as the literacy-based demands of various academic discourse communities (social dimension). While contending in their introduction that "reading and writing abilities are inextricably linked" (Carson and Leki, 1993:1), they gave this description of changes taking place in the L2 writing field which motivated the approach taken in their collection:

[From the early 1980s to the early 1990s] ESL writing classrooms have changed dramatically, focusing on writing as a communicative act and emphasizing students' writing processes and communicative intentions. Along with this change has come recognition of the extent to which reading can be, and in academic settings nearly always is, the basis for writing. Recent research has also called into question the traditional narrow view of the function of reading in the teaching of writing.

Carson and Leki's (1993) work was a critical move at a time when L2 writing teachers tended to assume that reading should be taught in isolation from writing and by reading teachers, not writing instructors. Moreover, when they referred to 'communicative act' and 'communicative intentions' in their above brief commentary, we gain a sense of why they chose to look at both the social and cognitive demands of L2 composing; that is, "in line with the general trend in L2 language teaching to focus on the communicative purposes guiding students' language choices and expression and thus on the outer circumstances, such as audience, influencing communication, they acknowledged the need to look both inside and outside the L2 reader-writer." (Hirvela, 2004, pp. 21-22)

Several years after, Ferris and Hedgcock (1998) revealed the range of themes and interests dominating L2 reading-writing instruction. They reviewed relevant literature in the following areas:

- Text as the source of literature knowledge
- Reading patterns in L1 and L2 literacy development
- Reading ability, writing proficiency, and interlingual transfer
- Social aspects of reading and writing in academic discourse communities
- English for academic purposes
- Reading and genre in academic writing

Through the first theme explored by them, they pointed out the importance of exposure to L2, through reading texts in the target language, for L2 learners so as to build a knowledge base of the rhetorical and linguistic properties and operations of the L2. In the second theme, they asserted that reading is a must for the acquisition of L1 literacy, yet its importance is much more enhanced in the L2 context since learners may lack the other kinds of language input readily available to native speakers of a language, as illustrated by Hirvela (2004, p.22): "Students in EFL contexts, for example, may have to rely heavily, if not exclusively, on what reading target language texts reveals to them about the L2, since opportunities for meaningful exposure to oral discourse may be limited or nonexistent."

The third theme they explored, which included a focus on interlingual transfer, showed that L1 reading and writing skills can play an important role in the acquisition of L2 literary skills (Cummins, 1979; Hall, 1990; Parry, 1996). Thus, helping learners use their L1 literacy skills effectively while reading and writing in the L2 is a key element in linking L2 reading and writing constructively. The Fourth theme explored in Ferris and Hedgcock (1998) focused

on academic discourse communities. Indeed, the authors looked at how L2 composing teachers can play a vital role in helping their students be part of any number of institutional and / or discipline-specific clubs or communities by making them aware of the properties and conventions of reading and writing specific to various fields. Students interested in chemistry, for example, can be taught how chemists write for other chemists and how reading can be tied to this discipline specific context. This was strongly linked to the English for Academic Purposes (EAP) theme, in that EAP instruction linked teaching to the needs within specific contexts of L2 use. And as for the final theme covered, “L2 writing teachers and researchers can focus on specific types of writing, such as critical review essays, and organize instructional practices around helping students understand and gain control of the features and principles of specific genres.” (Hirvela, 2004, p. 24).

In Bechler and Hirvela’s (2001) more recent edited collection of L2 reading-writing scholarship, both traditional and emerging themes in the L2 reading-writing connections field were explored including the following themes:

- Teaching reading as writing and writing as reading
- (E) merging literacies and the challenge of textual ownership
- Technology-assisted reading and writing

The first theme emphasized the long-standing roles of reading and writing as supporting activities for each other, and this was a call for L2 writing teachers to consider the value of approaching L2 reading-writing instruction from this more traditional, yet still valuable orientation.

Meanwhile, the two remaining themes drew attention to newer ways of constructing L2 reading-writing relations. The theme dealing with textual ownership and new literacies affected by computer-mediated communication “draws together emerging research and beliefs concerning a complex aspect of L2 literacy that is attracting increasing interest: students’ borrowing practices with respect to the use of source texts, as well as the closely related issue of plagiarism” (Hirvela, 2004, p.25). Indeed, the way students read both traditional print texts and internet-based or electronic texts and try to incorporate, as writers, material from them into their writing is likely to be an especially important and interesting area of L2 reading-writing connections research and pedagogy. The same can be said concerning the final theme explored: the ways in which technology is influencing L2 reading and writing – an emerging domain of interactions between reading and writing.

Grabe's extensive review of reading-writing literature in Belcher and Hirvela's (2001) work also provided a valuable look at the themes and constructions central to the reading-writing connections field. Grabe's review put extra emphasis on the need to understand the following theoretical / thematic domains:

- A theory of language
- A theory of learning
- A theory of language processing
- A theory of motivational and affective factors
- A theory of social-context influences
- A theory of background knowledge and its role in reading and writing

Referring to the six major theoretical areas mentioned above, Grabe (in Belcher and Hirvela, 2001, pp.17-18) explained:

These theoretical positions, while in themselves neither theories of reading or writing, underlie any carefully thought-out view on reading and writing and their development. For example, to discuss reading, one must first understand how reading is processed, how language knowledge itself contributes, how background knowledge plays a role, how both social contexts and motivation influence abilities, and how learning is best accomplished for such goals. The same is true for writing abilities and for the contexts in which reading and writing interact.

Moreover, Grabe (in Belcher and Hirvela, 2001, p.26) identified these areas as central to the continuing investigation of reading-writing connections:

1. Reading to write
2. Writing to read
3. Reading to learn and writing to learn
4. Reading multiple texts and writing outcomes

Besides, Grabe (2001) called for further research in these domains: L1 / L2 literacy transfer; the role of extensive reading in enriching reading and writing knowledge; EAP; the roles of summarizing, using text models, note taking, and outlining in reading and writing instruction; and new approaches to curriculum development and their implications for reading-writing instruction (e.g., task-based and content-based instruction).

Though all these perspectives, it should be noted that a comprehensive or definite model of L2 reading-writing connections from which to base our continued investigations, in research and practice, of such connections does not exist. Indeed, based on Grabe's (2001) extensive literature review cited earlier, Hirvela (2004, p.36) contended that a complete L2 reading-writing connections model building "is problematic because a true model of this type must account, simultaneously, for the inclusion of reading in a theory of writing instruction and a theory of writing in reading instruction". Building a model that binds these two directions (reading to write and writing to read) into one unified whole is "an elusive business" (Hirvela, 2004, p.36), particularly as we must take into consideration, in the L2 field, the characteristics that separate it from the L1 field.

All in all, the situation where the L2 reading-writing field now stands in its understanding and practice is perhaps best described by Grabe (2001, p.25) who stated:

One of the most consistent implications of the two decades of research on reading and writing relations is that they should be taught together and that the combination of both literacy skills enhances learning in all areas.

Three major modes of connecting reading and writing in L2 instruction are to be explored in the following sections.

2.10 Modes of Reading-Writing Connections

Hirvela (2004) presented three primary frameworks for the ways in which reading and writing interact with each other in academic settings. These modes of reading-writing connections – reader-response theory, reading to write, and writing to read – are intended to help and orient teachers who view the idea of linking reading and writing in their instruction not only as logical but as unavoidable. These three modes which provide meaningful ways to connect the two basic language skills in the L2 classroom are to be reviewed in the following sub-sections.

2.10.1 Reader-Response Theory

The act of reading involves: the author of a text, the text itself, and the reader of the text. Traditionally and for a long time, the main focus was in the authors of texts and their intentions when writing their texts. Then, there was a shift in emphasis to the texts themselves based on the assumption that texts are the sole source of meaning, and that the reader has to locate that meaning by analyzing the text's structure and language. Reader-response theory, however, says that "the reader is, if not the most important figure in this author/text/reader

combination (as many reader-response theorists would maintain), at least an equal partner in a dialogue among these three parties.” (Hirvela, 2004, p.46). This approach to reading argues that a text’s meaning is produced through the reader’s process of encountering it.

Reader-response theory originated in the work of the British literature and reading specialist Richards (1929) who instructed his students at Cambridge University “... to write ‘protocols’ – that is, explanations of poems that described, in part, how and why the students interpreted them as they did.” (Hirvela, 2004, p.46). By doing so, Richards (1929) shifted attention from the authors of the poems to the reader as the active creator of the interpretations or responses. It is then assumed that the reader brings forward his or her own understanding about how texts work as well as his or her own beliefs and expectations. In other words, adopting a reader-response view of reading allows to examine the student’s experience as a reader.

Reader-response theory has had a great impact in relation to reading and writing connection. In fact, it is reader-response theory that brings L2 literacy researchers to see reading and writing both as processes of composing since it “serves as a valuable tool for privileging and investigating students’ composing processes as readers, processes that can both influence and overlap with their composing processes as writers” (Hirvela, 2004, p.53). By placing a particular focus on the reader, reader-response theory has provided useful insights into how readers read, and how the reading process is similar to the process of writing in the making of meaning. This notion was made clear by Hirvela (2004, p.52) who explained:

While reading recursively – that is, moving forward and backward through the text – readers reject earlier hypotheses about the text and create new ones to reflect their added insight into the text, or, more accurately, the new text they compose as they encounter and reencounter the original text. In other words, they compose a reading in much the same way that writers compose the text they write, that is, through a combination of false starts, of revisions based on rereading of the earlier attempts to write the text, and of constructing new ideas about the shape the text will take while writing and evaluating it. Reader-response theory, then operates with images and concepts of composing processes in reading that correspond to those at work in writing.

With regard to classroom applications of reader-response theory, creating follow-up activities to reading promoting a wide range of creative and individualized responses is recommended. One popular activity of these is often called ‘*making connections*’ and is described by Tracey and Morrow (2012, p.78) as a strategy that:

... draws students' attention to the use of three different types of connections during reading. The first type of connection is the "text-to-self" connection. Here readers are helped to the ways in which the story or passage is related to the reader's personal life. The second type of connection is the "text-to-text" connection. In this area readers are helped to make connections between the text that they are currently reading and others that they have read in the past. The third type of connection is the "text-to-world" connection. In this activity, readers focus on the relationships between what they are reading and the world at large.

Assigning this kind of tasks allows teachers to both explore and develop their students' knowledge and skills as readers and writers. Indeed, the reader-response approach directs reading and the student as reader to a place in classroom instruction where space is shared equally with writing.

2.10.2 Reading to Write

There is strong agreement among researchers, teachers, and writers that reading improves writing. Indeed, "probably no one doubts that reading plays a major role in learning to write." (Bereiter and Scardamalia, 1984, p.163), and "everything points to the necessity of learning to write from what we read." (Smith, 1983, p.560). Accordingly, it was claimed that "teaching writing without teaching reading is not teaching writing at all." (Kroll, 1993, p.75).

Talking about the core notion of 'from reading to writing' requires looking principally at the role of 'input' in connecting reading and writing, and more specifically at how various uses of target language input deriving from reading influence writing development. And in doing so, various terms are to be used including; 'reading for writing', 'reading to write', 'reading while writing', and 'writerly reading'. All these terms are "related to the fundamental belief that at least in academic or school settings, reading is a prelude to writing that shapes writing." (Hirvela, 2004, pp.110-111). Referring to the benefits that can be gained from using reading input for writing development, Stotsky (1995, p.773) pointed out that "reading experience would seem to be the chief source of a developing writer's syntactic, generic, and lexical knowledge."

Krashen (1984) linked the distinction between 'competence' (the knowledge of something) and 'performance' (the ability to use the knowledge stored in competence) – a distinction at the heart of the communicative language teaching methodology – to the acquisition of writing skills. Writing, in Krashen's view, is acquired not learned. One acquires it by reading.

Indeed, reading improves a writer's competence, as Krashen (1984, pp.27-28) explained:

We gain competence in writing the same way we gain competence in oral language: by understanding messages encoded in written language, by reading for meaning. In this way we gain a subconscious 'feel' for written language.

In other words, knowledge of writing comes from the input provided by reading. Reading gives the learner (writer) all the intricacies of a successful style that teachers could not hope to teach as conscious rules. Indeed, the rules and conventions of writing in the target language may vary considerably from those guiding writing in the students' native language.

That is why; it is often difficult for students to learn them directly through explicit instruction. As Hirvela (2004, pp. 112-113) noted:

We may be better served in the writing classroom by providing reading materials and activities that allow learners meaningful exposure to writing in the target language. Through this exposure and the natural processes at the heart of acquisition (as opposed to conscious learning), learners are better able to internalize L2 writing rules and conventions, thus putting in place the competence they must draw from while attempting to write in the target language. Effective performance in L2 writing is less likely to occur if appropriate competence has not been established. The role of reading is to provide the grounds for that competence.

Yet, it is worth noting that reading alone may not lead to an improvement in performance; "the ability to put this knowledge to use in an actual piece of writing" (Krashen, 1984, p.20). According to Krashen (1984), to improve performance one needs to practice writing too. Through practice learners eventually abandon inefficient composing processes and hit upon some that work. Krashen was referring here to the correlation between amount of practice writing and writing quality.

Thus, in considering 'reading for writing' in the writing classroom, two key questions may be raised: what kind of input should teachers provide students? And in what form should that input appear and be treated?

When assigning texts (reading materials) for students, L2 writing teachers have to take into consideration not only the information these texts provide about a particular subject but also the value of these texts as sources of knowledge or input about writing itself. As Kroll (1993, p.72) pointed out, "one can read a text not only to 'learn' its content but to 'learn' choices that writers have made in producing it". Bloch and Chi (1995, p.271) made a similar

point while noting that “Reading in the composition class need not be simply about learning facts but about how writers think through the problems they are addressing.”

Through reading, learners can, for example, acquire knowledge about L2 writing by looking at the rhetorical decisions made by authors, that is, why certain information was arranged as it was by the author (i.e., rhetorical reading). Bean, Chappell and Gillam (2005, p.xxiii) contended that reading rhetorically means understanding “the how and what of a text’s message”. This allows readers to be aware of the principles of construction of the target language writing, such as where to locate thesis statements, topic sentences, examples and other supporting material, and so forth, and therefore, better understand how such choices might arise in their own writing. However, for students to be accustomed to this way of reading, they need explicit instruction in how to do so.

In short, when we consider ‘reading for writing’, we are presenting reading to students as a means of learning about the components that constitute writing and / or as a way of experiencing the meaning-making that is common to both reading and writing (i.e., seeing reading as a process of composing).

After shedding some light on the role of input in reading-for-writing work, we will then examine two primary models from which to view reading for writing namely, the direct model and the indirect model.

2.10.2.1 *The Direct Model of Reading for Writing*

At the heart of this model of reading for writing is the belief that learners learn best about writing when they are shown explicitly how to approach reading from a writer’s perspective. Learning about writing can mean, as explained by Hirvela (2004, p.115):

... learning about common *rhetorical* or *organizational* patterns in target language writing (e.g., location of such staples of writing in English as thesis statements and topic sentences), studying *linguistic* features of writing (e.g., transitional words and phrases, the frequency of certain verb tenses in specific kinds of situations, and examining *lexical* as well as *stylistic* characteristics of writing (e.g., the use of informal and formal vocabulary in different circumstances).

‘Mining’ and ‘writerly reading’ are two particularly interesting ways of viewing the direct act of reading for writing, offering some general or macro-level ways of looking at the use of reading to learn about writing. Rhetorical reading and the modeling approach are, however, two specific or micro-level ways of applying the concepts of mining and writerly reading.

2.10.2.1.1 Mining

Mining, an analogy for reading-writing, is the process of reading for the purpose of culling information from a text for a specific goal (Greene, 1992). Hirvela (2004, p.115) explained:

Between looking for sources of the material they're seeking and then physically extracting that material, miners operate with a clear and direct purpose in mind. In the same way, learners using reading to gain knowledge about writing act as miners exploring their source texts for the input being sought.

Thus, the strategies learners observe in such a mindful study of texts can become part of their own repertoire for writing on different occasions (Greene, 1993). In other words, while mining texts, learners can begin to attend to specific features of the texts they read, selecting, organizing, and connecting ideas for the purpose of writing. In practice, learners can be asked, for example, to find words and phrases that serve as cohesive devices in texts they read, that is, linking sentences and / or paragraphs together. Learners, then, read actively, reflecting on the ways writers use language and structure their ideas.

2.10.2.1.2 Writerly Reading

Like 'mining', the notion of 'writerly reading' is based on readers' conscious attempt to learn about writing from reading. Yet, while mining, the reader plays the role of a miner or detective hunting for clues about writing, whereas the writerly reader takes on the persona of the writer of the text being read; that is, to read like a writer (Smith, 1983). Hirvela (2004, p.119) made this notion clear claiming that:

To understand writerly reading, we need to see the reader as continually trying to be the writer. The reader is thus asking such questions as "If I were writing this, what sentence would come next? Or "What transitional word or phrase I use here to link the previous passage and the next one?" In trying to form answers to these questions and then seeing how the writer of the text actually proceeded, the reader is continually seeking to acquire knowledge of the specific features of writing by experiencing the decision-making process that constitutes writing.

Reading, thus, is to be seen as an act of construction or composing, and not as an act of decoding the meaning of a text. Hunt (1985, pp.162-163) described the writerly reading activity this way:

They read a text, a paragraph, a sentence, a word, as if they were writing it, using the structure they are building in their minds, and their knowledge of the codes of writing within which the text is being constructed. These serve as devices to anticipate what might be coming next to reorganize what they have already read, both in the short and long term. Thus, the reader's attention is predominantly constructive: they look not at things, but at possible relations between things.

In practice, learners, for example, might be given the first part of a text serving as a launching point and then be asked to complete it producing their own pieces of writing. Also, teachers can take a text, cut it into pieces, and ask the students to assemble the pieces into a coherent text. Sometimes, teachers may rely on more cutting up of the text so that students would have to make more “writerly” decisions while reassembling the text at various levels (word, sentence, and paragraph).

2.10.2.1.3 Rhetorical Reading

As mentioned before, one approach for applying the concepts of mining and writerly reading is called rhetorical reading and is closely related to understanding how texts are structured to make meaning – how the little pieces add up to the larger whole.

Rhetorical reading takes two primary forms. One is providing students with an explicit instruction in the primary rhetorical features of texts in the target language, and then asking them to put that knowledge into action in their own reading of such texts. According to Carrell and Connor (1991), this explicit training not merely helps students empower their L2 reading but helps them inform their L2 writing as well. That is why, writing assignments following rhetorical reading are especially important.

Helping students analyze and learn from the ‘rhetorical situation’ in which a text has been written is another pedagogical approach to rhetorical reading (Haas and Flower, 1988). The idea here is to enable students to look closely at the situation motivating the writer to produce his or her text first and then to focus on the strategies used by the writer to generate a text that addresses the rhetorical situation at hand. Haas and Flower (1988, p.176) described this approach this way:

Rhetorical strategies take a step beyond the text itself. They are concerned with constructing a rhetorical situation for the text, trying to account for an author's purpose, context, and effect on the audience. In rhetorical reading strategies, readers use cues in the text, and their own knowledge of discourse situations, to recreate or infer the rhetorical situation of the text they are reading.

While making a rhetorical analysis of a text, students might examine how the text makes appeals to its audience, they would look at the purposes informing the text, the specific strategies used and other details. Thus, questions like these may arise in the mind of the reader – does the text appeal to my emotions, to my intellect, or perhaps to both? In what ways? Does it use description, narration, statistics, or quotations, and if so, to what end? Then, students will use the rhetorical strategies of the writer – the patterns, structures, figures, and methods – to strategize their own approach to creating effective texts for particular audiences and purposes.

Consistent with the notions of mining and writerly reading, students view reading as a productive act in which they try to produce knowledge of writing. In other words, reading and writing are linked “...through an emphasis on how the knowledge of writing gained through rhetorical reading can be applied in writing.” (Hirvela, 2004, p.123).

2.10.2.1.4 *The Modeling Approach*

The modeling approach is the direct and the one most familiar approach to using reading for learning about writing. According to Hirvela (2004, p.126), the idea behind such an approach is too simple, “have students study, through close reading, models of the kinds of texts they are expected to write.”

Students are supposed to be exposed (as readers and writers) to various genres and types of writing in their schooling years from elementary to graduate school – like poems, stories, diaries, book reports, summaries, essays, journal articles, conference papers, theses and dissertations. While processing model texts as readers, students step into the roles of miners and writerly readers and engage in specific acts of rhetorical reading. Accordingly, they become aware that they can apply what they observe through their reading. As Greene (1993, p.34) pointed out:

Reading has played an important role in the writing classroom because we believe that students can learn about writing through imitating models of well wrought prose. The expectation is that students will internalize the style, grace, and correctness that make these works exemplary.

Through reading model essays, for example, L2 students can become familiar with a particular genre, namely, description, narration, exposition, and argumentation, and therefore, get specific information from specified writing works to be able to take actions within the genre (Miller, 1984). This view is supported by Hillocks (1986, p.154) who stated: “In order

to write an essay of a given type, the writer must be familiar with examples of the type and know the parts of the type and their relationships.” Indeed, students’ focus on the features of model texts they are reading allows them to develop their own abilities in producing those features accurately.

However, it seems that there is more to model essays than such a focus on formal features of the model. Through their exposure to models of standard paragraphs and essays as well as genres of writing, students may be able to communicate more effectively with their audience (Swales, 1990; Raimes, 1991). Furthermore, Bagueri and Zare (2009) pointed out that text analysis is another application of model essays. By analyzing model essays, L2 students (writers) become aware of how particular grammatical features are employed in authentic discourse contexts.

Nevertheless, it is worth noting that there have been some objections to using model essays in an L2 writing context. Ferris and Hedgcock (1998), for instance, commented that reading model essays is important but not totally sufficient. Besides, Goby (1997) asserted that using model essays prevent L2 learners from having creativity. Yet, Grellet (1996, p.32) seemed to have another view saying:

Imitating is one of the best ways of learning. Is it not by copying that most painters acquire their skill? In the field of writing too, a great deal can be learnt by following the style of certain writers. It forces you to study a model, and gives you a framework within which to write, whilst still allowing you to be fully imaginative and creative. It is therefore a first step on the way to freer writing.

The Indirect Model of Reading for Writing – involving extensive reading and free / voluntary reading – will be described next.

2.10.2.2 The Indirect Model of Reading for Writing

Students relying on such a model of reading for writing do not conduct a direct search for input related to writing. Comprehension of the source text is a principal concern for them whereas acquiring that input might not be the primary goal of their reading.

Thus, unlike the direct model discussed before, knowledge of writing in this model is viewed more as a natural outcome of reading. Students do not have a conscious task to perform while reading. In other words, in the direct model, students tend to discover things about writing or gain knowledge of writing consciously and deliberately through their reading. However, the indirect model is based on a belief in the processes of language

acquisition, whereby learning occurs on its own when students are presented with what Krashen (1984) called ‘comprehension input’. According to Krashen (1984, p.25), “Just as comprehensible input is necessary for second language acquisition, but is not sufficient, reading is necessary for acquisition of writing competence.”

Accordingly, writing instruction that focuses merely on writing without some focus on the knowledge of writing the reading provides has a limited effect. More specifically, Krashen (1984, p.23) explained:

If second language acquisition and the development of writing ability occur in the same way, writing ability is not learned but is acquired via extensive reading in which the focus of the reader is on the message, i.e., reading for genuine interest and / or for pleasure. Just as speech is hypothesized to be a result of comprehensible input, the ability to write is hypothesized to be the result of reading. Moreover, when enough reading is done, all the necessary grammatical structures and discourse rules for writing will automatically be presented to the writer in sufficient quantity.

Extensive reading and free or voluntary reading are the two primary frameworks to the indirect model of reading for writing.

2.10.2.2.1 *Extensive Reading*

Extensive reading is partly in contrast to intensive reading, or the careful reading of short, complex texts for detailed understanding and skill practice which is more likely to occur in the direct model of reading for writing discussed earlier. While reading intensively, students are required to consciously extract as much useful input from the text as possible.

An extensive reading⁽²⁾ approach is based on reading large quantities of a wide variety of materials on a variety of topics and of different genres with focus on the general meaning rather than the language of the text. Moreover, it is based on reading unproblematic self-chosen materials for information and enjoyment (Hafiz and Tudor, 1989; Day and Bamford, 1998). Students choose the texts and the subject they read about, they can then approach this reading from the perspective of genuine interest or pleasure.

When engaged in extensive reading, the reader focuses mainly on the insights derived from the information contained in the reading, the entertainment value of reading itself, or the thoughts provoked by the reading material. From this perspective, it seems reasonable to assume that any attempt to require post-reading work may spoil students’ reading enjoyment. However, if carefully designed, post-reading activities can serve useful purposes. For the teacher, such activities determine if the reading was actually done and what the students got out of it. For the students, follow-up reading activities may reinforce what they have gained

from their reading, give them a sense of progress, help them share information about materials being read, and give them a chance to reflect on their reading.

For instance, asking students to write book reports is very useful as a post-reading activity in support of extensive reading (Day and Bamford, 1998). A book report offers a summary or a brief description of the key points of the book being read; giving an account of the major plot, characters and main ideas of the work. Besides, a book report often provides a short appraisal of the strengths and weaknesses of the work.

In a review of literature on extensive reading, Ferris and Hedgcock (1998, p.23) noted that “a growing body of evidence suggests that extensive reading – most notably, reading of a voluntary nature – may dramatically enhance the development of linguistic skills, especially those related to comprehending and producing written texts.” Besides, Cumming (1989, p.126) observed that extensive reading “...appear necessary to facilitate the long-term development of effective writing performance.” And in another look at the extensive reading literature, Tsang (1996, p.228) claimed that an extensive reading scheme “improved general knowledge and thus helped develop content in writing. It also exposed students to appropriate models of construction, agreement, tense, and word order / function, which strengthened their use of the language.”

All in all, researchers were impressed by the gains ESL and EFL students have in writing English due to extensive reading even though they were not given any instruction on writing. Indeed, a significant correlation has been found between reading and proficiency in written English.

2.10.2.2.2 *Free / Voluntary Reading*

Free / voluntary reading is another application of the indirect model of reading for writing, and it overlaps significantly with extensive reading. According to Dupuy, Tse, and Cook (1996), both approaches share the core notion that students benefit most from reading widely in the target language. Yet, unlike extensive reading which often takes place in classroom settings, free / voluntary reading usually takes place outside the classroom and under less structured conditions than in extensive reading. Kim and Krashen (1997, p.26) pointed out:

It has been established that reading, especially free voluntary reading, is a powerful means of developing second language competence. Those who read more have larger vocabularies, do better on tests of grammar, write better, and spell better.

In other words, such a type of reading provides non-native students with large doses of comprehensible input with a low affective filter, and thus is a major factor in their general language acquisition.

On what concerned writing, many studies reported gains in the writing of students who engaged in voluntary pleasure reading in the target language (Junopoulos, 1986; Constantino and al., 1997). In this concern, Hirvela (2004, p.134) added:

The reading material itself – often literary texts in extensive reading schemes and free, voluntary reading – and the positive atmosphere toward learning created by the voluntary nature of the reading experience together are believed to allow students to subconsciously internalize valuable information about writing in the target language.

Yet, it is worth noting that some researchers like Hedgcock and Atkinson (1993) and Flahive and Bailey (1993) did not report meaningful impact on writing from such a type of reading. According to them, many learners and due to many factors (the age and language proficiency level of students, kinds of texts chosen for free voluntary reading, and even the kind of writing they are expected to do after their reading) may be lacking the kind of structure or guidance provided through the direct model of reading for writing.

2.10.3 *Writing to Read*

The use of writing to enhance reading has also generated a great deal of debate among those searching for methodologies that increase improvement in reading proficiency. Indeed, writing before, during, or after reading, was shown to assist reading and readers in a number of ways (Leki, 1993; Kauffman, 1996). For instance, if students are preparing for a civilization or a literature test, they are supposed to read books or articles in the field. While reading such materials, students might write summaries or annotations in the text's margins or in some other place, pencil in translations in their first language, underline some key words, highlight some relevant sentences, comment on how a point just raised links to something else mentioned in another part of the text, and so forth. Without these acts, students may approach reading in a haphazard manner. They may find it hard to remember what they have read. Thus, without the support of writing, their reading would have become unfocused. And even after reading, students may paraphrase some ideas from the original text, or may turn to mapping and graphic organizers which require identification of main ideas and supporting details in a text.

In other words, writing – in all the above examples – served as a means of creating better reading. Blanton (1993, p.241) made a similar point in describing how she began

writing a paper about reading-writing connections, when she observed that “we don’t know what we’ve read until we begin to work with it by talking and writing about it.”

Many studies have proved the contribution that writing gives to a reader. Petrosky (1982) found that the quality of reading of his students was enhanced by involving them in writing essay responses to stories they had read, while Wittrock’s (1983) study of high school and college students found that writing summaries after reading improved comprehension. Also, Taylor and Beach (1984) improved students’ reading of expository texts by involving them in writing paragraphs with the same structures

In another study, Salvatori (1996) asked her students to write essay responses to texts they read where they are required to reflect on their reading processes, and even on the difficulties they encounter while reading. Reflecting on the thinking strategies they use to enhance understanding allows students to engage in a kind of self-examination through which they become aware of their strengths and weaknesses. Such a writing-to-reading task can be viewed as “...a way of breaking the silence between the text and the students; it brings to words the solitary activity of student-with-reading, and, at the same time, becomes a means of empowerment.” (Lent, 1993, p.233).

Similarly, in a study conducted by Fotovatian and Shokrpour (2007), they found that students relying on strategies involving writing like note-taking, summarizing, synthesizing, understanding text-structure are shown to be better readers than those who do not.

All in all, and as explained by Hirvela (2004, p.77), writing to read can be defined as “the use of writing at various stages of reading to ensure stronger reading, with writing serving as a means, a tool, not an end or final activity.”

2.10.3.1 Origins of Writing to Read

In order to better understand the notion of writing to read and its contributions to pedagogy and to students’ acquisition of academic literacy, a brief look at where this idea has come from is required.

2.10.3.1.1 Common Sense

To some extent, the idea of writing to read probably comes from common sense. As Hirvela (2004, p.77) pointed out:

Intuitively, and then through experience, we understand that writing has a unique power to bring clarity to our thoughts, to soothe our nerves, to provide new ways of examining situations, to allow us to review alternative interpretations of events, and so forth.

In other words, we frequently write to make sense of or to reflect on experiences we have passed through. And we usually do that through diary and journal writing. The writing of a diary or a journal is a private record of experiences one relies on to report thoughts, feelings, and opinions rather than merely the factual events of the day. Accordingly, such a type of writing provides comfort and insight that might otherwise be difficult to obtain.

In the same way, making an outline before writing a paper enables us to better visualize the way we want the paper to proceed as it allows us to put our thought into action. Gage (1986, p.24) drew the distinction between thought and writing in the following explanation:

One difference, of course, between writing and thinking is that writing is tangible – it results in a finite product – while thinking is intangible, and just goes on and on (or, sometimes, around and around) ... Writing is thinking-made-visible, thinking that can be examined because it is “on the page” and not all “in the head”, invisibly floating around. Writing is thinking that can be stopped and tinkered with. It is a way of making thought hold still long enough to examine its structures, its possibilities, its flaws. The road to clearer understanding of one’s own thoughts is traveled on paper. It is through the attempt to find words for ourselves, and to find patterns for ourselves in which to express related ideas, that we often come to discover exactly what we think.

Generally speaking, we rely on writing to record what we have encountered in life experiences and in reading as thinking about what we have read or experienced is not enough to ensure full or satisfactory understanding.

As far as education is concerned, Vacca, Vacca, and Gove (1991, p.137) emphasized the commonsense aspect of writing to read when they observed, in looking at teaching reading at the elementary school level that “common sense tells us that writing is intended to be read.” In other words, writing has to be read during and probably after the writing takes place.

2.10.3.1.2 Critiques of Reading Instruction

Critiques of the ways in which reading is often taught also contribute in giving birth to the notion of writing to read and its use in classroom instruction. For instance, Flesch (1955, 1981) observed that many schoolchildren have been taught to read individual words without an understanding of the system by which words are constructed. As a result, Flesch (1981, p.3) supported the idea that writing should be used to teach reading and asserted that writing is part of the foundation of reading, saying:

The best way to learn any system of language is to learn to write and to read it at the same time. And how do you do that? The obvious answer is, by taking up one symbol after another and learning how to write it and how to recognize

it. Once you are through the whole list of symbols, you can read and write; the rest is simply practice – learning to do it more and more automatically.

Flesch (1981) supported his arguments by pointing out to other language systems such as shorthand (a system of rapid abbreviated symbolic handwriting), Braille (a system of reading and writing by touch used by blind or visually impaired people), and Morse code (a system used in telegraphy to represent the letters of the alphabet as sequences of dots, spaces and dashes). According to him, those systems of language are learnt first by writing them, so why not learn to read our daily language in the same way? In other words, why not learn how to write our everyday language first? Perfetti and Zhang (1996, p.40) explained that “learning to read, whatever else it is, is a question of learning. And what is learned is the workings of a writing system and specific orthography.”

Criticisms of reading instruction at later stages of education shed light on other problems. Zamel (1992), for example, criticized the static and receptive approach to teaching reading which requires learners to identify and retrieve a set of ideas from a given text, denying the reader’s dynamic contribution in creating meaning. According to Zamel, such an approach to reading affects the reader’s writing skill as well since readers are prevented from writing about their reading.

The same researcher pointed out that both reading and writing are influenced by purpose and goal and that both are interactive, and therefore, proposed many pedagogical implications that not merely integrate reading and writing but also foster reading and writing development. These activities include the use of reading journals, asking students to summarize passages they have read and then reflect on them, and asking students to insert marginal notations as they read.

Another problem was identified by Bartholomae and Petrosky (1987, p.iii), who said:

Our students felt powerless in the face of serious writing, in the face of long and complicated texts – the kinds of texts we thought they should find interesting and challenging.

According to them, students’ problems were not intrinsically reading problems but problems of composing (the ability to compose a reading). Thus, their pedagogy was based on the belief that it is writing which can help learners get rid of such a sense of powerlessness they may experience as readers (Hirvela, 2004).

2.10.3.1.3 *Writing to Learn*

Another factor affecting the development of writing-to-read strategies is the writing-to-learn movement upon which the writing-across-the-curriculum movement was developed. Like reading, writing is a way of learning. Writing-to-learn is based on the notion that students' thought and understanding can grow and clarify through the process of writing. This was explained by Woolfolk (1993, p.503) who wrote:

My students write to explain, to argue a point of view, to prove a hypothesis. My focus is on their message. Eventually their need to present a clear description or persuasive argument will lead to a concern with the clarity and logic of their message. First and foremost, my students are encouraged to write in order to discover and clarify their ideas.

Vacca and Linek (1992, p.145), as write-to-learn proponents, claimed that learners' learning is improved when writing is part of the learning process, observing that "to find meaning and purpose in learning, students must be encouraged to think about what they are learning – and therein lies the power of writing." Similarly, Emig (1977, p.122) asserted that "Writing serves learning uniquely because writing as a process-and-product possesses a cluster of attributes that correspond uniquely to certain powerful learning strategies."

Moreover, Schumacher and Gradwohl Nash (1991) noted that through various writing activities, learners can put the knowledge they obtain (especially via reading) into action to serve other purposes requiring applications of that knowledge. Indeed, writing has a very important role to play "in any course as a medium of learning and for teaching how to learn." (Herrington, 1981, p.387).

Typically, writing-to-learn activities are of two types: those that parallel or are part of learners' reading processes, and those that are part of learners' discovery or invention processes. Referring to the first type of writing-to-learn activities, Hansen (1987, p.178) pointed out that "writing is the foundation of reading; it may be the most basic way to learn about reading."

2.10.3.2 *Writing to Read/Learn Research*

Most of the research identifying the positive effects in the use of writing to enhance learning and reading has been in the L1 context (Ackerman, 1993; Geisler, 1995; Newell, 1998). However, as McGinley and Tierney (1989, p.245) pointed out, such research has been narrowly focused, so that "these studies provide a somewhat limited picture of how students might use more complex combinations of reading and writing en route to thinking and

learning.” Moreover, these studies have focused mostly on writing used to read and learn in courses dealing with the sciences, social sciences, and history (Newell, 1984; Greene, 1993), and have not placed too much emphasis on writing to read and learn in literature courses (Marshall, 1987). One of the major findings of these studies is that more complex writing tasks which involve some degree of composing (e.g., analytic and response-based essays) have a greater effect on students’ learning than do less demanding activities such as note taking or answering study questions (Newell, 1984).

There has been, however, less emphasis on research into uses of writing for reading and writing for learning in L2 teaching and learning contexts. Cumming (1990), for example, identified positive effects on L2 learning acquisition arising from composing in L2. Besides, Connor and Mayberry (1996) concluded that a combination of reading and writing as acts of composing is more likely to help L2 writers successfully negotiate a topic to be written about.

Boughey (1997), in her turn, found that applying the notion of writing to learn with a group of tertiary multilingual ESP students helped them in improving their language acquisition and in their understanding of the subject being studied. Furthermore, she noticed that having students read some materials and then asking them to write in groups offered them a good opportunity to discuss, exchange ideas, and reflect on what they had read while composing.

A longitudinal study, aiming at investigating the effects of writing on learning in an L2 context, was conducted by Smoke (1994). The study took a college student named ‘Ming’ as a sample, and the researcher’s main focus was to see how writing assisted Ming’s learning in courses other than writing classes. Results proved that Ming’s general acquisition of English as a target language improved due to her improved ability in writing in English. Besides, it was observed that Ming’s discovery that she could use writing as an aid for learning pushed her to make more efforts to enhance her writing ability.

2.10.3.3 *Writing to Read in Classroom Contexts*

In classroom contexts and in a variety of subjects, students are required to read materials that provide them with valuable information and ideas about the subject at hand. Writing tasks that students are engaged in while using these materials, are generally referred to as ‘*composing from sources*’ or ‘*writing from sources*’ (Hirvela, 2004).

Spack (1988) saw that engaging students in the complex ability to write from other texts is the most important skill EFL teachers can engage their students in. And even though the focus in research is mostly on reading-for-writing strategies (as it is writing that functions

as the end point or aim of the reading), writing from sources can also be approached from a writing-to-read perspective (Hirvela, 2004). Indeed, writing can support and enhance reading as explained by Carson and Leki (1993, p.2):

Writing provides a way into reading, extends reading, and consolidates understanding a text just as reading sustains writing and furnishes, for the writer, the counterpart of another voice.

Written texts leave readers with gaps that may be filled by active, meaning-making reading, which is often guided most effectively by writing (Hirvela, 2004). The writing-to-read approach may be implemented in various ways. Answering questions about a text in writing, annotating, summarizing, synthesizing, and responding are to be discussed as some major writing-for-reading activities.

2.10.3.3.1 Answering Questions about Text in Writing

Asking students to answer questions about a reading material in writing is a straightforward procedure, easily implemented to assess and quickly beneficial to increase their comprehension. In fact, presenting students with questions before, while, or after reading a text, has been proved to have beneficial effects on comprehension (Andre, 1979; Hamilton, 1985; Vidal-Abarca et al., 1996). And even though answering these questions can be done verbally, there is a greater benefit from performing such tasks in writing (Langer and Applebee, 1987). As Feng-Checkett and Checkett (2012, p.xv) noted: “by answering the questions following reading, students learn the techniques that other writers use to communicate effectively.”

Comprehension questions asked in reading activities can be classified into three main categories, according to Pearson and Johnson (1978), based on the source of the answers. Answers can be text explicit, text implicit, or script implicit. Text explicit questions are literal questions where the answer is directly stated in the text. Text implicit questions require the reader to infer, interpret or analyze specific parts of the texts to find the answer. Script implicit questions are more open-ended and go beyond the text in conjunction with the reader’s background knowledge.

Writing answers to text questions makes the reading material more memorable, and makes the act of reading more purposeful (Peverly and Wood, 2001). Indeed, reading with a purpose in mind (to answer a question) increases concentration, comprehension, retention, and interest. Moreover, it has been well established that answering comprehension questions about a text in writing provides students with a tool for visibly and permanently recording,

connecting, analyzing, personalizing, and manipulating key ideas in text (Graham and Hebert, 2010), and encourages them to think actively as they read and monitor their comprehension of the reading material at hand. Students, then, demonstrate the degree of their understanding of what has been read based on the content of their answers.

2.10.3.3.2 *Annotating Text*

Annotations refer to notes, comments, glosses, footnotes, explanations, and interpretations with which the reader marks a reading material providing a visible record of the thoughts that emerge while making sense of the reading. They are, indeed, "...the product of an interaction between text and reader." (Jackson, 2001, p.100), turning reading into an active pursuit. And as expressed by Harvey and Goudvis (2007, p.55), the act of annotating "...gives readers a place to hold their thinking and work through it as well." Even more, Taggart and Dole (2011, p.445) stated that the purpose of annotating while reading is "...to leave a record for yourself of what you have learned."

Annotations can serve a variety of purposes indeed as noted by Robertson and Smith (1987, p.43):

First of all, reading with the intention of marking the text is useful in maintaining your concentration. You are more actively involved with the text and are therefore less likely to be distracted. Secondly, the act of choosing which particular sections to mark involves a pause for thought between reading and note-making. This pause is a vital part of learning because it will involve the student in establishing a running dialogue with the author and not simply in a recording exercise. It is essential that thinking should precede writing. Thirdly, marking the text helps to put the material in a more manageable form for revision purposes and enables you to make cross-references with your other notes.

Similarly, annotations while reading can take a variety of forms, according to Moss et al. (2015, p.72), and these are generally classified into:

...language, questions, predictions, opinions, author's craft, author's message, connections, reflections, and arguments. For example, when reading to focus on language, students might circle confusing words (marking them with a *C*) and interesting words (marking them with *I*). They might not key words and phrases by drawing boxes around them, underline major points, draw an arrow when making connections to information in another text, or write *EX* when the author provides an example.

In their turn, Ovsiannikov, Arbib and McNeill (1999) classified annotation forms as mark up, write on margins, write at the top, and write between lines while reading or

rereading a text. Annotations are, then, of two main types: graphic and written. Graphic annotations involve highlighting, underlining, and circling to emphasize words and phrases, or show the relationship between words and ideas. Written annotations, however, refer to the reader's notes and comments.

As a writing-to-learn strategy, the powerful tool of annotating “helps readers reach a deeper level of engagement and promotes active reading.” (Porter-O'Donnell, 2004, p.82). Indeed, annotating forces the reader to concentrate better, and consequently, allows him or her to notice main ideas, and draw conclusions that a cursory reading could miss. Likewise, Kiewra (1989) pointed out the advantages of annotating in terms of the cognitive processes of coding, integrating, synthesizing, and transforming information that can later be reviewed and recalled.

Moreover, even though the difference between annotating and ‘taking notes’ seem to be negligible for some readers, Pennington (2009) claimed that note-taking on the text (i.e. annotating) is superior to note-taking on paper. In other words, having one annotated text instead of a set of note papers plus a text is more advantageous to the reader in that all the information is together and inseparable, with notes very close to the text for easier understanding, and with fewer pieces to keep organized.

In their turn, Robertson and Smith (1987) distinguished between note-taking and note-making. Note-taking is viewed as essentially a ‘mechanical’ task involving the copying of notes from a reading material, while ‘note-making’ (which is synonymous to ‘annotating’ according to them) “is a more creative process with a greater degree of discretion as to what is to be included, what is to be excluded and what form the notes are to take. This process of selection produces a more personalized form of notes.” (Robertson and Smith, 1987, p.36).

Pennington (2009, p.22) listed these annotation tips as the most beneficial to improve comprehension and retention:

- (1) Write out definitions.**
- (2) List examples.**
- (3) Write a question mark for confusing passages or sections to review.**
- (4) Write comments. Personalize your reading with criticisms, praises, and increase reading comprehension.**
- (5) Write out questions. Reader-generated questions significantly increase reading comprehension.**
- (6) Summarize reading sections.**
- (7) Write down predictions as to where the author will go next or what conclusions will be drawn.**
- (8) Draw arrows in the margin to connect related ideas.**
- (9) Number key details that the author provides.**
- (10) Write a check mark in the margin when a key term is introduced.**

Whatever form it may take, the dynamic act of annotating makes the reader remember his or her thoughts much easier. In fact, the reader does not even have to remember what he or she thought -- the paper will remember for him or her. And this makes it a powerful writing-for-reading activity facilitating and building reading comprehension.

2.10.3.3.3 *Using Graphic Organizers*

Having students write about a text they have read affords them greater opportunities to think about ideas in it, requires them to organize and integrate those ideas into a coherent whole, fosters explicitness, facilitates reflection, encourages personal involvement with texts, and involves students transforming ideas into their own words (Smith, 1988; Klein, 1999). The use of graphic organizers as a post-reading activity that involves writing is another sample of writing-for-reading activities providing the structure for bringing reading and writing together.

Graphic organizers allow the learners to record their thinking and code the text while reading. They consist of words, indicate relations among concepts using spatial arrangements of the information in the texts, depict the organizational plan of the text, and can be deployed in different kinds of texts - both narrative and expository texts (Stull and Mayer, 2007).

Accordingly, the use of graphic organizers has been found to be a viable tool to enhance the readers' understanding of texts (Drapeau, 2008). These visual representations help readers gather and sort out information as they help them see patterns and relationships between the given information. Indeed, "with only a few words, concepts are clarified, information and ideas are organized, and complex relationships are shown between the elements." (Macceca, 2006, p.4).

Thus, by drawing and filling in their graphic organizers – with their writings –, learners organize their thinking on paper and are therefore, in a better position to understand another writer's organization of an idea. And this is the essence of comprehension.

2.10.3.3.4 *Summarizing*

Summary writing is one of the primary contact points between reading and writing in academic settings. Such an instance of academic behaviour where reading and writing are intimately interrelated (Hidi and Anderson, 1986) has recently received much attention in the literature. This growing interest has evolved as researchers have attempted to describe the strategies readers use when processing and summarizing a passage. Most of the studies undertaken were guided by the assumption that summarization is closely connected to a key reading skill, extraction of the main idea from a text (Williams, 1988). Indeed, when readers

comprehend a reading material, they construct the gist or “the main point” (Olson, 2011, p.25) that has been understood about the text. This overall understanding of the reading material is often expressed through a tight, precise summary, and hence “the inability of the reader to summarize text indicates that comprehension is incomplete.” (Padma, 2008, p.15). That is why, there is considerable evidence that summary writing both encourages and measures reading comprehension (Taylor, 1982; Hill, 1991; Friend, 2001; Thiede and Anderson, 2003).

A summary is “the simplest text that attempts to represent in some form what another text says.” (Geisler, 1995, p.105), it is “a condensed version, in your own words, of the writing of someone else, a condensation that reproduces the thought, emphasis, and tone of the original. It abstracts all the significant facts of the original – overall thesis, main points, important supporting details –, but, unlike a paraphrase, it omits and/or condenses amplifications such as descriptive details.” (McAnulty, 1981, p.50).

Accordingly, when learners summarize their reading, they are involved in a process of reproduction that requires them to perform many reading-writing tasks that entails complex cognitive, linguistic, and rhetorical operations including: “(a) thorough comprehension of the original source; (b) selection of the text’s most salient information; (c) deletion of less-than-essential information; (d) comprehension and integration of the selected information; and (e) arrangement of selected material in a way that reflects the rhetorical structure of the original.” (Ferris and Hedgcock, 2005, p.106).

Engaging in these operations can add much-direction to the reading process. In fact, in situations where the reading material is long or complex, reading becomes more difficult and challenging for many L1 and L2 learners as well, and here writing can serve reading. The summary writing-based sub-activities can allow the reader to see the source reading material in a more focused way. In other words, the reader turns to writing as a way to both recording and guiding the reconstruction of the original text into a new and more manageable version. As Hirvela (2004, p.91) contended:

In situations where we have reasons to expect our students to encounter difficulties while reading, adding a writing component such as summarizing might be the best reading gift we can give them.

Summarizing, then, cultivates active reading and minimizes passive reading, and this influences comprehension. It is thus an inherent part of comprehension. Moreover, summarization appears to enhance cognition which will affect one’s understanding of texts being read. Research in the field of cognitive processing (how information is stored and

retrieved) showed that if students summarize a passage rather than simply reading it, the quality of their information storage will be stronger (Rosenshine, 1997). Besides, summarizing reinforces readers' ability to build relations among ideas contained in a text and helps them link these ideas to prior knowledge (Friend, 2001). All in all, the reading experience can be made more meaningful and productive for students through summarizing tasks involving writing.

From another perspective, research has shown that using summary writing for reading-related purposes provides teachers (and learners) with a better understanding of students' reading processes and strengths or weaknesses (Johns and Mayes, 1990; Sarig, 1993).

Indeed, while involved in the process of summary writing, learners are self testing their reading comprehension and applying strategies to remedy comprehension breakdowns (Palinscar, 1986; Thiede and Anderson, 2003), and "by examining, in the written summaries, the students' choices in terms of what information has or has not been transferred from the source text to the summary and what passages from the original text students have chosen for paraphrasing, reading and writing researchers and teachers have gained deeper insight into students' L2 literacy skills and practices." (Hirvela, 2004, p.91).

In fact, as it requires much more active meaning construction compared to other reading-related learning activities – like writing short answers to post-reading questions or choosing the best response from a set of choices –, summarizing has been identified as a more authentic method for assessing what readers do or do not understand about a text than traditional tests of reading comprehension (Kintsch et al., 2000).

It is worth noting, however, that writing an effective summary is a difficult task which is rarely done satisfactorily, even by students at university level (Grellet, 1999; Duke and Pearson, 2002). This might be attributed to the fact that many teachers incorrectly assume that students know how to summarize, and hence, they do not teach them how to do so (Hill, 1991). Yet, research that has identified summary writing as one of the essential skills which improves reading comprehension, has also indicated that the skill of summarization needs to be explicitly taught in order for students to turn into effective and critical readers (Taylor and Beach, 1984; Cordero-Ponce, 2000).

2.10.3.3.5 *Synthesizing*

Another activity that requires writing about source texts is synthesizing. Unlike summarizing, synthesizing involves working with two or more source texts at the same time

(especially through comparison and contrast) and creating sophisticated connections between them. As explained by Kennedy, Kennedy, and Smith (2000, pp. 93-94):

To synthesize is to select elements from two or more sources on a topic of interest that they share and then to organize them under a controlling theme or idea you look for or create a controlling idea or thematic consistency.

While synthesizing, then, the reader/writer is involved in a process that encompasses identifying and explaining issues, themes, relationships, and so forth, deriving from more than one source text. Mastering these sophisticated acts of literacy can pose particularly complex challenges for L2 readers and writers. At the same time, synthesizing as a learning means offers rich opportunities for L2 students to develop their reading and writing abilities. As with summarizing, tasks like extracting important ideas or information from the source texts, deleting unimportant information, and so forth, are required in synthesizing as well. Yet, synthesizing is an advanced technique that requires the reader/writer to pull together information not only to highlight the important points, but also to draw his/her own conclusions, compare, contrast, and forge the relationships between the multiple texts at hand during and after reading. Syntheses, then, are meant to be longer than summaries.

If a student has been asked to write a report on global warming, for example, this will usually necessitate reading at least a few articles and/or books on or visiting some websites dealing with the topic. The student is going to have to collect core information from the texts to create a meaningful whole. Yet, creating this whole relying on reading merely is probably a hard task even for the best of readers. Hence, “the more effective approach would be to synthesize these texts through some kind of analytic writing.” (Hirvela, 2004, p.94). The student can, for example, write notes to record his or her observations across the texts while or after reading, or use writing to build an outline reconstructing the main points of the texts. Writing a short summary for each source text, and then analyzing the summaries as a set of texts is also possible as another form of synthesizing that supports reading.

When synthesizing, the student can also turn to writing paraphrases of key sentences and quoting from the source texts too as helpful ways to strengthen reading. Paraphrasing and quoting from source texts are, indeed, “processes that involve reading, understanding, learning, relating, planning, writing, revising, editing, and orchestrating.” (Campbell, 1990, p.211).

All synthesizing tasks mentioned so far can facilitate students’ reading of texts through the medium of writing.

2.10.3.3.6 Responding

As explained before, both of summarizing and synthesizing involve tasks like selecting, rejecting, rearranging source content, and so forth. When summarizing or synthesizing, the reader/writer is not required, however, to discuss his or her own reactions to the source texts.

Responding to texts read through writing is another activity that can enhance reading. And unlike summarizing and synthesizing, such an expressive kind of writing discusses one's reactions to what he or she has read. Blanton (1994, p.10) viewed this as a process of students "talking to texts" rather than pulling information from them (as it is in analytic writing).

Simply put, responding is an activity offering opportunities to the students to reflect on their reading. Responding to reading through writing can take many forms like pre-reading writing, response statements, response essays, and journals.

'Write-before-you-read' activities have been proved to be effective in integrated reading-writing instruction. It is, indeed, recommended by some L2 writing specialists to have students write freely about a happening or idea in the text they are about to read bringing and putting their own experiences onto paper (Spack, 1985, 1990). In this way, the students will approach the reading material prepared for it through their writing which can be considered as an entry into that text before reading it. This free writing can last ten to fifteen minutes, with the students expressing themselves without a focus on grammar or organization. Responding to reading through pre-reading writing "...primes schemata and thereby facilitates reading of a text." (Leki, 1993, p.19).

Tasks involving students to write response statements to texts they read is another form of responding to reading through writing. Here, students are supposed to explore how they read the text rather than simply what they found in it (Bleich, 1978). This may entail how the reading material has impacted them throughout the reading experience in terms of feelings, memories, thoughts, and so forth. As students unravel, in their own words, their stories of reading, these experientially based accounts provide L2 teachers and students with invaluable insight into the ways in which students read. And writing, here, is once more a tool in the reading process.

Like response statements, response essays focus on a student's reading experience. Yet, response essays exceed the primary focus on interpretation of a text or of a reading experience found in response statements (Hirvela, 2004). Asking students to write a paper describing where they have encountered difficulties in their reading is an example of such

response essays. Lent (1993, p.233) viewed this piece of writing as "...a way of breaking the silence between the text and the students; it brings to words the solitary activity of student-with-reading, and, at the same time, becomes a means of empowerment."

Journal writing is another way of responding to reading. Sheridan (1991, p.811) suggested that "we need assignments that ask students to explore reading.", and Hirvela (2004, p.101) viewed that "the personal as well as free-form nature of journal writing is especially conducive to such explorations when students use response-based writing to narrate ongoing stories of the reading of a text."

A student-reader's response journal is a notebook that he or she uses expressly for talking – thinking and writing – about what he or she reads, and where he or she confidently shares feelings, thoughts, reactions and questions, writes about what he or she likes and dislikes, what seems confusing or unusual to him or her, and makes prediction about what might happen later, etc.

In their writing of journals, their reading of them later, as well as their reading of teachers' written comments on them, students can gain insights into the texts themselves and into their performance as readers. And this can strengthen their reading performance as well.

All of the above classroom activities can be employed in individual assignments of shorter duration. In the next section, however, more involved instructional scenarios in which to use writing to support reading will be described.

2.10.3.4 Major Writing to Read Instructional Scenarios

Hirvela (2004) suggested two main instructional scenarios each of which offers rich opportunities for students and teachers to use writing in service of reading. The sequential model as well as the content-based instruction are claimed to be of great help especially for students who are struggling as L2 readers.

2.10.3.4.1 The Sequential Model

This model engages students in a series of writing activities that turn, usually, around the reading of a single text or a few texts on the same topic. Such writing tasks are sequenced in a way that increases students' grasp of their reading as they move from one task to another. This sequence starts with some kind of informal written response to the reading material and ends with a more formal, analytic essay. Applying such a sequence approach, Bazerman (1980), for example, asked students "to complete a series of steps that begins with summarizing and paraphrasing (where there is an emphasis on accuracy in reading and

writing), moves on to an informal response essay (an initial reaction to reading), and culminates in a formal evaluative essay in which students examine and comment on their own reading.” (Hirvela, 2004, p.103).

Also, Bartholomae (1986) used writing in his courses as a means of making sense of reading. He asked students to read a collection of texts within each of several sequences in a semester-long course and then, during each sequence, to write along a continuum similar to that of Bazerman (1980).

The model has been supported by some L2 writing specialists. For example, Spack (1988:44) viewed that “by sequencing assignments, the teacher can move from a primarily personal approach to a more critical approach to the readings.” Similarly, Blanton (1993, p.238) commented, “it is students’ continued interaction [through writing] with texts that transforms them into readers, writers, and academically / cognitively proficient people.”

Another valuable way to use writing to support reading is the content-based instruction. The latter is to be described below.

2.10.3.4.2 Content-Based Instruction

This approach involves a link between an L2 course and a content course. Indeed, it requires the L2 instructor to work in conjunction with the teacher of a content course creating opportunities for students to use the L2 class as a place to investigate the reading and writing skills necessary in the content course (Snow, 1998; Kasper, 2000). According to Shih (1986, p.628), writing tasks in such an instruction:

... require students to restate and recast information and ideas from readings, lectures, and discussions on a topic and possibly also to report on results of independent group research on related topics. Thus, students develop strategies for collecting, synthesizing, and interpreting new information from external sources as well as for connecting such new information to previous knowledge and skills.

Indeed, as students write about the types of texts and the reading difficulties they experience in a particular content course, teachers can employ that writing as a basis upon which to discuss strategies for reading the text types involved and for coping with the reading difficulties students encounter.

Moreover, the opportunity to use the L2 course, and especially writing tasks to learn to read the materials assigned in content courses could provide students with the knowledge, skills, and confidence needed to perform reading assignments effectively (Hirvela, 2004).

2.11 Conclusion

This theoretical chapter has explored the link between reading and writing, and how they complement and enhance each other. Moreover, it has shed light on some instructional approaches that integrate reading and writing, and that can strengthen students' literacy skills in L2 settings. Yet, there is a need to establish if it would be possible to confirm these theoretical findings in the present study. This will be answered in the following chapter where the data collected from learners will be analyzed and interpreted.

NOTES TO CHAPTER TWO

- ⁽¹⁾ Schema theorists made a distinction between two major types of schemata, namely, formal schemata and content schemata which are closely related to reading comprehension. Formal schemata referred to the reader's knowledge of different text types and genres, and the acknowledgement that different types of texts use text organization, language structures, vocabulary, grammar, and level of formality differently. Content schemata, on the other hand, referred to the reader's background knowledge of the content area of a text, or the topic a text talked about. This type included topic formality, cultural knowledge, and previous experiences with a field.
- ⁽²⁾ More details on how to implement extensive reading in The EFL curriculum are to be dealt with in chapter four of the present research work.

CHAPTER THREE

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

3.1. Introduction

To helpfully find answers to the research questions that motivate the present study, an analysis and an interpretation of data collected by the research instruments described in chapter one – and which consisted of a set of treatments (trainings on some instructional practices integrating reading and writing) classroom observation during the training, questionnaires for students, and a series of tests – will be dealt with in this chapter. Before that, a summary involving the different steps undertaken in the data collection procedure will be presented.

3.2 Data Collection Procedure, Results, and Interpretation

Using the research instruments described in chapter one, the practical side of the present research work took two distinct but complementary instructional directions – the ‘writing to read’ direction and the ‘reading to write’ direction. The aim of the first instructional direction was to prove whether or not having students write about materials they read would improve their reading comprehension of such texts. This first stage of the current investigation involved 60 first-year EFL students enrolled in the English Language Department at Djillali Liabes University of Sidi Bel Abbas. The main objective of the second instructional direction, however, was to determine the effects of reading on the writing performance of students. The participants in this second phase were 86 second-year EFL students enrolled in the same department.

Each of the above mentioned directions required a series of steps and procedures that are to be explained in details in the following sections. Moreover, the results gathered through the different stages involved in the current investigation will be revealed, discussed and interpreted.

3.2.1 *The Writing-to-Read Instructional Phase*

For the purpose of proving whether or not students’ comprehension of texts would be improved when they write about what they read, this phase involved many instructional practices that recent research has shown to be effective in enhancing learners’ reading comprehension (Graham and Hebert, 2010; Miller, McCardle, and Long, 2014).

More specifically, students were instructed to write about what they had read in four ways:

- a. Making written annotations on texts while reading (Robertson and Smith, 1987; Porter-O'Donnell, 2004; Bean, Chappell, and Gillam, 2005)
- b. Answering questions about texts in writing – or answering written questions about texts (Vidal-Abarca et al., 1996).
- c. Writing summaries of texts read (Taylor, 1982; Hill, 1991; Friend, 2001; Thiede and Anderson, 2003; Hirvela, 2004).
- d. Drawing and filling out graphic organizers as a post-reading strategy that requires writing (Keene and Zimmerman, 1997).

It is worth noting here that before engaging the sample of first-year LMD English students in any of the above instructional practices, all of the sixty (60) participants were required to fill in the first and second parts of the first questionnaire (see Appendix A) administered to them in the beginning of the study (i.e., in the first week of the 'Comprehension and Written Expression' courses). This was for the purpose of collecting enough data about their profile, their needs, and difficulties as far as the skills of reading and writing are concerned. Yet, the results and interpretation of students' responses to these two sections of the questionnaire were dealt with in chapter one (see section 1.9 and 1.10).

Moreover, and as mentioned in chapter one (section 1.12.1.1.2), the sample participants were observed by the researcher (the instructor) at different times while implementing the series of writing-to-read instructional practices cited above. Observation took place during the Comprehension and Written Expression module's sessions devoted for such practices of course.

Thorough explanation of each step undertaken in the writing-to-read instructional phase will be provided below.

3.2.1.1 Explicit Instruction on Annotating Texts While Reading

At the beginning of this investigation, the sample of students who participated in this phase of the current study (i.e., 60 first-year EFL students enrolled in the English Language Department at Djillali Liabes University of Sidi Bel Abbas) received an explicit instruction on how to 'annotate' texts they read.

This was implemented following a set of steps:

- First, the researcher (who is also the teacher) provided a definition of ‘annotating’ as a writing-to-learn strategy used while reading and explained the purposes it can serve as well as its importance in enhancing students’ comprehension of texts they read. Most importantly, the instructor identified the main forms that annotations may take.

Indeed, the researcher stressed on the idea that ‘annotating’ is the act of recording one’s interaction with the text as he / she reads. Simply put, it was made clear to students that ‘annotating’ is the process of writing down notes and comments in the margin of the text or inserting them between the lines while reading. Besides, it was explained that annotating may involve underlining and highlighting key words, phrases, concepts, terms and ideas, and drawing arrows too even though these can be considered as the least active forms of annotations.

Participants were also made aware of the value of annotations in making them better readers. Indeed, the researcher explained that annotating texts helps them become aware of the connection between their thinking and the materials they read, and that it assists them familiarize themselves with both the content and organization of what they read. Moreover, the researcher cleared up that annotating makes it easy for them to find important information quickly when they look back and review a text, and that it activates their background knowledge and stimulates questioning and analysis of texts as well.

- Second, the researcher used ‘think aloud modeling’ while reading a sample text to show students how to record responses to a given reading material. In other words, the researcher tried to provide a model on how to annotate by thinking aloud through a text and jotting connections, questions, important information, inferences, and predictions in the margin. The researcher paused to vocalize any and all thoughts that came into her mind while reading the sample text. It was an attempt to model the internal dialogue that may occur when one is reading a text silently to oneself. Meanwhile, the students were simply listening.
- Third, each student of the participants was handed out a copy of the same sample text the researcher has been modeling to study the sample annotations closely.
- Forth, students were engaged in the process. They were required to practise annotating on their own through a careful reading of another sample text using specific guidelines and recording as much annotations as possible.

- Fifth, students were encouraged to discuss and compare their notes – or thinking tracks – with peer and/or class, and review any similarities, differences, conclusions, etc.

It is worth noting that instruction on annotating texts that students received lasted three sessions of one hour and a half each, and it was the first instructional treatment students were subject to in the present investigation. Indeed, it was thought that it is more appropriate to equip students with such a strategy right from the beginning, for they might find it useful to annotate texts they would read in the incoming reading comprehension sessions they would be enrolled in. Yet, it must also be noted here that even though students were made aware of the relevance of the above mentioned strategy in improving their comprehension of texts they would read, they were given the choice whether or not to use it with texts they would deal with in the classroom in the reading comprehension sessions to come. The next step, then, consisted of a series of intensive reading sessions.

3.2.1.2 Intensive Reading Instruction and the Distribution of the Third Part of Students' First Questionnaire

As explained above, after receiving an explicit instruction on how to annotate reading materials, the same sample of students (i.e., 60 first-year EFL students) were involved in a series of intensive reading sessions that required them to read and analyze different types of texts with a variety of topics for deep understanding.

Accordingly, students were to be engaged in many activities that required them to answer reading comprehension questions in writing while and after reading any text dealt with in the classroom. Indeed, the researcher relied on such an instruction as a way to systematically incorporate writing to enhance reading comprehension.

Each of the above mentioned guided reading sessions was planned in three complementary segments:

- The pre-reading phase
- The while-reading phase
- The post-reading phase

The pre-reading phase's main objective was to prepare students before reading the text. In fact, it aimed at: sparking students' interest and curiosity, activating and building their background knowledge, relating the reading to students' lives, and so on. This was done through a range of activity types such as: asking students to use the title of the passage to

predict what the passage would be about, asking them to list items of information they already knew about in relation to the topic, recalling and sharing experiences, presenting some of the new words which would appear in the text by providing students with synonyms and antonyms to familiarize them with word families, etc. All of that was to be discussed orally.

In the while-reading phase, however, each student of the participants was given a copy of the target text to be read silently, and was then involved in a variety of activities to ensure comprehension. Indeed, many while-reading activities were employed by the researcher at this stage to guide students' reading process, and to provide practice in specific reading strategies like asking students to skim the text to find out the main idea, asking them to infer meaning which is implicit in the text, asking them to scan the text to locate specific information, and so on. Yet, unlike pre-reading questions, answering comprehension questions in this phase would be in written form.

The post-reading phase was the last phase required for each of the intensive reading sessions students were involved in. This phase allowed students to expand the knowledge acquired in the reading, reflect on what they have read, argue, discuss, analyze and give their point of view about issues presented in the material being read through a range of questions and activities. As for activities in the while-reading phase, those in the post-reading phase required writing too. Indeed, in both phases, students were given enough time to think and answer the given questions in written form. After they finished answering the questions in their own copybooks, the correction would start in a collaborative way. And this was to be done either orally or by writing the answers on the board.

After dealing with eight texts using the same instructional routine, each student of the participants was given the third part of the first questionnaire to be completed (i.e., the last part of the same questionnaire addressed to them at the beginning of the study) . This part of the questionnaire was on answering questions – about texts they have read – in writing and on annotating those materials while reading as well.

The aim was to know students' perceptions of using writing as an aid to reading comprehension. It consisted of two semi-closed questions only, but they are direct and straight to the point:

- The first question aimed at knowing the extent to which students think their written answers to the comprehension questions in both the while- and the post-reading phases of the intensive reading courses they were involved in, have assisted their reading comprehension of the different texts dealt with in the classroom.

- The second question, however, tended to determine whether or not students have made written annotations while reading those texts, the forms of their annotations in case they have done so, and the causes behind choosing to annotate or to not annotate while reading.

It must be noted that some texts and activities demanded more than one intensive reading session of one hour and a half to be dealt with. This means that intensive reading instruction lasted more than eight sessions of one hour and a half each.

Due to time limitation, the researcher (teacher) found those reading sessions enough so that enough time would be available for other instructional practices planned for the present study to be applied, namely, instructing students in summarizing, and in using graphic organizers as aids to reading comprehension.

3.2.1.3 Explicit Instruction on Summarizing, Summary Writing Assignment, and the Reading Comprehension Test

As for text annotating, summary writing exemplifies a mixture of reading and writing. Research has shown that one of the most effective procedures for increasing comprehension is to have students write a summary of what they have read (Graham and Hebert, 2010). Based on the notion above, instruction on summarizing took part in the current phase of the study to obtain empirical evidence which serves either to support or reject the claim that the reader's ability to summarize a text contributes to his/her overall comprehension of the target reading material.

The aim was to examine the relationship between EFL students' summary writing ability and their reading comprehension. More specifically, differences in reading comprehension performance among EFL students of different summary writing ability would be identified in an effort to shed light on the reading-writing connection from a writing-to-read perspective. To fulfill this aim a descriptive correlational research methodology suitable to describe and discover links or associations between variables drawn from a single group of research participants was utilized and a set of steps was required as explained below.

The same sample of students (i.e., 60 first-year EFL students) first received an explicit instruction on summarizing. This step was planned, for the researcher intended to remove the presupposition that all students already acquired the skill of summarizing. Moreover, such a direct rule-driven procedural instruction was needed knowing that summary writing is a highly complex reading-writing activity that does not develop on its own.

By the end of this explicit instruction, the students were subject to a text summarizing assignment, then to a post-summarizing reading comprehension test involving the same text used in the summarizing assignment. The reading comprehension test assigned was meant to assess students' overall understanding of the target passage.

Finally, students' written summaries as well as their written answers to the comprehension questions were collected to be scored. And in order for the researcher to analyze, compare, and interpret the results, each student was required to write his/her name in the top of both his/her written summary, and his/her written answers to the reading comprehension questions.

Two scores will then be given to each participant – one for each of the two variables (i.e., summary writing ability and reading comprehension). This would enable the researcher to identify the relationship between each participant's summary writing ability and his/her reading comprehension of the target reading material – by determining how change in one variable is correlated with a change in the other variable.

It is worth noting here that relationships in correlational studies are usually examined with no potential cause-and-effect linkage. Yet, it is possible to establish a certain cause and effect relationship between two correlated variables. Indeed, two of the major factors that Rovai, Baker and Ponton (2013) suggested to obtain evidence of a cause and effect relationship in correlational studies were relied on in the present investigation – to prove that summary writing ability has an influence on reading comprehension performance (as this phase of the study adopted a writing-to-read directional perspective).

The two factors are:

- Temporal precedence of the cause over the effect – in the current study, participants received an explicit instruction on summary writing and were assigned to write a summary before being assessed for their reading comprehension performance.
- Theoretical basis for the cause and effect relationship – there exists a theory-based causal mechanism that explains the relationship between summary writing ability (being the cause) and reading comprehension ability (being the effect), as reported in chapter two (section 2.10.3.3.4) belonging to the theoretical background of the present study.

The explicit instruction on summary writing was implemented following the teaching steps below adapted from Irwin (2006)'s model of direct instruction:

- a.** Explanation: as a starting point, the researcher (the teacher) defined the strategy of summarizing. It was explained that summarizing is the strategy of shortening a long text into a brief version while maintaining the main points of the text and using one's own words. Besides, the researcher tried to make the students aware of the merits of such a strategy in helping them be effective readers – as summary writing requires them to organize and recollect information of the target reading material and therefore, helps them improve their overall comprehension of text content. Then, students received a rule sheet with rules for how to write a good summary (see Appendix L). These rules or steps were read loudly and explained by the teacher at the same time.
- b.** Modeling: at this stage, the instructor distributed a text to the students, and started modeling and demonstrating the strategy of summarizing using think-aloud procedure (i.e., the vocalization of the internal thought process) while reading that sample text to them. The researcher said each step of the strategy as she modeled it, asked questions, identified important information, deleted useless information, etc., and most importantly, the instructor paused each time to explain how she made each decision as she modeled. When the teacher finished vocalizing the process of summarizing, students were given a copy of the product or the written summary of text produced by the instructor.
- c.** Transferring (Guided Practice): now as students became aware of the stages involved in the process of summarizing, the teacher instructed them to work in pairs or small groups to summarize another text. They were required to highlight the main idea, strike through repeated or less important details, etc., and then collaboratively write a summary of the given text. The instructor walked around the class to provide guidance when necessary and asked students guiding questions to scaffold their use of the target strategy. When the pairs or small groups of students finished writing their summaries, they were instructed to read and self-evaluate their final products by asking themselves questions like: does our summary include all of the important details? Did we leave out details that weren't important? Did we combine some details or events that go together? Did we put the ideas in our own words? Are our details in logical order? Did we write in complete sentences?

- d. Application: after being involved in the above guided practice, students were offered an opportunity to apply the strategy independently writing a summary of a new text individually with no scaffolding.

It is worth noting that explicit instruction on summarizing that participants received lasted four sessions of one hour and a half each (explanation in the first session, modeling in the second, guided practice in the third one, and application or independent practice in the last session). The papers of the summary writing assignment of the independent practice phase were collected to be read and scored by the researcher.

As mentioned above, participants were given a text to be read and summarized in the last phase of the explicit summarizing instruction they were involved in. They were supposed to read the text, understand its main idea and supporting points, and produce a written summary in their own words. The text used for the assignment (see Appendix F) was of intermediate level difficulty, and it was an expository one (using problem/solution as a form of informational organization) on purpose as research has shown that summarization instruction is beneficial in working with expository texts (Brown, Campione, and Day, 1981; Taylor and Beach, 1984).

The sixty written summaries were collected by the researcher to be read and scored. They were to be evaluated on the extent to which students effectively convey the relevant information of the original reading material accurately, clearly and concisely using their own words but without introducing their own ideas and opinions.

Indeed, each summary was scored according to a holistic rubric, i.e., based on holistic criteria rather than on specific dimensions of summary writing ⁽¹⁾. The use of holistic rubrics is probably more appropriate when performance tasks require students to create some sort of response and where there is no definite correct answer (Nitko, 2001). Moreover, using such a type of scoring rubrics can result in a somewhat quicker scoring process than using analytic ones. The teacher is required to read through or examine the student product or performance only once, in order to get an 'overall' sense of what the student was able to accomplish (Mertler, 2001). The scores were assigned on a 4-point scale (see Appendix M).

As explained earlier, the same sample of participants (i.e., the sixty students) who received an explicit instruction on summarizing and who were subject to the text summarizing

assignment, took a reading comprehension test. This reading comprehension post-summarizing test consisted of the same expository text used in the summarizing assignment and a set of six comprehension questions (see Appendix G) to which students had to provide answers in one hour and a half:

- Question one and six of the test aimed at assessing learners' ability to skim for the main idea of the text and therefore, provide a suitable title to the text as well.
- Questions two, three, and five assessed learners' ability to scan for details and locate specific information in the text.
- Question four, however, assessed their ability to elaborate by associating text information or text topic to their personal knowledge. Thus, the reading sub-skill of inferring was assessed through this question.

Participants' answers to the reading comprehension test were collected to be scored by the researcher using an analytic scoring scale. Each question is worth 2 points, and thus, if all his/her responses are both accurate and complete, one will get a total of 12 points as a score. If a question is partially answered, the student may get 1 point out of 2 for it. Scores less than 6 out of 12 were classified as limited, scores between 6 and 8 were classified as intermediate, and scores above 8 were classified as good.

The test sought to measure students' overall understanding of the text they have summarized. The aim was to determine the correlation between the written summary and the comprehension questions' responses performed by each participant.

3.2.1.4 Explicit Instruction on Using Graphic Organizers as an Aid to Reading Comprehension, the Distribution of Students' Second Questionnaire, and the Administration of the Last Reading Comprehension Test

Another instructional tool promoting the reading and writing connection and assisting learners' reading comprehension is the use of graphic organizers. So, in the last stage of 'The Writing-to-Read Instructional Phase' of the current study, the same sample of students (60 first-year EFL students) was divided into: a control group and an instrumental group of 30 students each.

The instrumental group received an explicit instruction on using graphic organizers as a while- or an after-reading strategy that helps them in comprehending passages they read. The following steps were used:

- First, the teacher (researcher) familiarized the students with what graphic organizers are and how their use while or after reading would help them identify important information through the structure of the text read. Students were made aware that the use of graphic organizers would force them to be aware of how texts are organized (which is seen as an important component of a reader's overall comprehension abilities).
- Second, students were exposed to a variety of existing graphic organizers they could use to arrange the content of passages they read and illustrate relationships between ideas (see Appendix D). The aim was to make them see that there exist different graphic organizers for different types of texts. In this stage of instruction also, the teacher modeled the use of some graphic organizers to go with some text structures (i.e., the teacher modeled charting the structure of specific passages while reading), and showed students examples of information presented in graphic organizers.
- Third, in the guided practice stage of the treatment, participants in the experimental group were given an opportunity to present information they read in texts in the graphic organizer form. Of course, they were guided by the teacher in their choice of organizer, and the conventions for each style so that the organizer they choose fits the purpose.
- Forth, in the independence practice phase, participants started creating their own organizers without teacher guidance. Indeed, the experimental group students were given two texts to be read (a compare/contrast text and a cause/effect text) and for which they had to draw and fill in graphic organizers as a post-reading activity that requires writing.

Explicit graphic organizers instruction lasted four sessions of one hour and a half each. After the last step in the treatment (i.e., the independence practice phase), students involved in the instrumental group (only) were required to complete a questionnaire consisting of 11 closed questions (see Appendix E). The aim of the questionnaire was to identify the impact of using graphic organizers on their reading ability in the target language (as sought by the six first questions), and on their reading confidence and motivation as well (through the five last questions).

Moreover, and for the purpose of confirming or rejecting students' answers to the part of questionnaire which focused on their perceptions of their reading ability after such a treatment, students in the instrumental group were given a text for which they had to make a graphic organizer and then answer a series of multiple-choice questions as a post-treatment test (see Appendix H).

It is worth noting that the target text is organized following a 'classification' text structure pattern, and this should be displayed in the post-reading graphic organizer required. Students' graphic organizers as well as their answers to the reading comprehension test's questions were collected to be scored.

The graphic organizers were scored just to measure how well the trained students (those receiving the treatment) used such a post-reading strategy, and therefore, to consider the completion of graphic organizers after reading a factor assisting comprehension in case the instrumental group would perform well in the post-treatment reading comprehension test. The researcher scored each graphic organizer using a holistic rubric (see Appendix N).

The same reading comprehension test was given to the control group which received no treatment (i.e., no explicit graphic organizer instruction), and of course, they were supposed to answer the comprehension questions only without making a graphic organizer for the target material. The aim was to be able to compare the reading performance revealed by both groups (the instrument group and the control one), and therefore, evaluate the effects of the treatment (i.e., such a writing-to-read instructional activity) on the instrumental group's reading comprehension achievement.

The post-treatment reading comprehension test lasted one hour and a half, and it consisted of an expository text and a series of multiple-choice questions divided into three main categories, namely; text-based questions, local inference questions, and global inference questions (see Appendix H).

Accordingly, the reading performance of students from both groups would be evaluated and compared based on their ability to identify information explicitly stated in the passage, comprehend implied information from within relatively small sections of the text, and comprehend implied information from across relatively larger sections of the target passage respectively.

Each of the three categories of questions included four multiple choice questions (i.e., the test consisted of 12 multiple choice questions). And each multiple-choice question is

worth 1 point, and thus, if all his/her responses are correct, one will get a total of 12 points as a score.

Scores less than 6 out of 12 were classified as limited, scores between 6 and 8 were classified as intermediate, and scores above 8 were classified as good. And in order to be able to compare both groups performance more easily, the researcher found it useful to classify their scores in each category of the three categories of questions into three levels as well: scores less than 2 out of 4 (limited), scores equal to 2 (intermediate), and scores above 2 (good).

It is also worth noting that the reading material used for the test was expository on purpose as EFL university students are often exposed to this genre in particular. Moreover, comprehending and retrieving information from expository texts poses one of the most difficult tasks encountered by them in university.

3.2.2 Results and Discussion

In this section, the results of each step undertaken will be given and discussed. It is worth mentioning at this stage that data collected by the instruments (described earlier in chapter one, section 1.12.1), and through the procedures described above in the present chapter center on exploring the effects of writing on EFL students' reading comprehension performance.

3.2.2.1 Results and Interpretation of Students' First Questionnaire Responses about Answering Comprehension Questions in Writing and Annotating Texts Read

Answering different types of questions in writing while and after reading texts in the classroom was a routine students were used to through the intensive reading courses they were involved in. When asked through question eleven (11) of the first questionnaire distributed to them to tick out the gain(s) they had as a result of answering questions about texts they read in writing, most students ticked more than one answer of the possibilities proposed.

The results gathered are shown in the upcoming table:

The Benefits of Answering Questions about Texts Read in Writing	Number of Respondents / 60
Understanding the text better	52
Noticing and organizing relevant information in the text	36
Integrating information from different sections of the text	24
Practicing different reading strategies (skimming, scanning, making inferences, guessing from context, ... etc.)	44
Improving memory and concentration (to remember information)	32
Reading with a purpose in mind	36
Reflecting on the text	32

Table 3.1: Students' Perceptions about the Effects of Answering Questions in Writing on their Reading Comprehension Ability

It can be noticed from the table that the majority of the respondents (52 students out of 60) have the same view that providing written answers to the variety of questions that the intensive reading tasks required helped them understand the texts read better. Indeed, although those questions are commonly used by teachers as an assessment strategy, they can also be seen as an effective comprehension practice knowing that answering them allowed students to sort out their reading through writing. In fact, writing answers promoted students to engage in the basic mental operations involved in constructing meaning, and therefore, gave them opportunities to discover that reading is an active process.

Besides, a total of 44 respondents agreed that the act of generating written answers to questions about texts they have read allowed them to apply and practise different reading strategies. In fact, while working intensively on reading materials, students are involved in tasks which foster their use of the various reading strategies needed for successful reading. Seeking answers required them, for example:

- to infer (i.e., recognizing a writer's intentions, perceiving what is implied but not stated, making connections between the ideas read and other ideas that they brought from outside the text, and drawing conclusions);
- to scan (i.e., glancing rapidly through the text focusing on locating specific information, for example; looking for particular details such a name, a date, a phrase, certain types of words, ... etc);
- to skim (i.e., passing quickly over the passage to get its gist, or reading for key topics, main ideas, overall theme, basic structure etc.);
- to guess from context (i.e., using prior knowledge of the subject, ideas in the text, knowledge of words' parts, syntax, and relationship patterns as clues to the meanings of unknown words).

Thus, recording answers in writing helped them to make visible the mental processes they passed through as readers.

Also, 36 students among the respondents referred to the notion that looking for answers to the different reading comprehension questions that the classroom tasks entailed and then recording them in writing allowed them to read with a purpose in mind and therefore, helped keep them focused on the topic. Their purpose in reading makes them opt for such information and not another, read, for instance, a part not the whole of a text, read rapidly or with precise concentration ...etc. In fact, their awareness of their purpose while reading is of paramount importance, as different purposes for reading determine different strategies in approaching texts and different rates of reading. The reading purposes that the questions accompanying the texts set are, thus, directed toward attaining a goal through reading; and responding to those questions in written form gave a shape to that attained goal. So here again writing served reading as it brought it into clearer focus. Simply put, the questions are a way of drawing their attention to what they should be noticing.

The same number of respondents (i.e., 36 students) pointed out that writing down answers to questions helped them notice and organize relevant information in the reading materials dealt with in the classroom. Indeed, reading to answer questions demands a lot of concentration and close attention to the text being read. The reader is supposed to pause and think about what he or she is reading throughout the process of seeking answers, and of course, the act of writing those answers creates a kind of contact point with the reading.

Reflecting on the materials read is another beneficial effect answering questions about texts in writing can offer according to 32 students of the respondents. Indeed, through their

written answers to the post-reading phase questions in particular, students are often encouraged to reveal their personal thoughts about their life experiences in relation to the content of the text they are reading. More often than not, such reflective writing that followed reading also invites them to think about what the writer wants, decide whether the writer's views are worthy of agreement, and therefore, express their own opinion as well.

Similarly, 32 respondents claimed that answering questions about texts in writing helped them improve their memory and concentration. Simply put, it seems that the act of writing down answers to questions about their reading made them engage more fully with the content of the text read and therefore, absorb more of the information. The idea is that when students consciously write something, they are more likely to remember it. And when they write something in relation to their reading, they are better able to remember its content and store new acquired information in their minds.

Other than that, 24 respondents revealed that answering questions in writing while and after reading a passage allowed them to integrate information from different segments of the reading material. As they read the text, and seek and write their answers, students are involved in a process where reading and writing are intimately interrelated. They look back into the text, focus on the sections where the answer is more likely to be found, assist meaning construction with the background knowledge they bring to the text, and then construct an answer in a written form. Providing written answers to the questions requires students to integrate different parts of the text to understand main ideas and important concepts. Accordingly, writing answers helped them monitor their understanding of what they have read.

In the light of students' answers to this question, one might be tempted to conclude that they all acknowledge the utility of providing written answers to questions about texts they read in assisting their reading comprehension of that reading materials. It can be claimed that the process of writing their own answers to questions in connection with their reading offers them an immediate test of understanding.

In other words, writing answers to questions in connection with reading sets up a self-provided feedback system for these EFL students who are often described as unsecure readers. No one from the respondents opted for option eight of the question indeed (i.e., no student from the 60 participants denied the importance of answering written questions on improving their understanding of texts read).

Even more, some respondents referred to other benefits of answering written questions about texts as explicitly expressed in their responses, like:

"It helps me put my thoughts into words."

"It helps me to know whether or not I understand information in the text. I mean if I can't explain something which I read in written words, I probably have a problem in understanding it."

"Sometimes the text is difficult and when we read it the first time, we understand it in the wrong way. But when we try to answer questions about it in the classroom, things become clear (we organize and clarify our ideas)."

"Sometimes, the teacher asks us to write a paragraph about the topic of the text in the end of the course of reading, so I can use my written answers to the questions to write my paragraph (because they give me background information)."

"When I write answers, I always try to use new words. Sometimes, I look for words in the dictionary to put them in my answers, and writing these words each time makes me remember them. I improve my vocabulary in English and this helps me in reading and when I write also."

"Writing answers helps me to improve my writing ability and learn how to write correct sentences without mistakes."

"Looking for answers to the comprehension questions motivates me to read."

"I feel satisfied when I find the correct answers to the questions."

It seems, accordingly, that providing written answers to questions about texts read helped them not only in deepening their understanding of those reading materials, but also in improving their writing performance in the target language as well as in increasing their motivation and self-confidence as readers.

Through the twelfth question of the same questionnaire addressed to students, the aim was always to search for some evidence in favour of the hypothesis that writing can assist reading comprehension. Indeed, respondents were required to specify whether or not they have annotated the reading materials they were exposed to in the intensive reading courses they were involved in; why they have or have not chosen to do so ; and the forms their written annotations took if they have relied on such a strategy.

It is worth noting here that the teacher (researcher) did not impose on students to annotate the reading materials dealt with during the intensive reading sessions (even though they have received explicit instruction of how to do so), and this was done on purpose. The aim was to see if they would choose and need to rely on annotating as a strategy facilitating their comprehension of texts or not.

The utility of writing annotations on texts to assist comprehension while reading was not denied as their responses revealed indeed: a great majority of the subjects (50 students out of 60) jotted down written annotations on texts they read in the classroom, 8 students did not mark their reading with marginal written annotations however, while 2 respondents provided no answer to this question.

It can be concluded, accordingly, that for those 50 students (readers), writing notes on the margin of texts at hand was a must - an indispensable part of the reading process they are involved in.

When asked to specify the forms that their written annotations usually took, most of the 50 respondents out of 60 ticked more than one of the options suggested as shown in the following table:

The forms of marginal written annotations on texts while reading	Number of Respondents / 50
---	-----------------------------------

Paraphrasing difficult ideas into my own words – easy-to-understand language	43
Defining unfamiliar vocabulary	50
Commenting on information in the text	24
Recording questions that come to my mind as I read as an interaction with the text or for later discussion in class	21
Summarizing key information in the text	27

Table 3.2: Forms of Students’ Marginal Written Annotations

The findings above suggested that all of the 50 respondents who claimed having annotating their texts while reading, relied mostly on writing definitions of words they found new to them as they read. This common form of written annotations might be explained by the fact that for most EFL learners (readers), unknown vocabulary is often a barrier that disturbs the flow of their reading in the target language. Thus, jotting down definitions of terms here and there on the text itself is supposed - in part - to support their understanding of the material at hand.

43 students among them, also, depended on paraphrasing – or translating ideas they encountered in texts into their own words – for comprehension as they read. As they looked for word substitutes to allow them to paraphrase, those students (readers) would inevitably re-process what they had just read to be able to explain it coherently. Thus, it may be reasonable to think that writing a paraphrase would lead them to better understand the material.

Similarly, 27 students of the 50 respondents who adopted annotating texts while reading stated that they usually summarized key points being expressed in the material read in the margins. And of course, that act involves thinking and writing processes which cannot be successfully done without comprehending the text. Simply put, being able to summarize key information encountered in the reading helped them realize that comprehension is the goal of reading.

Besides, 24 students wrote their own comments about texts’ content as another form of written annotations assisting their reading. In other words, they personalized their reading

with some brief comments including their agreement or disagreement with some points in the material, expressing new ideas that may occur to them, or things that impress or surprise them as they read, etc. When recorded, all these reflections that the reading evoked in their mind allow them not only to think deeply about the text, but help in metacognition processes and developing their own ideation process.

Recording questions that came to their mind as they read was another way 21 respondents claimed using to annotate their texts as well. They formulated a range of questions which helped them to fully engage in an intricate dialogue with the text, and to clear up confusion along their reading process. Those written reader-generated questions can also be used to open a debate with the whole class by the end of the reading, and hence, helped them reinforce their understanding of the topic discussed in the material.

Some respondents have even mentioned other forms of annotations they sometimes used while reading like:

- drawing arrows in the margin to connect related ideas;
- listing examples;
- numbering key details in the text;
- putting a question mark or an exclamation mark next to a confusing idea or information in the text;
- underlining the main idea of the text and key words as well and;
- highlighting important information.

When asked to specify why they annotated texts they dealt with in the intensive reading courses, the 50 respondents (out of 60) justified their choice providing a variety of answers all of which supported the notion that in one way or another ‘written annotations assist reading comprehension’.

This was explicitly stated in their responses as the samples below reveal:

“I annotate while reading because it helps me clarify things about the text.”

“It facilitates my understanding of the text.”

"I write notes in the margin when I read because they simplify the meaning of texts."

"My notes are easier than the language of the text. So, the notes help me to understand the text and to remember the information because they are my own words."

"I write notes on the page that I read because when I explain things in my own style I can understand easily."

"Annotating texts helps me to understand better."

"It helps me in understanding the text easily."

"Annotating texts improves my reading comprehension."

"It facilitates understanding."

More specifically, many respondents referred to the effectiveness of annotating on their concentration while reading as shown in responses like:

"Writing while I read keeps me focused."

"Annotating while reading helps me concentrate more. It makes me close to the text."

"If I don't write when I read, I will remember nothing."

"It increases my focus on the text."

"I annotate texts because I can't remember if I don't write."

Further, some students stated that making written annotations on texts read in the classroom helped them remember information that would be useful for upcoming tasks involving the same reading materials. Here are some sample responses:

"I do write notes in the margin when I read texts because it helps me to deal with the text quickly later."

"I think that writing in the margin of texts while reading is important because if I come back to the text after a period of time, I will read only my notes to remember its content. I mean I will not need to read the whole text again."

"I have a very weak memory, so I have to write notes while reading to save information and ideas in my mind."

"It helps me remember important points about the text."

"I do take notes in the margin in order to remember information and in this way, and with practice it becomes a part of my knowledge later."

"It helps me answer comprehension questions about the text later."

And most importantly, many responses reported students' engagement and involvement with the material read due to the act of annotating:

"Annotating makes me feel that I am in a conversation with myself as I move through the text."

"Annotating texts as I read is important because it includes reading, thinking and writing at the same time."

"Writing notes in the margin makes me feel that I am talking to the text."

"It allows me to put my personal comments on the text."

"I add my personal touch to what I read."

"Annotating allows me to hear my thoughts about the text."

"When I write notes in the margin while reading, it makes me feel that I know the text. I mean it makes it easy to understand."

"Writing my personal notes on the text that I read makes the text become part of me in some way."

For some, annotating texts while reading has even become a habit as expressed below:

"It has become a habit. I mean I can't read without writing on the page."

"Writing notes in the margin of texts is my own way of understanding what I am reading. I think it is a useful technique."

All the above statements strongly confirmed that written annotations helped them to acquire and adopt the key characteristics of active readers. Annotating made them approach the act of reading systematically. It helped them get involved in what they were reading, monitor their understanding, and therefore, be more likely to better understand the meaning within the text.

For the rest of the respondents (i.e., the 10 students who stated that they haven't relied on annotating while reading), 8 students justified the act of not doing so with the arguments below:

"I don't write notes because annotating disturbs my reading."

"I don't need to annotate because I can understand all the words of the texts we read in the classroom. They are not difficult."

"I don't do that when I read because the texts usually come in a relatively easy vocabulary."

"If I stop each time to write something on the page, I will waste time."

"It makes my reading slow."

"I can't read and write at the same time."

"I can summarize everything in my mind as I read so I don't need to write notes in the margin of texts."

"I don't know what to write in the margins."

What can be clearly revealed through the responses reported by those 8 students is that they showed a misunderstanding of the reading process, and an unawareness of the interactive nature of reading, as they viewed reading merely as the act of understanding all the vocabulary found in the text. Moreover, it seems that they have not the characteristics of engaged readers who should by definition take their time to reflect on and respond to the text being read. For some, interacting with the reading material is a waste of time. For few others, no relation exists between reading and writing as they found no need to connect the two basic language skills together while reading. Even more, one student showed an unawareness of what the strategy of annotating may involve – having no idea what to write in the margin of texts. For the 2 respondents that remained, however, no answer was provided to justify why they have not relied on that writing-to-read strategy.

3.2.2.2 Results and Interpretation of Students' Performance in the Text Summarizing Assignment

Based on the findings of the holistic rubric used by the researcher to evaluate the participants' written summaries, no summary out of the 60 written summaries reached the score of 4 (advanced), 22 summaries scored 3 (good), 23 summaries scored 2 (intermediate), and 15 summaries scored 1 (limited).

No student was, then, able to write a summary that meets all the criteria of competence (i.e., a 4 summary) and this indicated that summarizing is a skill which needs to be practised frequently if one is to become proficient. Nevertheless, a 3 summary is still good even though it is not excellent. The 22 students who reached such a score revealed a generally accurate reading of the text as they were able to convey the main idea and the most significant details supporting it. Besides, their summaries were generally written in their own words and most ideas were presented in a coherent manner. Moreover, they exhibited general control of written language except some minor mistakes in grammar and spelling. It is worth noting also that for some students among those 22, introducing one sentence or two expressing their opinion was the main cause that prevented their summaries from reaching the 4 score. All in all, the 22 participants scored 3 were classified as good summarizers of the target text, and were, therefore, considered to have comprehended the reading material appropriately.

The 23 students who scored 2 were classified by the researcher as intermediate summarizers showing a partial understanding of the text they had read. The main idea of the original text was not specifically stated in their writing, some supporting information was missing, and some irrelevant information was included. Moreover, the noticeable borrowing of some sentences directly from the original text indicated marginal interpreting and paraphrasing skills. They also showed some weaknesses in grammar and conventions.

For the last category of students' summaries (i.e., the 15 summaries scored 1), however, they were considered as limited in all areas of competence, either because the content was inaccurate, poorly written, or seriously disorganized, or because students largely or completely imitated the source material copying whole paragraphs directly from it. This revealed that those 15 participants had not attended closely to the material being read, or that they were struggling to understand it. Indeed, it is assumed that their inability to restate what they have read into their own words is an indicator of their lack of comprehension of that reading.

3.2.2.3 Results and Interpretation of Students' Performance in the Post-Text Summarizing Assignment Reading Comprehension Test

The results of the reading comprehension test that followed the summarizing assignment were as follows: 43 students of the 60 participants scored above 8 (their scores ranged more precisely between 9 and 12 out of 12) and were considered as good reading comprehenders of the target text, 5 participants scored between 6 and 8 out of 12 and were classified as intermediate reading comprehenders, while 12 participants were identified as limited reading comprehenders showing a poor performance in the test and scoring below 6 out of 12 (their scores varied between 1 and 4).

The 43 respondents identified as good reading comprehenders made convenient finding about the main idea discussed in the text, and were successful in giving suitable titles to the target reading material through their answers to question one and six of the test respectively. This means that they had understood the main point the writer attempted to express. Besides, the majority of them (i.e., 30 students) succeeded in identifying specific details within the text ignoring unrelated information as all their answers to question two, three, and five were complete and accurate (i.e., they were able to have the full six points devoted to this part of the test). This implies that they were involved with the text they were reading. The results gathered also showed that 28 students among them could infer information sought by question four of the test appropriately, and this was a reflection of active reading. All in all, their performance in the reading comprehension test showed that they were actively thinking and working to create meaning from what they read.

As far as the second category of respondents is concerned (i.e., the 5 respondents scored between 6 and 8 out of 12 and classified as intermediate comprehenders), they showed a partial identification of the overall main idea of the reading material as they included too many details in their answers to question one of the test. Nevertheless, their choices of the text's title were suitable through their answers to question six. They had difficulty identifying some specific details from the text required through question two, three and five, and they were all able to read between the lines, figuring out information implied or not directly stated in the text, and made, therefore, appropriate inferences while answering question four of the test.

It is worth noting that for the last category of participants (i.e., the 12 students classified as limited reading comprehenders), they were all unable to extract the main idea of the text and failed in some way to find out the appropriate answer to question one of the test as their suggestions were either too general or too detailed. Approximately, the same remark can be said about the titles they had chosen for the reading material through their answers to question six. Such a poor performance revealed a particular difficulty to summarize what the

text was about, and an inability to keep the meaning in mind as they read. Moreover, the scores they got as a result of their responses to question two, three, and five of the test, revealed that they were far from being successful in locating specific details that are supposed to be relevant information in the text. Indeed, no one of those 12 respondents reached the full score awarded for answering all those three questions correctly (i.e., the full 6 points). Furthermore, it was noticed that the majority of them (more specifically 9 students of the 12) could not infer information sought by question four of the test. They failed to apply the active comprehension strategy of inferring as they couldn't monitor their comprehension or engage in productive thinking while reading.

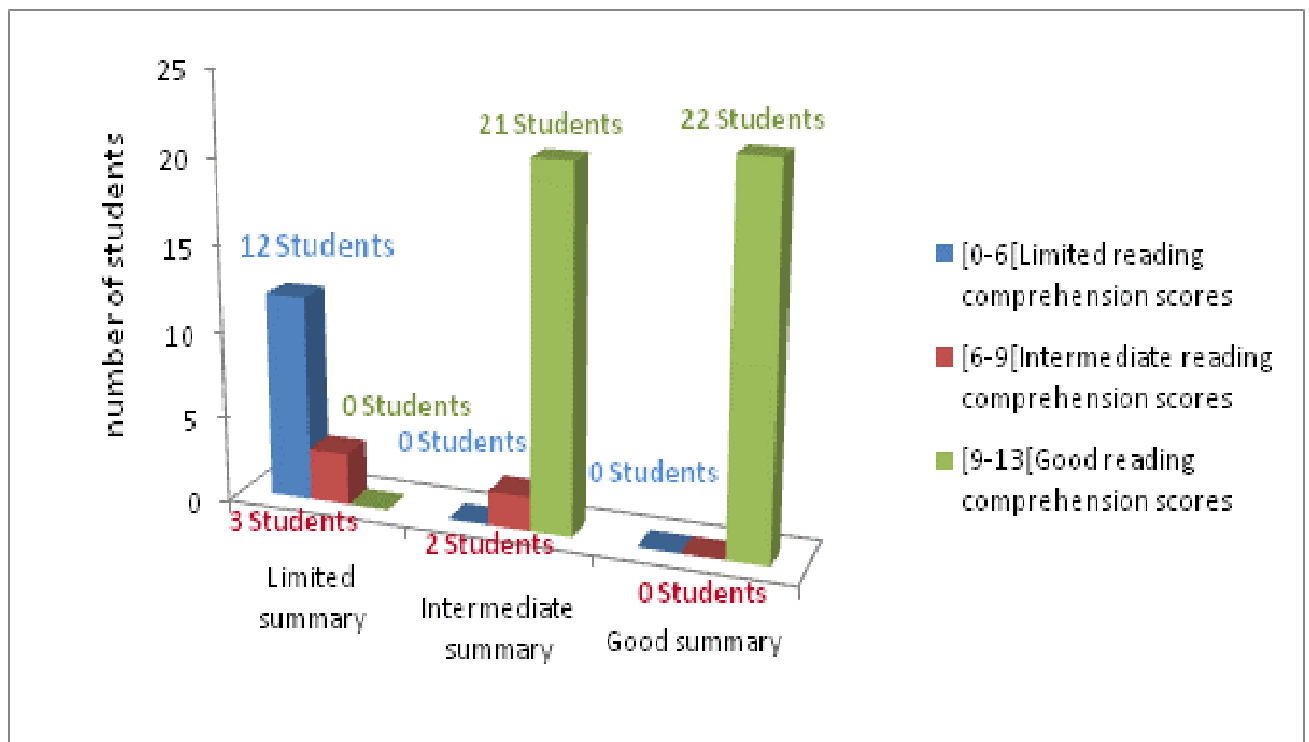
3.2.2.4 The Correlation between Students' Summary Writing Ability and their Reading Comprehension Performance

In an attempt to determine the correlation between students' ability to produce a written summary of the target reading material and their overall understanding of the reading, each participant's summary writing performance was compared to his or her performance in the reading comprehension test. The findings revealing their performance are illustrated through the following table and graph:

Reading Comprehension score Summary Writing Performance	[0-6[	[6-9[	[9-13[
Limited summary	12	3	0
Intermediate summary	0	2	21
Good summary	0	0	22

Table 3.3: Students' Summary Writing Performance and their Reading Comprehension Scores

Graph 3.1: Students' Summary Writing Performance and their Reading Comprehension Scores



To begin with, all of the 22 students who were able to produce good written summaries (i.e., a 3 summary) of the text being read succeeded to reach good scores (scores above 8 out of 12) in the reading comprehension test as well. This supports the assumption that if a reader has the ability to reduce a text to its main points while deleting its irrelevant details and stating the condensed version in his or her own words, he or she is considered to have a good grasp of the target reading material.

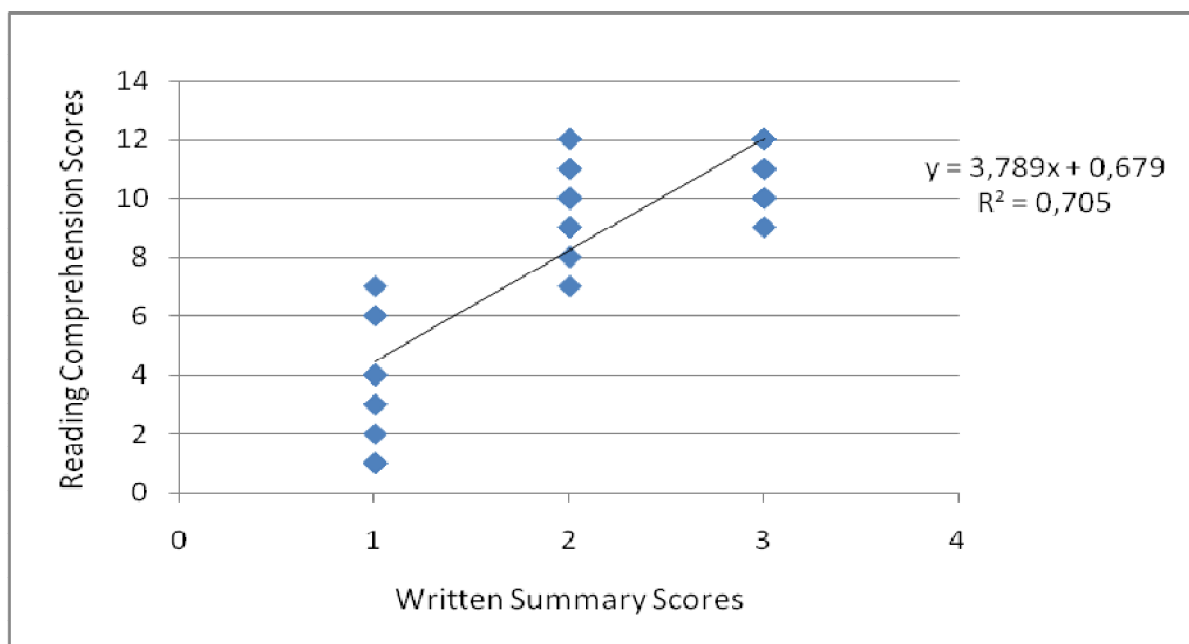
Second, no one of the 23 students who produced intermediate written summaries of the original text (i.e., a 2 summary) showed a limited performance in the reading comprehension test as no one scored below 6 out of 12. Indeed, 21 of them obtained good scores while a minority (2 students) got intermediate scores (scores between 6 and 8 out of 12) in the test. It can be said accordingly that the majority of those considered as intermediate summarizers displayed an appropriate understanding of the target reading through their answers to the reading comprehension questions. In fact, they all successfully formed the main idea of the reading and were able to identify relevant information in the text as their performance in the test revealed. It might be assumed then that the unspecifically stated main

idea, the lack of some supporting information, and the inclusion of some irrelevant details in their written summaries do not necessarily imply that they were struggling to understand the text. Instead, this intermediate performance in summary writing might be attributed to their lack of concentration on the task. It seems that they did not take their time to attend closely to the reading material before launching into writing. Such a lack of involvement in the task of summarizing is also revealed through the direct borrowing of some sentences from the original text.

Finally, 12 students of the 15 who wrote limited summaries of the reading (i.e., a 1 summary) scored badly in the reading comprehension test as well (i.e., getting a score below 6 out of 1), 3 students among them showed an intermediate performance in the test, while no one was able to reach good scores. Accordingly, those who were not able to summarize the target text appropriately showed an inappropriate comprehension of the reading as shown through their answers to the comprehension test.

All in all, the bond between students' summary writing ability and their overall reading comprehension performance is to be explained through the graph that follows.

Graph 3.2: The Relationship between Written Summary Scores and Reading Comprehension Scores



The director coefficient (3,789) of the regression line is positive. Thus, the covariance between the two variables is positive indicating a positive correlation between the scores of written summaries and that of reading comprehension. Besides, the coefficient of determination R^2 is an indicator which allows measuring the quality of a correlation. The later is considered to be strong if $0.5 < R^2 < 1$ whereas it is considered to be weak if $0 < R^2 < 0,5$. In our case, $R^2 = 0.705 > 0.5$ and this reveals a strong bond between the scores of written summaries and that of reading comprehension.

Moreover, since the coefficient of determination $R^2 = 0.705$, we can say that 70,5% of the total variation of the scores of comprehension is explained by the link between the scores of written summaries and that of reading comprehension which clearly explains such a strong correlation between the two variables as well.

The researcher's goal in this part of the study was to examine the extent to which EFL learners' summary writing ability correlates with their reading comprehension of the material being summarized. This was an attempt to look at the contribution writing makes to reading and to illustrate why it is important to link reading and writing in EFL instruction.

The findings indicate that being able to write an effective summary of a reading is a strong predictor of reading comprehension. In other words, if students can summarize a text appropriately, they are often considered to have comprehended the reading appropriately. However, if they are not able to summarize the reading material, they are supposed to have an inadequate grasp of it. A strong positive correlation has, thus, been revealed between the two variables. Accordingly, we may come to the conclusion that if EFL learners are helped to work on their summarizing skills, they will become more active, critical readers of materials they are exposed to in the target language.

Yet, it is worth mentioning that summarizing is not an easy task. It requires a lot of training and enough practice to be mastered. Moreover, creating a good summary implies not only a complete comprehension of the reading material, but also a necessary writing ability to create a new version of the source text. And such writing ability can be enhanced through exposure to reading. Ultimately, reading and writing are closely interrelated, and mixing them together in instruction will be of great benefits to EFL learners.

3.2.2.5 Results and Interpretation of the Instrumental Group Students' Graphic Organizers Questionnaire Responses

The graphic organizers questionnaire given to the instrumental group (involving 30 students only of the 60 first-year EFL students who participated in this phase of the study) to

determine students' perceptions of their EFL reading ability as well as their reading confidence and motivation after such a treatment (i.e., instruction on using graphic organizers as a while- or post reading strategy that assists comprehension) revealed the results shown in the next table. This second questionnaire that consisted of eleven (11) closed ended (yes/ no / don't know) questions was administered to that sample of students only as the control group (i.e., the rest of participants) has not received such a training.

Questions	Yes	No	Don't Know
1. Do you think that using graphic organizers helped you improve your knowledge of text organization?	100%	0%	0%
2. Do you think that using graphic organizers helped you pick important information out of texts read?	80%	7%	13%
3. Do you think that using graphic organizers helped you summarize large quantities of information in a creative and interesting way?	100%	0%	0%
4. Do you think using graphic organizers helped you examine and show relationships between facts, concepts, or ideas in texts read?	83%	10%	7%
5. Do you think using graphic organizers helped you remember what you have read in texts?	67%	30%	3%
6. Overall, do you think that using graphic organizers helped you improve your English reading skills?	60%	17%	23%
7. Do you think that using graphic organizers encouraged you to interact more closely with texts?	80%	7%	13%
8. Do you think that graphic organizers improved your reading confidence?	67%	10%	23%
9. Did you enjoy using graphic organizers?	77%	23%	0%
10. Do you think that using graphic organizers encouraged your interest in reading English?	70%	7%	23%
11. Overall, do you think that using graphic organizers was a useful activity for you ?	83%	0%	17%

Table 3.4: Results of the Instrumental Group Students' Graphic Organizers Questionnaire Responses

The two sub-sections below intend to interpret the students' responses to the questionnaire.

3.2.2.5.1 The Effects of Using Post-Reading Graphic Organizers on the Instrumental Group Students' EFL Reading Ability

As shown in the table above, all the students belonging to the experimental group (i.e., 100%) agreed that due to the act of drawing and filling in graphic organizers after reading texts, their awareness of text organizational patterns increased. Indeed, all texts they read are different to a certain extent knowing that depending on the writer's purpose, the topic and the genre, reading passages tend to be organized according to specific structural patterns (description, sequence, compare/contrast, cause/effect, problem/solution, etc.). And the use of graphic organizers as a post-reading strategy (and as a writing-to-read procedure as well) helped them identify these text structures, and therefore, understand how a particular piece of text is organized. Such an awareness will inevitably help them – as readers – to make better sense of the information they are exposed to.

All of them also contended that using graphic organizers to record information was particularly useful for summarizing the content of texts they read. Relying on such a tool, therefore, assisted and monitored their comprehension of the target reading materials.

Besides, of those students, 83% thought that graphic organizers helped them examine and show relationships between facts, concepts, or ideas in passages they read. The process of filling out their graphic organizer after reading (depending on the text structure of course) required them to break down the whole text into manageable pieces. This allowed them to see and illustrate the parts compared to a whole, and the connection between them, which in turn, helped enhancing their understanding of the material.

Moreover, most of them (i.e., 80% of the experimental group) stated that constructing and filling out post-reading graphic organizers helped them pick important information out of texts. In other words, when completing graphic organizers, students often had to return to the text to locate information, and this helped them become (as readers) more able to sort important information from unimportant information in the reading. And this led to improve their performance as readers.

Also, 67% of the students thought that it was easier for them to remember what they had read in texts due to the use of graphic organizers after reading. Simply put, recording information after reading helped them keep what they had read in their minds. And here again, filling in graphic organizers (as a writing-to-read procedure) assisted their reading comprehension.

Based on the findings revealed above through students' responses to question 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 of the graphic organizers questionnaire, it seems logical that many among them saw an improvement in their English reading ability after such a treatment. This was confirmed through their answers to question 6. Indeed, more than half of the respondents (i.e., 60% of the subjects) thought that using graphic organizers after reading was beneficial to improve their reading skills in the target language.

3.2.2.5.2 The Effects of Using Post-Reading Graphic Organizers on the Instrumental Group Students' EFL Reading Confidence and Motivation

Overall, a great a majority of the subjects (i.e., 83% of the students) thought that using graphic organizers was a useful activity for them. 80% of them pointed out that relying on post-reading graphic organizers to present and synthesize reading materials' content helped them to interact more closely with texts they read. In other words, the experience of creating such graphic representations engaged students (readers) in reflective thinking about the content they were reading, which enhanced their involvement in processing texts.

Also, 77% of the experimental group students found the creation and completion of graphic organizers after reading appealing. Indeed, graphic organizers are fun to use and provide variety; and using them to support reading is likely to influence motivation to read. This was even confirmed by the respondents themselves through their answers to question 10 of the questionnaire as 70% of them asserted that such a writing-to-read strategy heightened their interest in reading English.

Moreover, it seems that filling out graphic organizers to organize and make sense of content read had a positive effect on students' self-efficacy as readers. 67% of the respondents contended that using graphic organizers improved their reading confidence in the target language. Indeed, completing such a post-reading task required them to sort through information, prioritize it, sequence it, and so on. Those sub-tasks set goals for students-readers, and when they succeeded to complete their graphic representations accurately, readers developed a sense of achievement (which subsequently leads to an increased confidence in their own ability to comprehend reading materials written in English).

It is worth nothing that while instructing students on using graphic organizers as a post-reading strategy assisting comprehension, the researcher aimed always at proving that the reading ability of students can be enhanced by writing (knowing that the completion of graphic organization requires some writing). Indeed, even though filling in graphic

representations demand limited written responses, these responses demonstrate to a large extent readers' general grasp of the material read.

3.2.2.6 The Instrumental Group Students' Performance in the Target Text's Graphic Organizer

As explained earlier, the 60 first-year EFL students who participated in the study were divided into an experimental group (30 students) receiving an explicit instruction on using graphic organizers as a post reading strategy and a control group (30 students) receiving no treatment. And after the treatment, both groups were subject to a reading comprehension test.

Students of the experimental group were required to read a text, draw and fill in a graphic organizer based on its structure pattern and content, and then answer a series of multiple choice questions. Students of the control group, however, were merely required to read the same target text and answer the series of questions.

Based on the findings of the holistic rubric used by the researcher to evaluate the experimental group's graphic organizers, no graphic organizer out of the 30 got the score 1 (limited), 13 graphic organizers scored 2 (intermediate), while 17 graphic organizers scored 3 (good). Broadly speaking then, the instructed students were successful in constructing their post-reading graphic organizers.

Their performance varied between good and intermediate. Indeed, more than half of the participants (57%) created a graphic organizer that meets all criteria of competence (i.e., a 3 graphic organizer) - their graphic organizers were complete and accurate demonstrating a clear understanding of the passage and using appropriate details to classify plants' responsive movements and hormones into categories, and the function of each as well. Information in the graphic representations is well-organized, focused, and fluent, with a sense of engagement. This could be attributed to students' excitement to this new way of assisting their reading. For the rest of the participants (i.e., 43% of the 30 students), their intermediate graphic organizers scored 2, were still acceptable even though they were less than fully elaborated.

As noted previously, the graphic organizers were scored just to measure how well the trained students (those receiving the treatment) used such a post-reading strategy, and therefore, to consider the completion of graphic organizers after reading (an activity that requires writing) a factor assisting comprehension in case the instrumental group would perform well in the post-treatment reading comprehension test.

3.2.2.7 Results and Interpretation of the Post-Graphic Organizers Treatment Reading Comprehension Test

After scoring both groups' performance on the reading comprehension test, it was clearly revealed that the instrumental group performed better than the control group. Indeed, 18 students of the instrumental group (i.e., 60%) scored above 8 (their scores ranged more precisely between 9 and 12 out of 12) and were considered as good reading comprehenders of the target text, 8 out of the 30 participants belonging to the same group (i.e., 27%) scored between 6 and 8 out of 12 and were classified as intermediate reading comprehenders, while 13% of the students (4 participants only) were identified as limited reading comprehenders showing a poor performance in the test and scoring below 6 out of 12 (more specifically, their scores were equal to 5 or 4). Only 11 students of the control group (i.e., 37%), however, obtained marks above 8 in the test (good), 7 students (i.e., 23%) scored between 6 and 8 (intermediate), and nearly half of the control group students (i.e., 12 students or 40%) got scores less than 6 out of 12 showing a limited performance in the reading comprehension test.

Based on these findings, it can be assumed that the treatment (i.e., the explicit graphic organizers instruction) which the instrumental group received as well as their completion of the graphic organizer after reading the target text and before answering the test questions have helped them be more engaged readers.

Indeed, through the use of graphic organizers as readers, they were accustomed to notice the organization of the reading and used it as an aid helping them in finding the important information they need to recall from the material. As students filled in their post-reading graphic organizers, they returned to the text, they simultaneously extracted and constructed meaning through their interaction with written language, and they made their reading comprehension visible through the information they recorded on the graphic organizers. This kind of writing used to classify information under a scheme contributed to a holistic understanding of the passage. In other words, the process of designing graphic organizers required readers to put the extracted meaning from the passage in shortened version and to create connections that students from the control group may not have noticed.

Both groups' performance results in the reading comprehension test – in terms of their success or failure in answering the three types of multiple choice questions the test involved – are revealed in more details through the table that follows.

Reading test questions Learners Performance	Text-based questions		Local-inference questions		Global-inference questions		Final scores	
	Control Group	Instrumental Group	Control Group	Instrumental Group	Control Group	Instrumental Group	Control Group	Instrumental Group
Good Scores	16	25	13	18	6	8	11	18
Intermediate Scores	10	5	7	9	9	12	7	8
Limited Scores	4	0	10	3	15	10	12	4

Table 3.5: Control Group and Instrumental Group Students' Performance in the Post-Graphic Organizers Treatment Reading Comprehension Test

On what concerns their responses to the set of text-based questions, a great majority of the students belonging to the instrumental group (25 students out of 30, i.e., 83% of them) were able to search and locate the text explicit content, and therefore, succeeded in verifying which answer of the items proposed was the most suitable for each question (their scores varied between 3 and 4 out of 4). For the 5 remaining respondents (i.e., 17%), however, their scores were intermediate reaching a score of 2 out of 4. Although the instrumental group students' performance on that type of questions was generally higher than that of the control group students, still 53% (i.e., 16 students) of the control group were successful in identifying information that was clearly stated in the text, and 33% of them (i.e., 10 students) reached intermediate scores. However, 14% of the control group failed in retrieving directly stated information and got scores below 2 out of 4 (i.e., limited scores).

Such a general strength among both groups in locating explicitly cued text information might be attributed to the fact that answering text-dependent questions requires minimal if any inferential processes – the meaning is evident and stated in the text even though readers must recognize the relevance of the information or idea in relation to the information sought. Moreover, this might be due to their habitual reliance on focusing on the text at the word, phrase, and sentence level while constructing meaning.

As far as the local-inference questions are concerned, more than half of the experimental group students (18 respondents out of 30, i.e., 60%) were able to integrate information at a local level (connecting two or more ideas or pieces of information that are not explicitly connected) to resolve the gaps in meaning that occur in the target text. The majority of those 18 respondents got the total score devoted to this part of the test (i.e., 4 out of 4) as they correctly made the local inferences required. It can be assumed then, that the graphic organizers treatment they received (as well as the post-reading graphic organizer they filled in for the target text before answering the test questions) helped them to some extent be more able to construct coherent representations of the material than the control group students. They interacted with the text in a more dynamic manner.

This was supported by the control group overall performance in that second type of questions the test involved. Indeed, even though 13 respondents of the control group (i.e., 44%) reached good scores, still a considerable percentage (i.e., 33%) of the respondents failed in drawing local inferences and got limited scores that varied between 0 and 1 out of 4. Only 10% of the experimental group received limited scores however.

Even more, results indicated that the instrumental group showed better performance in the last category of questions (i.e., the global-inference questions) the test entailed compared to that of the control group. Half of the control group respondents (15 students out of 30, i.e., 50%) failed in drawing the global inferences required indeed. They were unable to connect widely separated pieces of textual information to infer information not explicitly stated in the passage. In other words, they were not capable of producing a coherent integrated model of the text as a whole. Only 33% of the experimental group, however, received limited scores.

On the bases of the results obtained out of the learners' performance in each of the three categories of questions presented in the reading comprehension test, one would be tempted to conclude that using graphic organizers as a post reading strategy had a positive effect on the instrumental group students' overall reading performance.

3.2.2.8 Result and Interpretation of Classroom Observation

This section will reveal some features identified by the researcher as a result of classroom observation undertaken during the 'Comprehension and Written Expression' module's sessions devoted to implement the instructional practices discussed earlier. Using notes writing as a technique for observation, the researcher (who is also the instructor) was able to record the following:

- A great majority of students annotated the assigned texts they were exposed to in the intensive reading sessions. While moving around the rows, the researcher noticed that they frequently jotted down some marginal notes on the texts as they read. Many among them relied on their dictionaries to write down definitions of unknown words they encountered in the passages. This was so common as a form of written annotations, in addition to some paraphrases produced by them on the page.
- In the pre-reading phase planned for each intensive reading course, some students showed a high motivation participating and expressing (orally) their predictions about the content of the incoming reading material before reading it. Other students, however, were talking to each other, or attempting invisibility; sliding silently down in their seats in hopes that they would not be called on.

Yet, whenever the while-reading phase started, most of the students became engaged. Indeed, as far as they were given a copy of the assigned text to be studied, they seemed too involved and focused. They read closely for the purpose of constructing

appropriate answers to the target questions. They worked in pairs sometimes. And as soon as they reached an answer, they directly started writing their responses. And while they wrote, the researcher noticed that they often revised their written responses rearranging the structure of their sentences, and adding or deleting some words and phrases.

- In the post-reading phase of the same intensive reading courses, students displayed the same positive behaviour. Most of them found pleasure reflecting on what they had read in writing. This was explicitly stated by many of them indeed whenever the teacher announced that they would switch to the post reading tasks. The teacher, at this stage in particular, often heard things like: “oh! Finally! My opinion about the topic!” or “I was waiting for this activity!”
- While instructing students on summary writing, the teacher noticed that most of them were very interested in learning how to summarize. They listened attentively to the guidelines presented by the teacher, and they frequently asked questions for more clarification. Yet, it was noticed that summary writing was still a hard task for many in the guided practice phase and thus, they asked for classmates’ and teacher’s assistance.
- Drawing and filling in graphic organizers after reading was also an appealing activity for many among them. They read and reread the target texts closely to be able to identify the pattern of organization adopted, drew the graphic organizers and then started filling it with information from the texts. It was noticed that students worked in pairs or small groups generally to decide about the pattern of organization employed in the reading materials dealt with. Filling in the graphic organizers was done individually however.

3.2.3 The Reading-to-Write Instructional Phase

As explained earlier, this second phase of the current study was devoted to investigate the effects of reading on students’ writing performance, and used a sample of eighty-six (86) second-year EFL students as subject. Indeed, just as writing has been proved to enhance comprehension of text, accumulating research has revealed that reading can help students think productively about the text they are writing (Smith, 1983; Kroll, 1993; Stotsky, 1995;

Hirvela, 2004). For fulfilling the objective of this phase and reaching some evidence supporting the latter notion, two main procedures that research has shown to improve writing from a reading-to-write perspective were used. Simply put, the current phase sought to explore how using input deriving from reading influences writing development by:

- a. Assigning students to read model texts which exemplify the types of texts they are expected to write (Eschholz, 1980; Smagorinsky, 1992; Hedge, 2000).
- b. Assigning students to use topic background reading for an upcoming writing assignment (Kroll, 1990).

It is worth reminding here that before being involved in any of the two above instructional practices, the sample of second-year LMD English students (i.e., the eighty-six (86) participants) were required to fill in a mini questionnaire (that consisted of the second part of the first questionnaire given to first-year students in the first phase of the current investigation, see Appendix B) administered to them in the beginning of the study (i.e., in the first week of the ‘Comprehension and Written Expression’ courses). This was for the purpose of collecting enough data about their needs, and difficulties as far as the skills of reading and writing are concerned. Yet, the results and interpretation of students’ responses to the questionnaire were dealt with in chapter one (see section 1.10). Besides, and as referred to in chapter one (section 1.12.2.1.2), the sample participants were observed by the researcher (the instructor) at different times while implementing the series of reading-to-write instructional practices cited above. And Observation took place during the Comprehension and Written Expression module’s sessions devoted for such practices.

The two above pedagogical tools were employed in instruction following a series of stages as described below.

3.2.3.1 Model Essays Reading Instructional Practice

The first instructional practice used in the reading-to-write instructional phase involved three main stages (the pre-, during-, and post- model essays reading treatment stages) each of which will be described in details in this section. Furthermore, the data collected through the research tools will be described and discussed.

3.2.3.1.1 *The Pre-Model Essays Reading Treatment Stage*

At the beginning of this phase of the current research work, the sample of students involved (i.e., 86 second-year EFL students enrolled in the English Language Department at Djillali Liabes University of Sidi Bel Abbas) were instructed on how to write different types of essays one hour and a half twice a week for a period of six months – knowing that essay writing is the core of second-year writing courses. This was implemented during the ‘Comprehension and Written Expression’ module sessions.

The first series of sessions covered in a very basic way: what an essay is and what it is not, the basic structure of an essay, types of essays, and how the essay structure fulfills the essay’s purpose. After being exposed to such relevant basics for essay writing, students were required to write several essays (throughout the period devoted to this instruction) in response to a variety of writing prompts. More precisely, students were regularly given a series of topics to choose from to write a five-paragraph essay relying on various modes of discourse: description, narration, exposition and argumentation respectively.

Whenever asked to write a particular type of essays, students were equipped by their instructor (the researcher) with some guiding tips that were supposed to be useful for writing that specific type of essays in particular. Students wrote those essays in the classroom, and they work on them in pairs generally. And as the class took place twice a week, one session of one hour and half was mainly devoted to thinking about the topic, planning and drafting while the second was for revising and editing their written essays. Accordingly, the essays written by the 86 students (43 essays as they work in pairs) were collected once a week by the researcher to be evaluated. The researcher’s feedback on their writings took the form of written comments recorded on their papers and pointed out the positive as well as areas in need of improvement in their essays.

After practicing the four types of essays (descriptive, narrative, expository, and argumentative respectively) using the same instructional routine with the sample students, the researcher had noticed that of all the types of essays dealt with, the majority of students showed a poor performance in writing argumentative essays and one kind of expository essays in particular, namely, the compare and contrast essay. The students themselves complained about being confused when writing those two types of essays in particular even though they had received enough tips on how to do so by the researcher.

It is worth reminding that in the instruction they received on writing argumentative essays, students were instructed by their teacher (the researcher) to use logic, reason, and supporting data to be able to argue that one idea is more legitimate than another. In other words, the arguments they provided to support their point of view must include sound reasoning and reliable evidence, facts, and examples, etc. And as no opinion is one-sided, they were supposed to consider the opposing side in their argumentative writing as well (i.e., the counter-arguments) and to attack or refute those opposing arguments – to prove wrong by providing new arguments supporting their main opinion or to show that they are invalid / untrue / illogical. This last step is known as the refutation. All these points were explained to them by their instructor.

Also, they were been told that they have to state their opinion in the thesis statement of their essay in a clear direct way (at the end of their introductory paragraph) so that they can support it through the body paragraphs devoted mainly to their arguments in addition to the counter-arguments and the refutation. Furthermore, it was made clear to them that an argumentative essay can be organized following a block pattern or a point-by-point pattern.

While explaining the compare and contrast essay writing to them, however, the teacher clarified that they were required to focus on the similarities and the differences between two items. Their purpose would be to develop the relationship between them, and in the process, explain both in details. Here again the point-by-point organization and the block organization were made clear to them as ways to be used to arrange their compare and contrast essays.

Even though the instructor equipped them with a series of tips that were supposed to be useful in assisting their writing of both types of essays, it seemed that participants still encountered problems writing them. Hypothesizing that reading may make a difference in the students' writing performance, the researcher intended to expose the students (i.e., the 86 participants) to reading model essays - argumentative essays and compare and contrast ones in particular. Of course, the researcher would ask them to write both types of essays again after such a treatment.

It is worth noting, however, that before assigning them to read model essays and for the results of this phase of the study to be more reliable, the researcher instructed the 86 participants to write a five-paragraph argumentative essay and a five-paragraph compare and contrast essay individually and not in pairs (after given them a series of topics to choose from of course). This was done in two separate sessions of one hour and a half each.

A total of 172 essays (i.e., 86 argumentative essays and 86 compare and contrast essays) were, thus, collected by the researcher to be read, scored and considered as the pre-treatment test. Two different rubrics were used to rate the participants' performance in writing the two types of essays. Yet, both scoring rubrics were analytic in nature allowing for separate evaluation of independent areas of the writing performance of each student ⁽²⁾.

The analytic rubric used to assess students' argumentative essays (see Appendix O) disaggregated their writing performance into eight (8) attributes and had specific descriptors for each attribute. These eight criteria include: (a) opening statements, (b) thesis statement, (c) arguments, (d) counterarguments and refutation, (e) conclusion, (f) organization and structure, (g) transitional words and phrases, and (h) grammar, spelling and punctuation. And for each of these components, numbers describing the levels of performance would be assigned as follows: (4) excellent, (3) good, (2) needs improvement, and (1) poor. As the highest score of each of the eight (8) criteria is 4 points and the lowest one of each is 1 point, the highest final score one can achieve in essay writing equals 32 points and the lowest final score is 8 points. Scores from 8 to 15 were classified as limited (grade C), scores above 15 and less than 24 were classified as intermediate (grade B), and scores between 24 and 32 were classified as good (grade A).

The analytic rubric used to assess students' compare and contrast essay (see Appendix P), however, breaks down the evaluation process into seven (7) parts: (a) opening statements, (b) thesis statement, (c) supporting details, (d) conclusion, (f) organization and structure, (g) transitional words and phrases, and (h) grammar, spelling and punctuation. And again each of these dimensions is divided into four levels of competency: (4) excellent, (3) good, (2) needs improvement, and (1) poor. As the highest score of each of the seven (7) criteria in this second rubric is 4 points and lowest one equals 1 point for each, the highest final score one can reach in essay writing equals 28 points. Scores from 7 to 13 were considered as limited (grade C), scores between 14 and 20 were considered as intermediate (grade B), and scores between 21 and 28 were classified as good (grade A).

One important reason for favouring such a multi-trait scoring method is its usefulness in capturing students' weaknesses and strength in different aspects of writing. The two above essay writing assignments can be considered as a diagnostic test to assess students' ability to write both essay types based on what they have acquired from the essay writing instruction they received only.

3.2.3.1.2 *The Model Essays Reading Treatment*

As previously mentioned, once participants' argumentative and compare and contrast essays were collected, read, and scored by the researcher, the scores they got in writing both types of essays helped classify them into distinct levels of performance. The next step consisted in inviting them to read and study model essays (both argumentative and compare and contrast essays) with a writer's eye in preparation for writing an essay. A series of reading materials (i.e., well-structured essays) was collected by the researcher for that purpose. The materials were typed and printed so that each of the 86 participants would have his or her own copies of the sample essays. Such a treatment was conducted in the classroom and lasted six sessions of one hour and a half each.

Three main sequential steps were involved while using the model essays approach: read, analyze, and write. The first three sessions of the treatment were devoted to read and analyze argumentative model essays while the three remaining sessions were for reading and analyzing compare and contrast model essays. Since those essays served as models for the type of writing they were expected to be doing in their post-treatment essays, participants were required to read them closely and in the process, do a sort of textual analysis.

For the three first sessions, close reading of the sample argumentative essays required students to read, reread and break down text, analyzing the writer's arguments and crafting. They are supposed to pay close attention to the language and structure of the sample essays, and the process of close reading should produce a lot of questions. To drive such a closer reading of the materials, a set of scaffolding questions were, thus, introduced to them by the teacher:

- How does the writer introduce his topic?
- What is the opinion or position of this piece? What is the writer for? What is the writer against?
- Identify the thesis statement of the essay? Is the writer's opinion explicitly stated in the thesis statement? What language frames does the writer use to state his position?
- What arguments does the writer rely on in the body paragraphs to support his thesis statement? What types of evidence does the writer employ? Real life examples (an actual event observed or experienced)? Statistics (numbers)? Facts? Quotes? How were these effective?

- Has the writer presented his points clearly and organized them logically?
- What linking words and phrases does the writer use to link opinion and reasons?
- Has the writer identified and refuted the opposing arguments (counter-arguments)?
- How does the writer structure his concluding paragraph? Does he restate the thesis statement? Reinforce the weakness of his opposition? Re-emphasize why the debate is important? Or suggest a course of action?

Answering all of the above questions and others while reading the models closely; was done orally and in a collaborative way in the classroom. Everyone one took part in the analysis including the teacher. Students were told that the aim of such reading assignments was to make them read with a writer's eye and, therefore, be able to put what they have learned from that close reading of the samples into action while writing their own argumentative essay later.

Students were, therefore, asked to underline or highlight the thesis statement in each model essay identifying the writer's opinion introduced at the end of the essay's introductory paragraph usually. They were encouraged to jot down some written annotations here and there in the model essays' margin as well to specify the writer's arguments, the counterarguments, and the refutation. This made clear the different components needed to build an argumentative piece of writing. Also, a special focus was put on the words and phrases used by the writers to present an opinion, to introduce opposing views, to signal a refutation, and so on. Students circled those signals to be used in their future argumentative writing as well. Moreover, students noted what kind of development the writers have used for each model essay to organize and structure the argumentation.

The same instructional routine was adopted in the three remaining sessions of the treatment – devoted to the close reading of a set of compare-and-contrast model essays. Yet, as the compare and contrast mode of writing adopts a completely different approach to seeing and analyzing a topic, students were required to read, reread and break down each of the models provided, analyzing the writer's presentation of the points of similarity and difference between the items being compared and contrasted and the writer's crafting as well.

Again it is worth mentioning that exposing students to such reading samples was to enable them to use the knowledge they acquired through reading like a writer in writing their own post-treatment compare and contrast essay. The students' close reading process was guided by a series of questions introduced by the instructor, like:

- What is the thesis statement of the essay? Does it clearly state the items that are to be compared and contrasted?
- What points of similarity and difference were highlighted between them?
- What details are provided to make the relationship between items clear?
- What patterns of development are used?
- What words, phrases and transitions the writer use to indicate equality and signal contrast?

All those details were discussed orally in class, and students relied on making annotations, highlighting, circling and underlining to guide their close reading of the models and assist their understanding of the components and structure of the compare and contrast type of essays.

3.2.3.1.3 The Post-Model Essays Reading Treatment Stage

In the session following the model essays reading treatment, each of the 86 second-year EFL students was required to write an argumentative essay in one hour and a half. And in another session of one hour and a half, each of the same participants wrote a compare and contrast essay. The topics students wrote about were the same as those assigned in the pre-treatment essays. The essays of both types were collected by the teacher-researcher to be read and scored using the same analytical scoring rubrics employed for assessing their performance in the pre-treatment stage. Indeed, assigning students to write an argumentative essay and a compare and contrast one after such a reading treatment is a kind of an achievement test. Their pre-treatment papers as well as their post-treatment ones are to be compared by the researcher to see whether the reading treatment provided to them affected their writing performance.

3.2.3.1.4 Results and Discussion

In this section, the results of students' performance in writing argumentative and compare and contrast essays both before and after receiving the reading treatment (reading and studying both model argumentative and compare and contrast essays) will be given and discussed. Also, the notes gathered through classroom observation will be revealed. It is worth mentioning at this stage that data collected by the instruments (described earlier in chapter one, section 1.12.2), and through the procedures described above in the present chapter center on exploring the effects of reading on EFL students' writing performance.

3.2.3.1.4.1 Results and Interpretation of Students' Performance in Argumentative Essay Writing in the Pre-Model Essays Reading Treatment Stage

Based on the findings of the analytic rubric used by the researcher to assess students' performance in the pre-reading treatment argumentative essay writing:

- Only 19 students out of the whole 86 participants were able to reach a good final score receiving a mark between 24 and 32 out of 32 points (grade A).
- A great majority (i.e., 59 students out of 86) reached an intermediate final score. They got B as a grade since their marks ranged from 16 to 23 out of 32 points.
- And 10 students showed a limited performance reaching a final score between 8 and 15 out of 32 points (grade C).

The results obtained are illustrated in the following table:

Final Score / 32 points	[8-16[	[16-24[	[24-33[
Grade	C Limited	B Intermediate	A Good
Number of Students / 86	10	57	19

Table 3.6: Students' Final Scores in the Pre-ReadingTreatment Argumentative Essay Writing Assignment

Based on such results, it can be assumed that students were not really successful in writing their argumentative essays – only 19 students out of the 86 participants reached a good final score in the essay writing assignment. And it can be hypothesized, accordingly, that the essay writing instruction they received throughout the 'Comprehension and Written Expression' module's courses were not sufficient to prepare them to write an effective argumentative essay in the target language.

In order to be able to identify students' areas of weaknesses and strengths as far as the eight criteria of writing assessed through the analytic scoring rubric were concerned, a

separate analysis would be conducted for each item's results. This will help the researcher check students' progress in these areas of essay writing, in particular, as they would write another argumentative essay (involving the same topic they wrote about in this diagnostic assignment) after the reading treatment they would receive. The results gathered concerning each item of students' writing performance in this pre-reading treatment stage are shown in the following table:

Students' Level of Performance Criteria for evaluation	4 Excellent	3 Good	2 Needs improvement	1 Poor
Opening Statements (attention-getters)	17	24	30	15
Thesis Statement (opinion)	28	13	25	20
Arguments	30	21	20	15
Counterarguments and Refutation	20	11	25	30
Conclusion	26	38	10	12
Organization and structure	20	29	27	10
Transitional Words and Phrases	23	19	24	20
Grammar, Spelling, and Punctuation	25	20	21	20

Table 3.7: Students' Performance in the Pre-Reading Treatment Argumentative Essay Writing Assignment

Starting with the *opening statements* that students put for their essays, it was revealed that:

- Only 17 students out of the 86 participants succeeded in having 4 as a score as they wrote excellent ‘hooks or attention grabbers’ – interesting openings for their introductory paragraphs. Their statements, generally, took the form of a quotation that was relevant to the assigned topic (adding someone else’s voice to their own), a striking fact, or a direct question to the reader.
- 24 students of the participants only partially developed attention-grapping openings and scored 3. The first sentences they started their introductory paragraph with were not as strong and appealing as they should be.
- A total of 30 students scored 2 in that area. The opening lines they wrote were relevant but still needed improvement as they did not engage the reader’s attention.
- 15 students, however, scored 1 showing a poor performance in this criterion. Their introductory paragraphs’ openings were of little import, lacking originality and freshness (i.e., their first statements seemed dull and trite).

As far as the *thesis statement* of their argumentative essays is concerned, their writing performance was as follows:

- A total of 28 of the participants composed a well-defined thesis statement presenting their opinion about the target issue in a clear and direct manner at the end of their introduction (i.e., they scored 4).
- 13 students presented their point of view in a form of a thesis statement but it was somewhat vague. Thus, they got a score of 3.
- 25 participants concluded their introduction with a thesis statement that hinted at the issue they were supposed to deal with in their essay but that failed to express their opinion explicitly, and therefore, they reached a score of 2.
- For the rest of the participants (i.e., 20 students), however, their introductory paragraphs did not include a thesis statement at all. And they scored 1 accordingly.

Moving to the *arguments* they wrote in their essays' supporting paragraphs, their scores were as described below:

- 30 students scored 4 as they were successfully able to provide a set of clear and accurate reasons to support their opinion. Enough relevant evidence (facts, statistics, examples, comparison, expert opinion, etc.) for that purpose.
- 21 participants got 3 as some of the arguments they presented needed more specific evidence.
- 20 participants cited arguments but with no evidence to support them, their performance needed improvement and, thus, they scored 2.
- 15 participants, however, wrote irrelevant or confusing reasons which made them get the lowest score 1.

Switching to the *counterarguments* and the *refutation* presented in their essays' supporting paragraphs:

- 20 students succeeded in presenting their opponents' (the other side's) arguments (i.e., the counterarguments) knowing that no opinion is one-sided. Besides, they provided strong rebuttal statements proving that their opponents are wrong. Thus, they successfully reached the highest score 4.
- 11 students presented the counterarguments but the rebuttal statements they offered were less persuasive, and thus, got 3 as a score.
- 25 students presented the counterarguments but without any refutation from their part. They did not respond to the rejection and therefore, got a score of 2.
- A total of 30 participants, however, did not acknowledge the counterarguments. An essential component was missing in their argumentation then, and received 1 as a score.

For the fifth criteria of the evaluation of their essay writing performance (i.e., the *concluding paragraph*), the following results were reported:

- 26 participants clearly restated their thesis statements using different words or concisely summarized the main points they discussed in their supporting paragraphs. Moreover, they included a final thought about the topic at the end. They received 4 as a score.

- 38 participants scored 3 as no final thought was presented after they restated their thesis statement or summarized the main points.
- 10 participants copied directly what they had written as a thesis statement and put it in the first part of their concluding paragraphs or only vaguely summed up the topic. Their conclusions needed improvement and thus, they scored 2.
- 12 participants, however, did not write a conclusion. They scored 1.

As far as the *organization and structure* of their argumentative essays are concerned, their scores were:

- 20 of the participants broke the information they provided into block-to-block arguments-to-counterarguments, or point-by-point structure. Their essays followed a consistent order and thus they reached the score of 4.
- 29 students used one of the two mentioned pattern of organization but their essays did not follow a consistent order, and they scored 3.
- 27 students adopted one of two above pattern of organization as well, but it was noticed that they put some information in the wrong section. This made them reach a 2 score.
- For the rest 10 students, there was little sense that their essays are organized. They got a 1 score accordingly.

Concerning the coherence of their argumentative essays (i.e., the use of *transitional words and phrases*), students reached the following scores for their performance:

- 23 students of the participants used effective transitions to link their ideas which created coherence throughout the essay. They scored 4.
- 19 participants scored 3 as coherence was displayed in most sections of their essays.
- For 24 students of the participants, occasionally, transitional words and phrases appropriately connected their ideas, but sometimes they were used inappropriately. They got a 2 score consequently.
- In the essays of 20 students among the subjects, however, transitions were absent. They got the lowest score 1.

Lastly, for the eighth criteria (i.e., *grammar, spelling, and punctuation*) of the evaluation of their essay writing performance, the following results were reported:

- 25 participants used grammar, spelling and punctuation appropriately throughout their essays. They scored 4.
- Only a few errors with grammar, spelling and punctuation were identified in the papers of 20 students among the participants, and therefore, they got a score of 3.
- 21 students made enough errors in those areas and that distracted the reader from the content. They got a 2 score based on their performance.
- 20 students, however, made numerous errors and that impeded the reader's understanding. The multiple errors made the papers hard to read by the researcher. Such a performance received a 1 score.

In the light of the results gathered from this pre-reading treatment assignment, it can be assumed that students still encountered problems in many aspects of argumentative essay writing. Yet, among the eight criteria assessed through the analytic rubric employed by the researcher, it was noticed that four components of their writing performance as far as argumentative essay writing is concerned, namely: *the opening statements, the thesis statement, the counterarguments and refutation* as well as *the transitional words and phrases* were at the top of the list as areas of weakness that needed urgent amelioration. In addition to that, *grammar, spelling, and punctuation* remained a common problematic area for many participants.

Indeed, as shown below:

- *Opening statements*: 30 students scored 2 (needs improvement) and 15 students scored 1 (poor performance)
- *Thesis statement*: 25 students scored 2 (needs improvement) and 20 students scored 1 (poor performance)
- *Counterarguments and Refutation*: 25 students scored 2 (needs improvement) and 30 students scored 1 (poor performance)
- *Transitional words and phrases*: 24 students scored 2 (needs improvement) and 20 students scored 1 (poor performance)

The researcher in an attempt to check students' improvement in writing such a type of essays in general (i.e., the argumentative essay) and in the several areas of performance described above in particular, after a model essays reading treatment (see section 3.2.3.2), invited the same participants to write another argumentative essay on the same topic they chose for the pre-treatment assignment.

The results and interpretation of students' writing performance in that post-reading treatment argumentative essay will be dealt with next.

3.2.3.1.4.2 Results and Interpretation of Students' Performance in Argumentative Essay Writing in the Post-Model Essays Reading Treatment Stage

As explained earlier, students' performance in the post-reading treatment argumentative essay writing was evaluated by the researcher using the same analytic scoring rubric employed in the pre-reading treatment stage. The following table indicates the final scores obtained by the participants in the post-reading treatment argumentative essay writing assignment:

Final Score / 32 points	[8-16[	[16-24[	[24-33[
Grade	C Limited	B Intermediate	A Good
Number of Students / 86	03	34	49

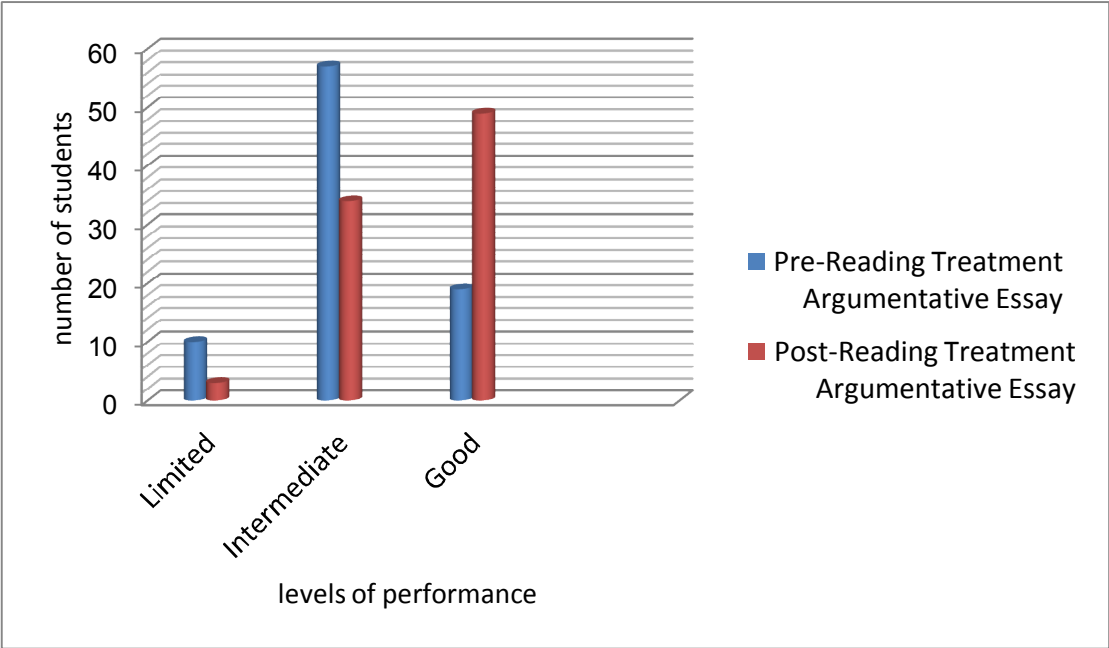
Table 3.8: Students' Final Scores in the Post-Reading Treatment Argumentative Essay writing Assignment

The findings above showed clearly that students performed better in the post-reading treatment argumentative essay than they did in the pre-reading treatment essay. Indeed, more than half of the whole 86 participants (i.e., 49 students) were able to reach a good final score receiving a mark between 24 and 32 out of 32 points (grade A) compared to 19 students only

in the pre-treatment essay. Moreover, only 3 participants showed a limited performance reaching a final score between 8 and 15 (grade C) compared to 10 students in the pre-treatment essay.

Such an improvement in students’ overall performance is illustrated through the following graph comparing their achievement after the instruction and tips they received on how to write argumentative essays (i.e., before the reading-treatment) and after being involved in a reading treatment that required them to read and study a set of model argumentative essays.

Graph 3.3: Comparison between Students’ Final Scores in the Pre- and Post- Reading Treatment Argumentative Essay Writing Assignment



Significant differences were also noticed as far as their performance in the different aspects of argumentative essay writing is concerned. Students’ separate scores in the same eight categories rated will be illustrated in the upcoming table.

Students' Level of Performance Criteria for evaluation	4 Excellent	3 Good	2 Needs improvement	1 Poor
Opening Statements (attention-getters)	20	34	20	12
Thesis Statement (opinion)	37	33	10	06
Arguments	35	26	15	10
Counterarguments and Refutation	44	16	14	12
Conclusion	30	37	10	09
Organization and structure	42	19	15	10
Transitional Words and Phrases	41	25	07	13
Grammar, Spelling, and Punctuation	25	23	20	18

Table 3.9: Students' Performance in the Post-Reading Treatment Argumentative Essay Writing Assignment

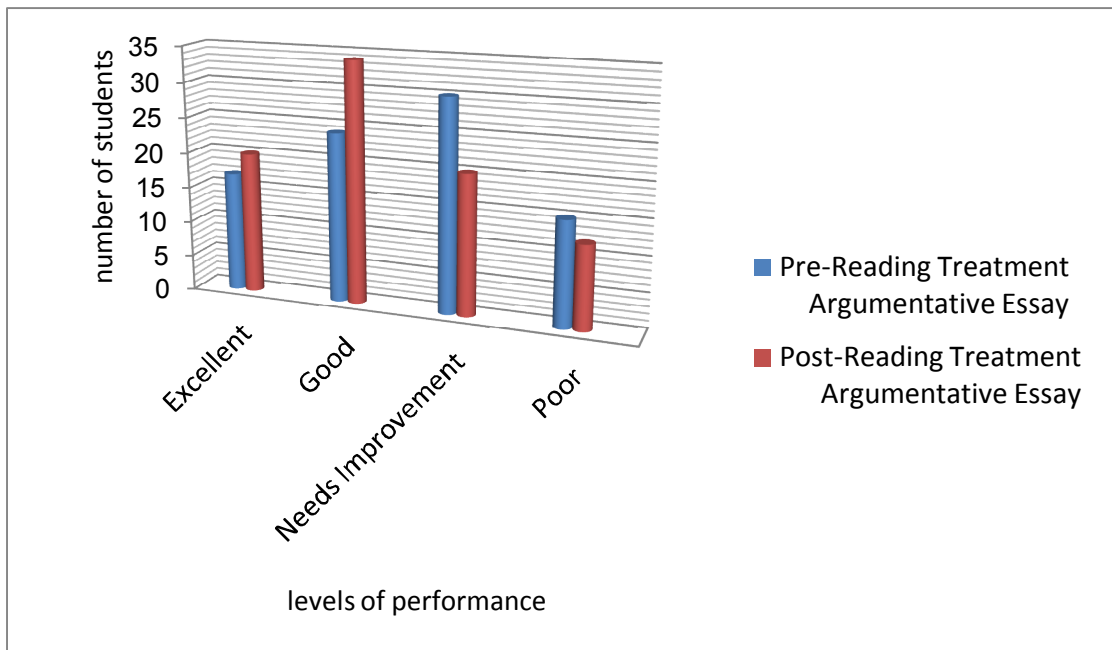
A comparison between students' separate scores in the pre-treatment argumentative essay and their separate scores in the post-treatment one revealed the following:

- First of all, and concerning the *opening statements* of their essays, the number of students having a 4 score (excellent performance) increased from 17 students in the pre-treatment essay to 20 students in the post-treatment one. Similarly, 34 students were able to write good opening sentences in their argumentative essays after the reading treatment they received and therefore, reached a 3 score, compared to 24 students only in the pre-treatment essay. Also, the portion of students obtaining a 2 score (their performance needs improvement) decreased from 30 students in the pre-treatment essay to 20 students only in the post-treatment essay. And 12 students got a

1 score (showing a poor performance) compared to 15 students in the pre-treatment essay.

This is what can be observed through the graph below:

Graph 3.4: Students' Opening Statements in the Pre- and Post- Reading Treatment Argumentative Essay Writing Assignment



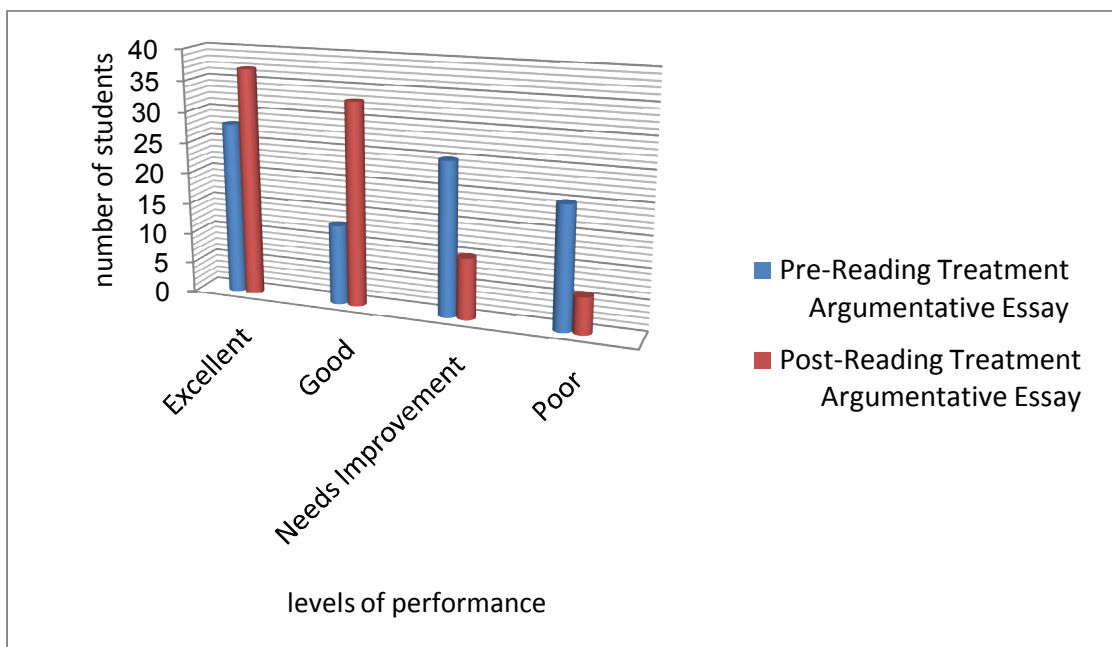
Such an improvement in composing their opening statements might be contributed to their focus on that part of the introductory paragraphs in the model essays they read in the treatment stage. Many forms of effective ‘attention-getters’ were shown to them through the model essays they dealt with. Indeed, through the sessions devoted to that, the teacher raised their awareness about the importance of making the first sentences they jotted down on their essays compelling and evoking interest. And as they were invited during the treatment stage to read the sample essays like a writer, they were trained to always ask themselves the question: “What do my readers need to know at the start so they become interested in reading my essay and can follow the rest of my argumentation?” while writing their opening lines. In short, through reading written models including appealing ‘attention-getters’, many students understood that their job as writers is to capture readers’ attention and make them want to keep reading (using

the same crafting techniques). And therefore, they applied that in their post-treatment Argumentative essay writing assignment.

- Second, concerning *the thesis statement* of their essays, many students increased their scores in post-treatment essay: 37 students succeeded in writing excellent thesis statements compared to 28 students showing the same performance in the pre-treatment essay. Even more, 33 students reached a 3 score (writing a good thesis) as opposed to 13 students only in the pre-treatment essay. The number of students having low scores decreased also. Indeed, 10 students only got a 2 score (compared to 25 students in the pre-treatment essay), and a minority got a 1 score showing a poor performance in that area (6 students compared to 20 in the pre-treatment essay).

Such findings are illustrated through the following graph:

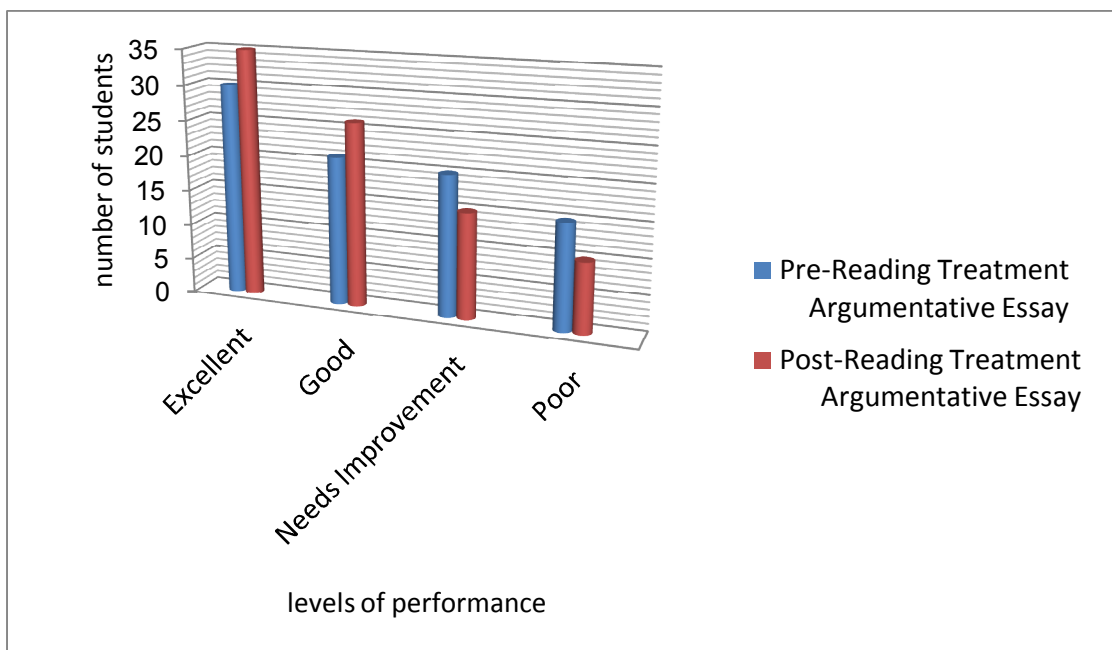
Graph 3.5: Students' Thesis Statement in the Pre- and Post- Reading Treatment Argumentative Essay Writing Assignment



It can be assumed accordingly that evaluating the thesis statement in each of the model argumentative essays students got exposed to during the reading treatment they received helped them craft or refine their own thesis statements – in a way that gives the reader a better take on their position (opinion) right from the beginning.

- Third, concerning the *arguments* they recorded to support their opinion, a slight improvement was noticed in their performance, indeed: 35 students showed an excellent performance in that area compared to 30 students in the pre-treatment essay; and 26 among the participants wrote good arguments compared to 21 in the pre-reading treatment stage. Besides, the number of students obtaining a 2 score in the pre-treatment essay decreased from 20 to 15 students, and from 15 to 10 students for those having a 1 score. This is illustrated through the following graph:

Graph 3.6: Students’ Arguments in the Pre- and Post- Reading Treatment Argumentative Essay Writing Assignment

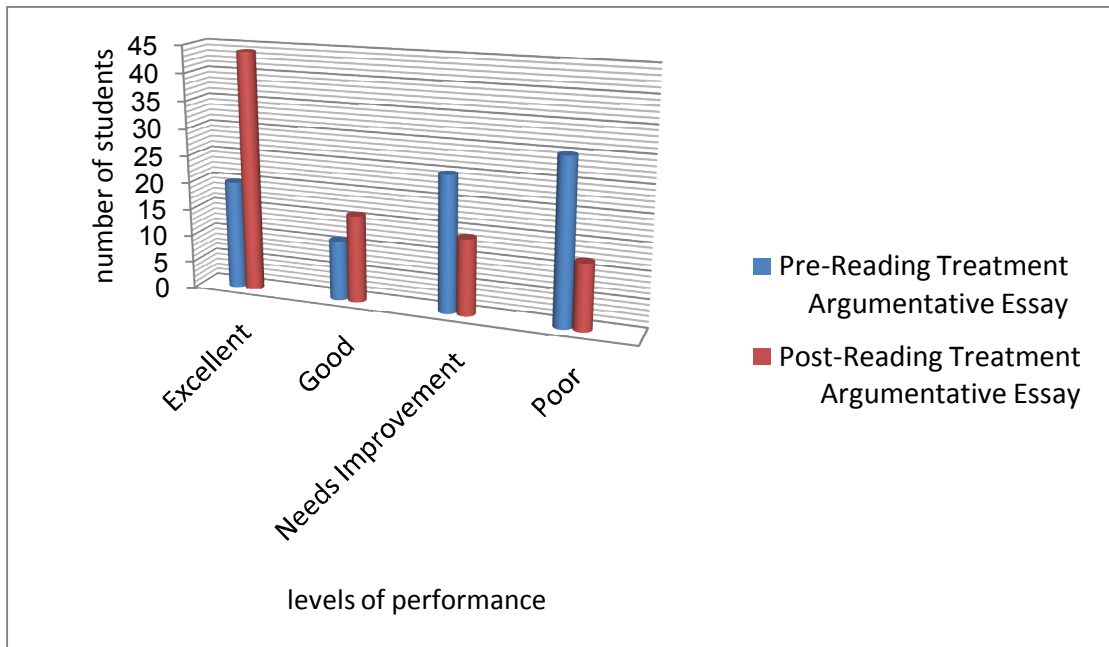


The performance shown above revealed that through the practice of analyzing the quality, relevance, and credibility of the evidence that support any claim or position in

the model essays studied helped some students ameliorate their performance in that area.

- Forth, as far as the *counterarguments and refutation* are concerned, it is worth reminding that this item was a common problematic area among students in the pre-treatment stage. A considerable improvement was displayed in the post-reading treatment argumentative essay however. Indeed, more than half of the participants (i.e., 44 students out of 86) succeeded in presenting viewpoints that oppose their own arguments and refuted the opposition appropriately in the post-treatment argumentative essay assignment whereas only 20 students showed such an excellent performance in the pre-treatment essay. Moreover, only 12 students got a 1 score (poor performance) as opposed to 30 students showing the same performance in the pre-treatment essay. This is shown through the graph below:

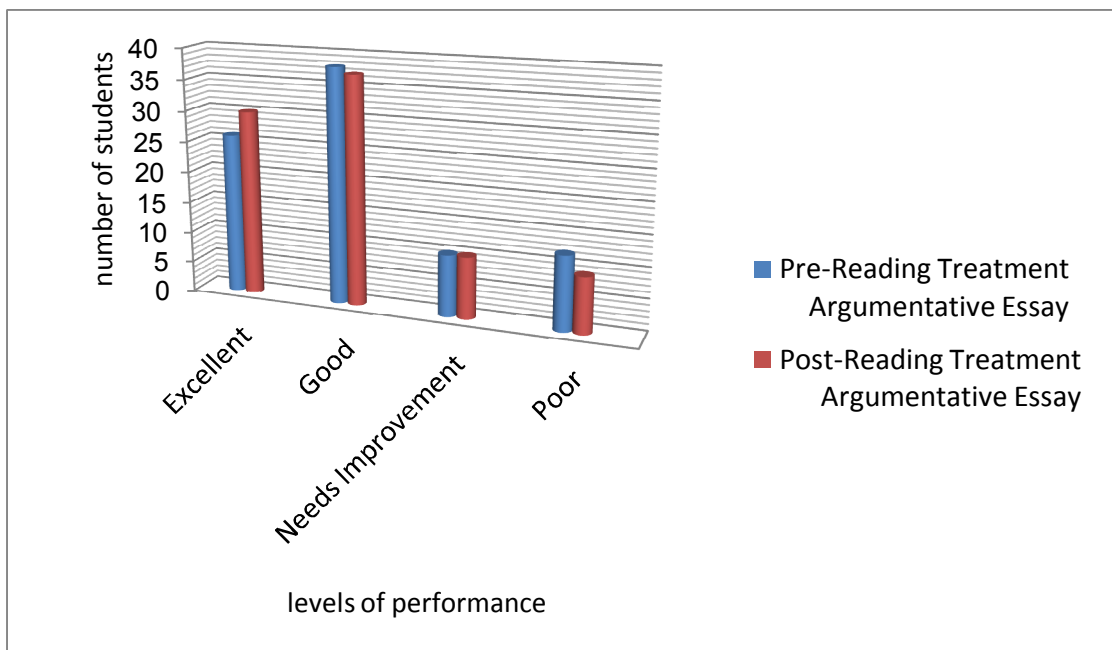
Graph 3.7: Students' Counterarguments and Refutation in the Pre- and Post- Reading Treatment Argumentative Essay Writing Assignment



The results above revealed that many students neglected or did not consider the opposing opinion in their pre-treatment argumentative essay, and among those who considered the opposition, many did so respond to it. That happened even though the teacher referred to such a component in the sessions devoted to essay writing instruction (see section 3.2.3.1). The reading treatment they received, however, allowed them to realize that counterarguments are part of good argumentative writing, for those counterarguments set up the chance to refute the opposition and show why their position was the right one to have. That was displayed in their post-treatment argumentative essay assignment.

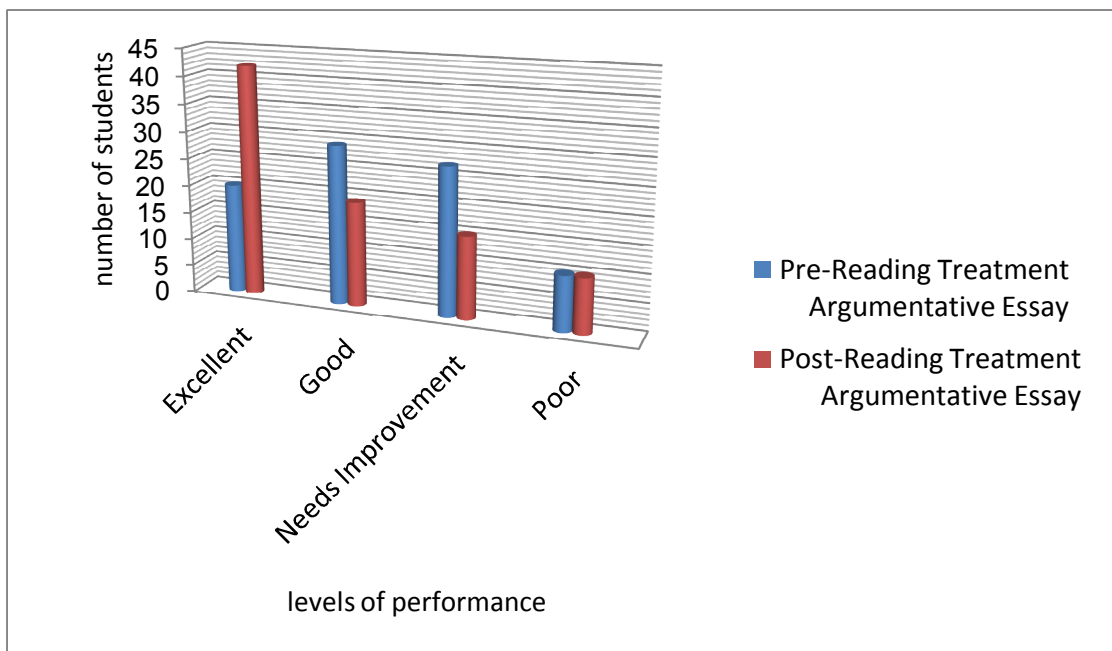
- Fifth, concerning the *concluding paragraph* they put for their essays, an improvement, though not too significant, was noticed in the post-reading treatment essay, as shown in the graph below:

Graph 3.8: Students’ Concluding paragraph in the Pre- and Post- Reading Treatment Argumentative Essay Writing Assignment



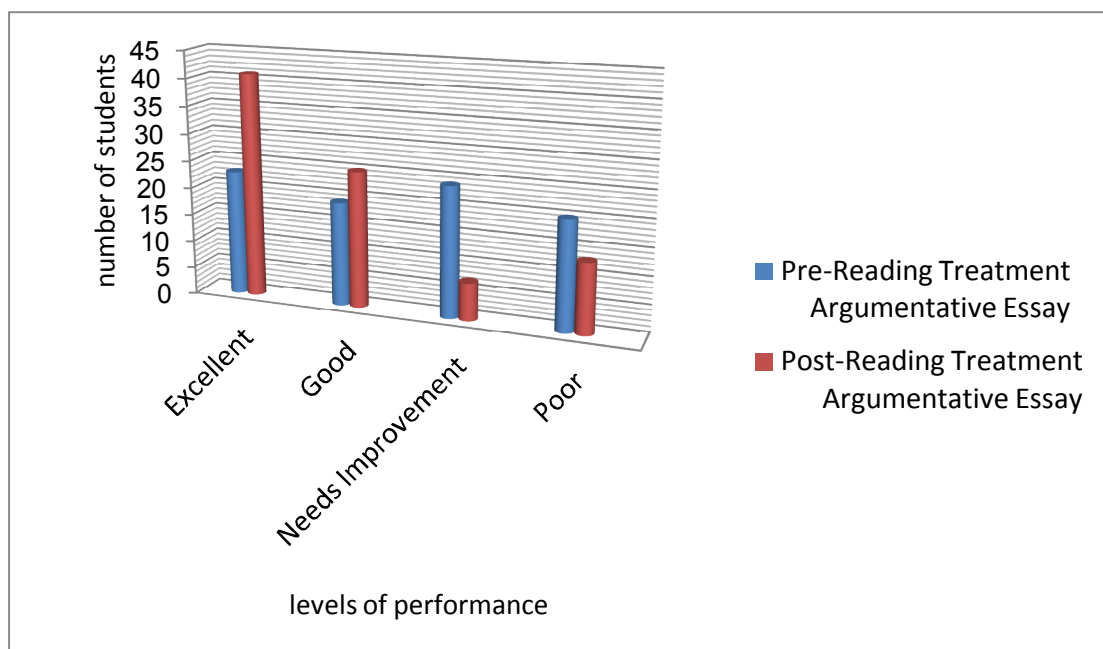
- Sixth, for the *organization and structure* of their argumentative essays, it is worth saying that exposure to written argumentative essays in the reading treatment stage helped them greatly in noticing how such a type of essays was organized and structured (adopting a block-to-block or a point-to-point organizational pattern). As shown in the upcoming table, 42 students out of the 86 participants were able to apply that successfully having a 4 score (excellent performance) in the post-treatment assignment compared to 20 students only in the pre-reading treatment assigned essay. Results are illustrated below:

Graph 3.9: Organization and Structure in Students' Pre- and Post- Reading Treatment Argumentative Essay Writing Assignment



- Seventh, a significant improvement was also identified as far as the use of *transitional words and phrases* is concerned. 41 of the participants, indeed, were able to use effective transition signals to clearly lay out their ideas in the post-treatment argumentative essay as opposed to 23 students only in the pre-treatment essay. The number of students having a 2 score and a 1 score decreased to a great extent in the post-treatment essay from 24 participants to 7, and from 20 to 13 participants respectively in the post-treatment essay. The results are shown in the upcoming graph:

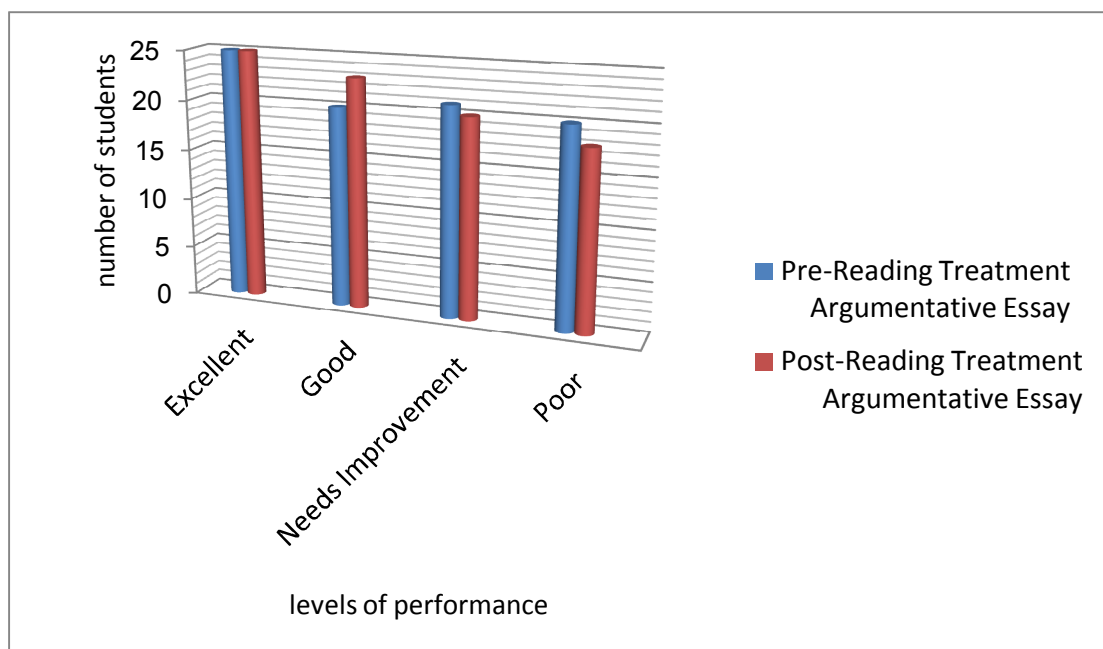
Graph 3.10: Transitional Words and Phrases in Students' Pre- and Post- Reading Treatment Argumentative Essay Writing Assignment



It can be assumed, accordingly, that the reading treatment students were involved in helped them understand, explore, and examine how transitions are used in argumentative writing. Indeed, a variety of transitional words and phrases they encountered in the model essays (on the contrary, nevertheless, while this may be true, some may say that, this is not true because, an opposing viewpoint is, some may argue that, a downside to this is, ...etc.) was employed in their post-treatment argumentative essays making their argumentation stronger.

- Finally, concerning *grammar, spelling, and punctuation*, it was noticed that students' performance remained nearly the same as in the pre-treatment stage (even though there was a slight improvement in their scores). Students' performance is illustrated through the following graph:

Graph 3.11: Students' grammar, Spelling, and Punctuation in the Pre- and Post-Reading Treatment Argumentative Essay Writing Assignment



This might be explained by the fact that the treatment students received (and which involved reading and studying model essays) focused mainly on the genre of texts studied, and on the basic components of essay writing rather than on grammar, spelling, and punctuation.

Broadly speaking, the model essays reading treatment was very advantageous to the participants as it positively affected their overall writing performance in the post-treatment argumentative essay assignment.

3.2.3.1.4.3 Results and Interpretation of Students' Performance in Compare and Contrast Essay Writing in the Pre-Model Essays Reading Treatment Stage

Based on the findings of the analytic rubric used by the researcher to evaluate students' performance in the pre-reading treatment compare and contrast essay writing:

- Only 24 students out of the whole 86 participants reached a good final score obtaining a mark between 21 and 28 out of 28 points (grade A).

- A great majority (i.e., 56 students out of 86) reached an intermediate final score. Their marks ranged from 14 to 20 out of 28 points, and therefore, they got B as a grade.
- And 6 students showed a limited performance getting a final score between 7 and 14 out of 28 points (grade C).

The results obtained are illustrated in the following table:

Final Score / 28 points	[7-14[	[14-21[	[21-29[
Grade	C Limited	B Intermediate	A Good
Number of Students / 86	06	56	24

Table 3.10: Students' Final Scores in the Pre-Reading Treatment Compare and Contrast Essay Writing Assignment

Accordingly, it can be assumed that as it was for students' performance in the pre-reading treatment argumentative essay writing assignment, students in this pre-treatment stage were not really successful in writing their compare and contrast essays. Indeed, only 24 students out of the 86 participants reached a good final score in the assignment. Thus, gain, it can be assumed that the essay writing instruction they received was not very beneficial in preparing them to write an effective compare and contrast essay.

Students' areas of weaknesses and strengths as far as the seven criteria of writing assessed (through the analytic scoring rubric used) are revealed through the upcoming table.

Students' Level of Performance Criteria for evaluation	4 Excellent	3 Good	2 Needs improvement	1 Poor
Opening Statements (attention-getters)	20	35	21	10
Thesis Statement	21	15	35	15
Supporting Details	35	20	10	21
Conclusion	42	21	18	05
Organization and structure	22	31	19	14
Transitional Words and Phrases	21	15	25	25
Grammar, Spelling, and Punctuation	24	22	21	19

Table 3.11: Students' Performance in the Pre-Reading Treatment Compare and Contrast Essay Writing Assignment

Starting with the *opening statements* that students put for their essays, it was revealed that:

- Only 20 students out of the 86 participants succeeded in having a 4 score as their first sentences were composed in a way that can easily entice the reader's interest.
- 35 students of the participants, however, only partially developed attention-grapping openings and scored 3. The first sentences of their introductory paragraph were not as engaging as they should be.
- A portion of 21 students scored 2 in that area as the opening lines they wrote still needed improvement.

- 10 students scored 1 showing a poor performance in this criterion since their first statements were of little import.

As far as the *thesis statement* of their compare and contrast essays is concerned, their writing performance was as follows:

- A total of 21 of the participants composed a well-defined thesis statement presenting the two items to be compared and contrasted in a very clear way at the end of their introduction (i.e., they scored 4).
- For 15 students, the thesis statement they wrote was somewhat vague. Thus, they got a score of 3.
- 35 participants composed a thesis statement that suggested confusion about the topic dealt with, and therefore, got a 2 score.
- For the rest of the participants (i.e., 15 students), however, no thesis statement was presented. And they scored 1 accordingly.

Moving to the *supporting details* they wrote in their essays' supporting paragraphs, their scores were as described below:

- 35 students scored 4 as they were successfully able to show how the two items are similar to and different from each other, and point to specific examples to illustrate the comparison.
- 20 participants got 3 as some of the supporting information they presented was general.
- For 10 participants, the supporting information they brought to support their thesis statement was incomplete. Moreover, they included information that was not relevant to the comparison. Their performance needed improvement and, thus, they scored 2.
- 21 participants, however, either compare or contrast the two items which made them get the lowest score 1.

As far as their essays' *concluding paragraph* is concerned, the following results were reported:

- 42 participants clearly paraphrased their thesis statement or concisely summarized the main points they discussed in their supporting paragraphs. Moreover, they included a final thought about the topic at the end. They received 4 as a score (excellent performance).
- 21 participants scored 3 as no final thought was presented after they reminded the reader of their thesis statement or summarized the main points.
- 18 participants copied directly what they had written as a thesis statement and put it in the first part of their concluding paragraphs or only vaguely summed up the topic. Their conclusions needed improvement and thus, they scored 2.
- 5 participants, however, did not write a conclusion. They scored 1.

Concerning the *organization and structure* of their compare and contrast essays are concerned, their scores were:

- 22 of the participants broke the information they provided into block-to-block similarities-to-differences, or point-by-point format. Their essays followed a consistent order and thus they reached the score of 4.
- 31 students used one of the two mentioned pattern of organization to develop their supporting paragraphs but their essays did not follow a consistent order, and they scored 3.
- 19 students followed one of two above pattern of organization as well, but it was noticed that they put some information in the wrong section. They got a 2 score consequently.
- For the rest 14 students, there was little sense that their essays are organized. They got a 1 score accordingly.

Regarding the coherence of their essays (i.e., the use of *transitional words and phrases*), students reached the following scores for their performance:

- 21 students of the participants moved smoothly from one idea to the next; using a variety of comparison and contrast transitions throughout the essay to show the relationships between ideas. They scored 4.

- 15 participants scored 3 as coherence was created in most sections of their essays.
- For 25 students of the participants, occasionally, transitional words and phrases adequately liked their ideas, but sometimes they were used inappropriately. They got a 2 score consequently.
- In the essays of 25 students among the subjects, however, transitions were absent. They got the lowest score 1.

Lastly, for the seventh criteria (i.e., *grammar, spelling, and punctuation*) of the evaluation of their essay writing performance, the following results were obtained:

- 24 participants used grammar, spelling and punctuation appropriately throughout their essays, and therefore, got a score of 4 in that area.
- Only a few errors with grammar, spelling and punctuation were identified in the papers of 22 students among the participants, and thus, they scored 3.
- 21 students got a 2 score as they made enough errors that distracted the reader from the content.
- 19 students, however, made plenty of errors which made their papers hard to read by the researcher. Such a performance received a 1 score.

The results gathered from this pre-reading treatment assignment clearly revealed that students faced problems in many aspects of compare and contrast essay writing. This happened even though they had already been instructed on how to write such a type of essays (in the pre-reading treatment stage). And among the seven criteria assessed through the analytic rubric employed by the researcher, it was noticed that essay's *thesis statement*, the use of *transitional words and phrases*, and *grammar, spelling, and punctuation* were the most common problematic areas among participants.

As explained earlier, and as done with argumentative essay writing, students were invited to write another compare and contrast essay (involving the same topic they chose to write about in the pre-treatment essay) as a post-reading treatment writing assignment. The aim was to check their improvement in writing that type of essays after being exposed to model compare and contrast essays (the reading treatment they received has been described in section 3.2.3.2).

The results and interpretation of students' writing performance in that post-reading treatment compare and contrast essay will be dealt with next.

3.2.3.1.4.4 Results and Interpretation of Students' Performance in Compare and Contrast Essay Writing in the Post-Model Essays Reading Treatment Stage

Students' performance in the post-reading treatment compare and contrast essay writing was assessed by the researcher using the same analytic scoring rubric employed in the pre-reading treatment stage. The table below shows the final scores obtained by the participants in the post-reading treatment compare and contrast essay writing assignment:

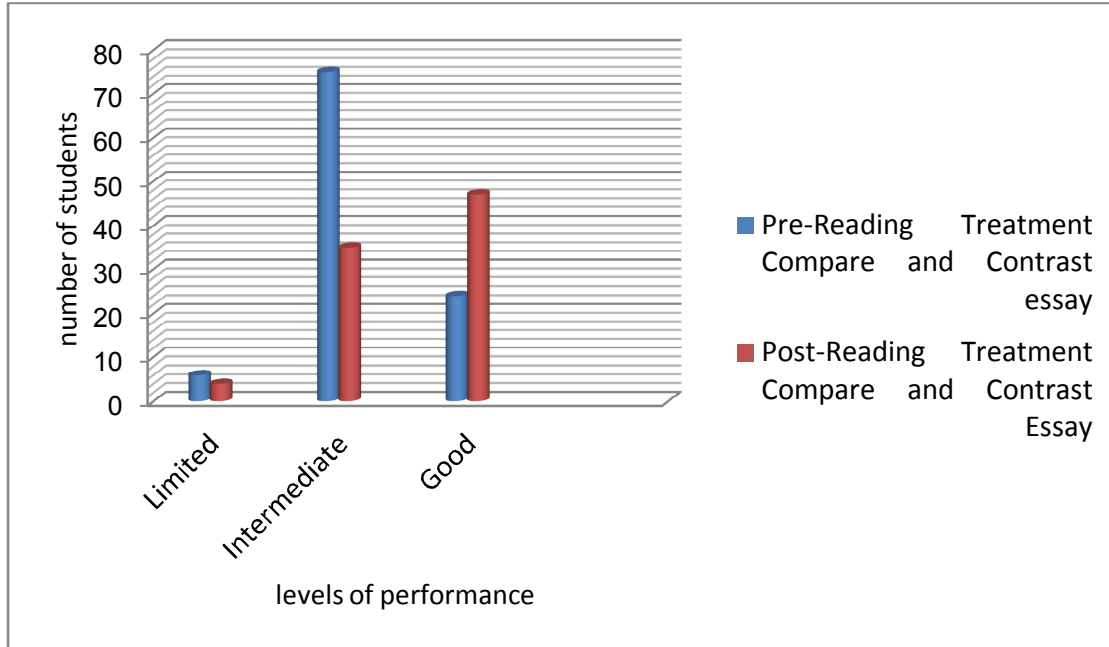
Final Score / 28 points	[7-14[	[14-21[	[21-29[
Grade	C Limited	B Intermediate	A Good
Number of Students / 86	04	35	47

Table 3.12: Students' Final Scores in the Post-Reading Treatment Compare and Contrast Essay writing Assignment

Students, thus, displayed a better performance in the post-reading treatment compare and contrast essay than they did in the pre-reading treatment essay. Indeed, more than half of the whole 86 participants (i.e., 47 students) reached a good final score receiving a mark between 21 and 28 out of 28 points (grade A) compared to 24 students only in the pre-treatment essay.

Such an improvement in students' overall performance is illustrated through the following graph comparing their achievement after the instruction and tips they received on how to write compare and contrast essays (i.e., before the reading-treatment) and after being involved in a reading treatment that required them to read and study a set of model compare and contrast essays.

Graph 3.12: Comparison between Students' Final Scores in the Pre- and Post- Reading Treatment Compare and Contrast Essay Writing Assignment



Significant differences were also noticed as far as their performance in the different aspects of compare and contrast essay writing is concerned. Students' separate scores in the same seven criteria rated will be illustrated in the upcoming table.

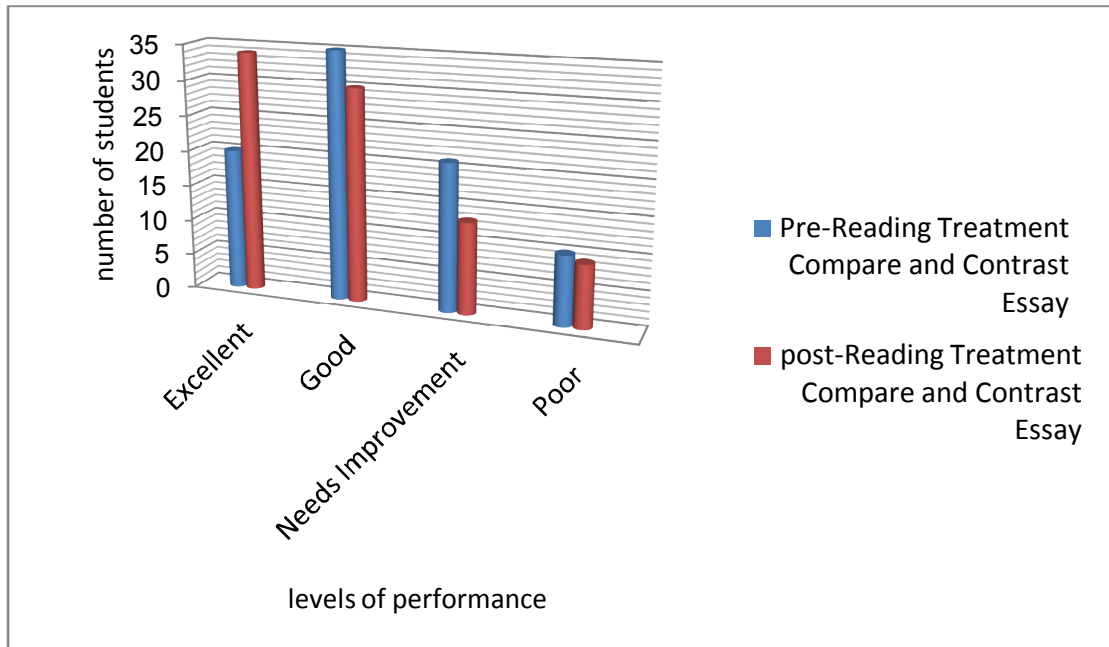
Students' Level of Performance Criteria for evaluation	4 Excellent	3 Good	2 Needs improvement	1 Poor
Opening Statements (attention-getters)	34	30	13	09
Thesis Statement	31	20	23	12
Supporting Details	35	22	17	12
Conclusion	43	23	20	00
Organization and structure	38	31	07	10
Transitional Words and Phrases	30	19	20	17
Grammar, Spelling, and Punctuation	25	24	20	17

Table 3.13: Students' Performance in the Post-Reading Treatment Compare and Contrast Essay Writing Assignment

A comparison between students' separate scores in the pre-treatment compare and contrast essay and their separate scores in the post-treatment one revealed the following:

- First, more students were able to construct better *attention grabbers* than it was in the pre-reading treatment essay assignment (34 students out of 86 scored 4 compared to 20 students only in pre-treatment essay). Also, the portion of participants who got a 2 score decreased from 21 students in the pre-treatment essay to 13 only in the post-treatment one. Most of those displaying such an improvement in that area (after the reading-treatment) began their essays with some broad yet appealing statements that eased the reader into their thesis statement by providing a background for it. And a few opened their essays with a direct question that would spark the reader's curiosity and invite him or her to read the essay to know the answer.

Graph 3.13: Students' Opening Statements in the Pre- and Post- Reading Treatment Compare and Contrast Essay Writing Assignment

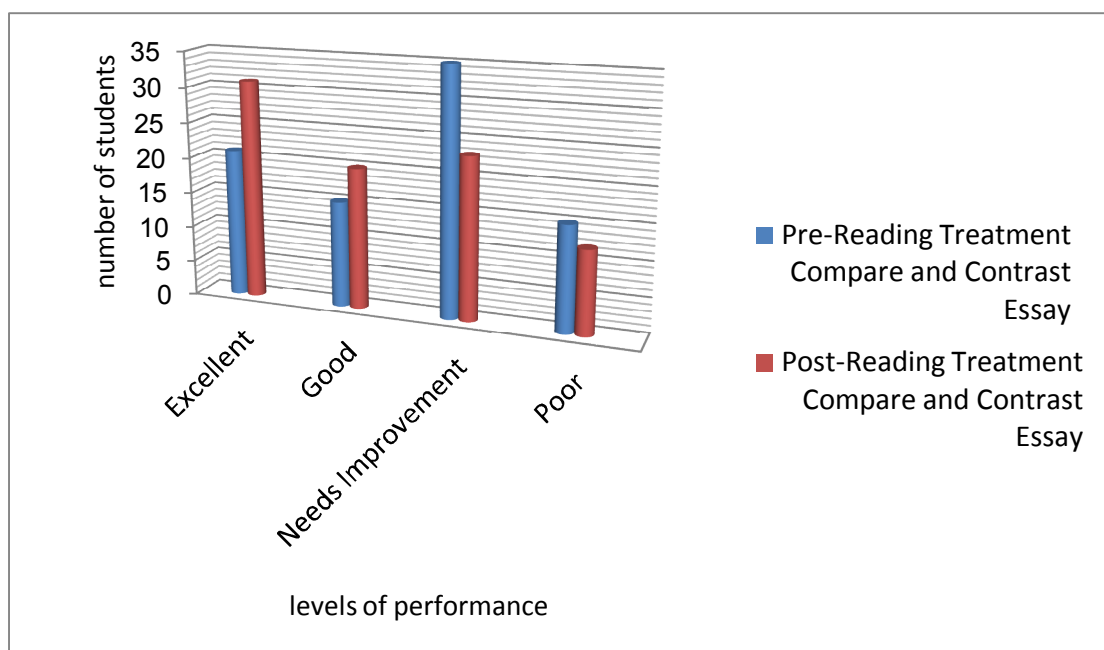


It can be claimed then that the reading treatment students were involved in helped many of them have a good grasp of how to construct effective opening sentences for their essays.

- Many students as well increased their scores as far as *the thesis statement* is concerned. In fact, 31 students among the participants reached a 4 score and 20 got a 3 score instead of 21 students and 15 students only reaching the same scores in the pre-treatment essay. The reading treatment enabled them to draw their attention to the basic features an appropriate thesis statement for such a type of essays, and therefore, the thesis statements many of the participants wrote in the post-treatment compare and contrast essay, successfully, summarized (controlled) the direction and the content of their essay.

Students overall performance in as far as this essay's component is illustrated in the next graph:

**Graph 3.14: Students' Thesis Statement in the Pre- and Post- Reading Treatment
Compare and Contrast Essay Writing Assignment**



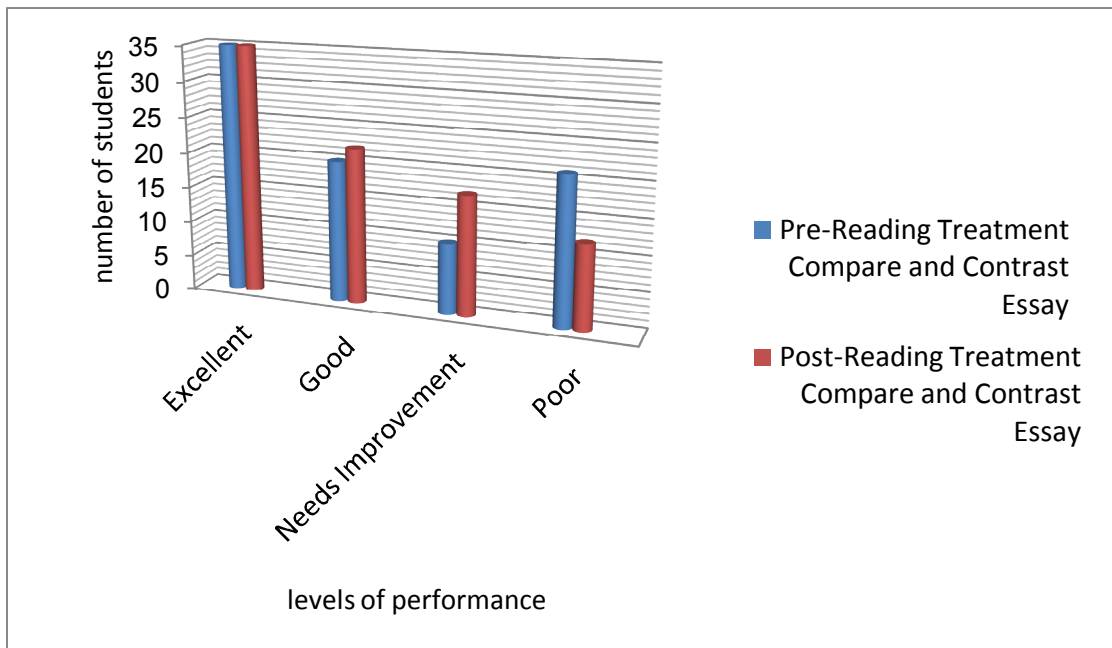
- A slight improvement was seen in the supporting details participants brought to clarify compare-contrast claims (i.e., to describe the two main subjects, how they are alike and how they are different) as shown in the upcoming graph. Indeed, even though the number of students showing an excellent performance (i.e. those reaching a 4 score) in that area in the pre-treatment assignment remained exactly the same in the post-treatment one (i.e., a total of 35 students), only 12 participants scored 1 compared to 21 students in the pre-treatment compare and contrast essay.

It is worth nothing here that students' ability to bring appropriate supporting details to support their thesis statement depended to a large extent on their background knowledge of the assigned topic. Therefore, the reading-treatment they received might not help them enriching the content of their post-treatment compare and contrast essay.

But, at least through their exposure to samples exemplifying such a type of essays during the treatment stage, some of those having a 1 score in the pre-treatment essay became aware that they should both compare and contrast (and not just compare or

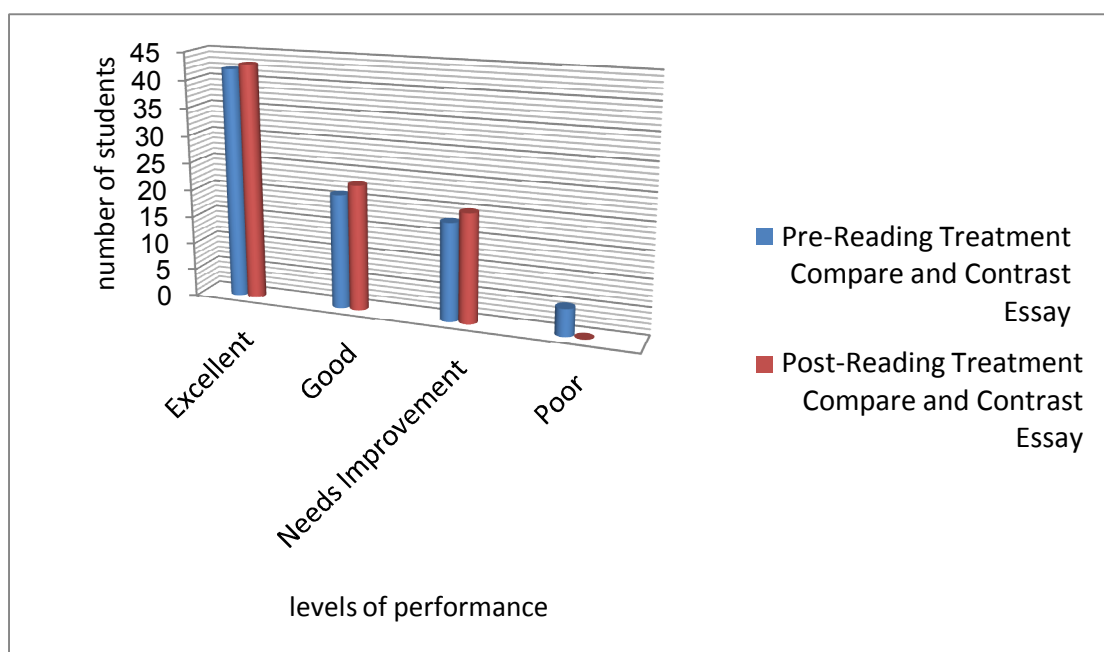
contrast) the two target items, and that they were required to bring supporting details for both purposes accordingly.

Graph 3.15: Students' Supporting Details in the Pre- and Post- Reading Treatment Compare and Contrast Essay Writing Assignment



- Also, no significant improvement was revealed as far as their students' performance in the *concluding paragraph* is concerned. Half of the participants were able to write an excellent conclusion for their essays both before and after the reading treatment as seen in the upcoming graph.

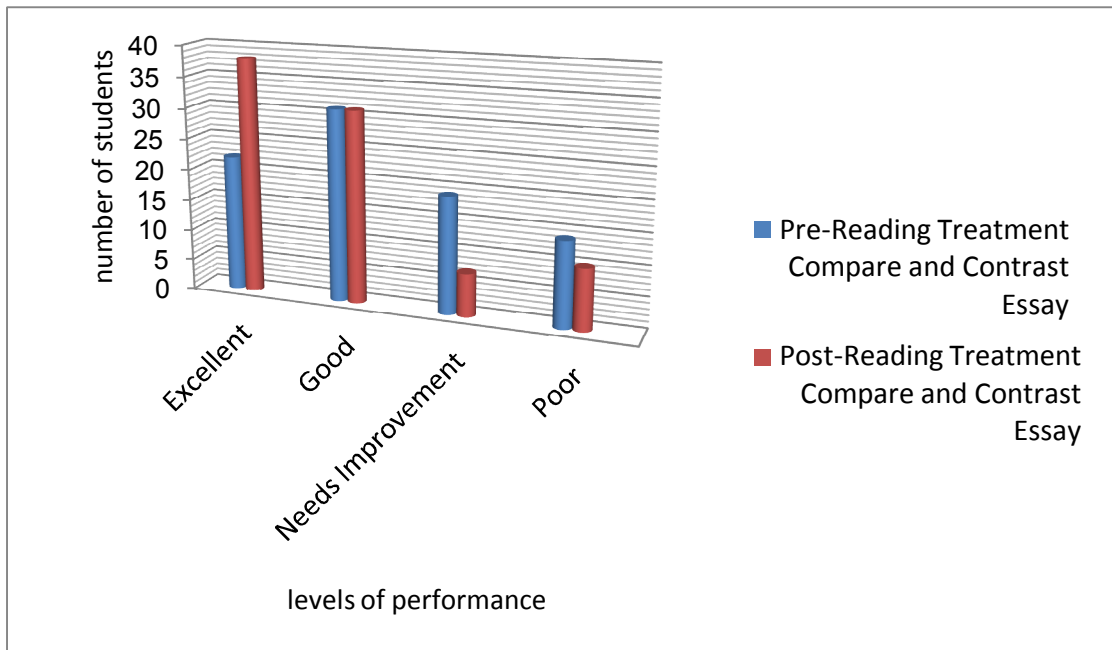
Graph 3.16: Students' Concluding Paragraph in the Pre- and Post- Reading Treatment Compare and Contrast Essay Writing Assignment



- Students' performance regarding the *organization and structure* of the assigned essay improved in the post-treatment stage compared to their performance in the pre-treatment compare and contrast essay as illustrated below. In fact, more students were able to organize their essays adopting one of the two arrangements:
 - a. a block-to-block organizational pattern (discussing one subject, point by point, in complete detail before moving on to the next subject, i.e., arranging all the similarities together in a block and all the differences together in a block);
 - b. a point-by-point arrangement (i.e., discussing a particular point about the first subject and then immediately discussing the same point about the second subject.)

Those two patterns were focused on intensively during the reading treatment through the compare and contrast model essays studied. Results of students' achievement are shown in the upcoming graph.

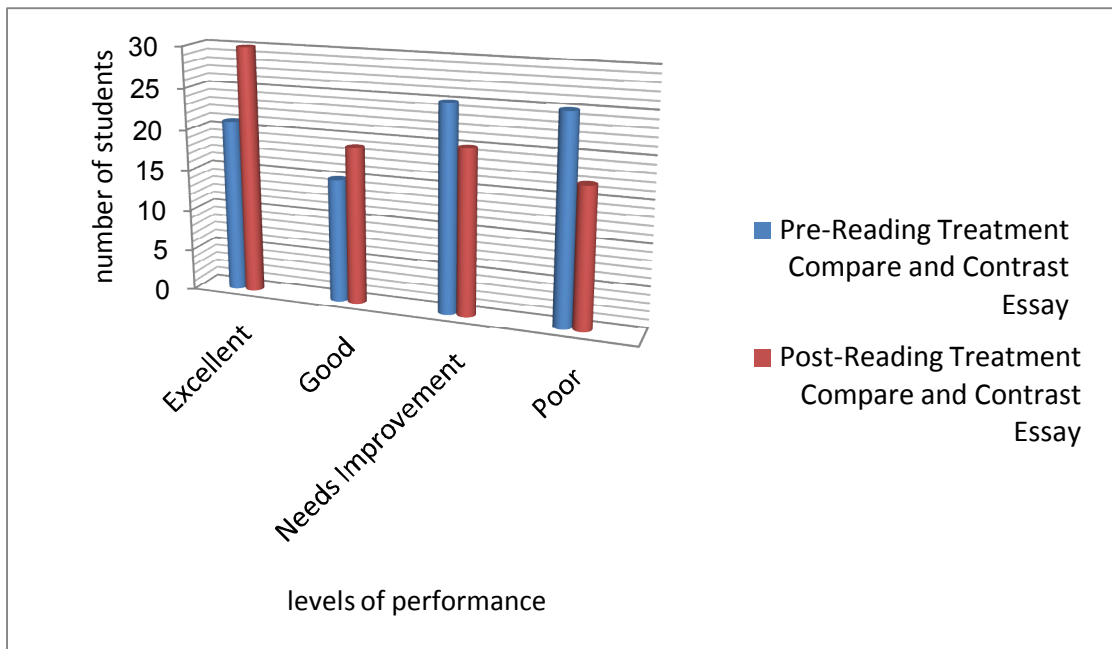
Graph 3.17: Organization and Structure in Students' Pre- and Post- Reading Treatment Compare and Contrast Essay Writing Assignment



- As shown in the upcoming graph, a progress was also identified as far as their use of *transitional words and phrases* is concerned. Compared to their performance in the pre-treatment essay, more students showed an appropriate use of transitions (showing comparison and contrasting relationships) providing coherence between paragraphs and sentences; allowing their ideas and points to be presented in a very organized manner; and preparing the reader for what is coming next.

It is worth noting here that many of transitions used in the sample model essays they had studied were employed by them while writing their post-reading treatment compare and contrast essay. Thus, words and phrases like: similar to, in comparison to, in contrast with, unlike, yet, but, just as, whereas, on the other hand, similarly, etc., were present in their post-reading treatment essay.

Graph 3.18: Transitional Words and Phrases in Students' Pre- and Post- Reading Treatment Compare and Contrast Essay Writing Assignment

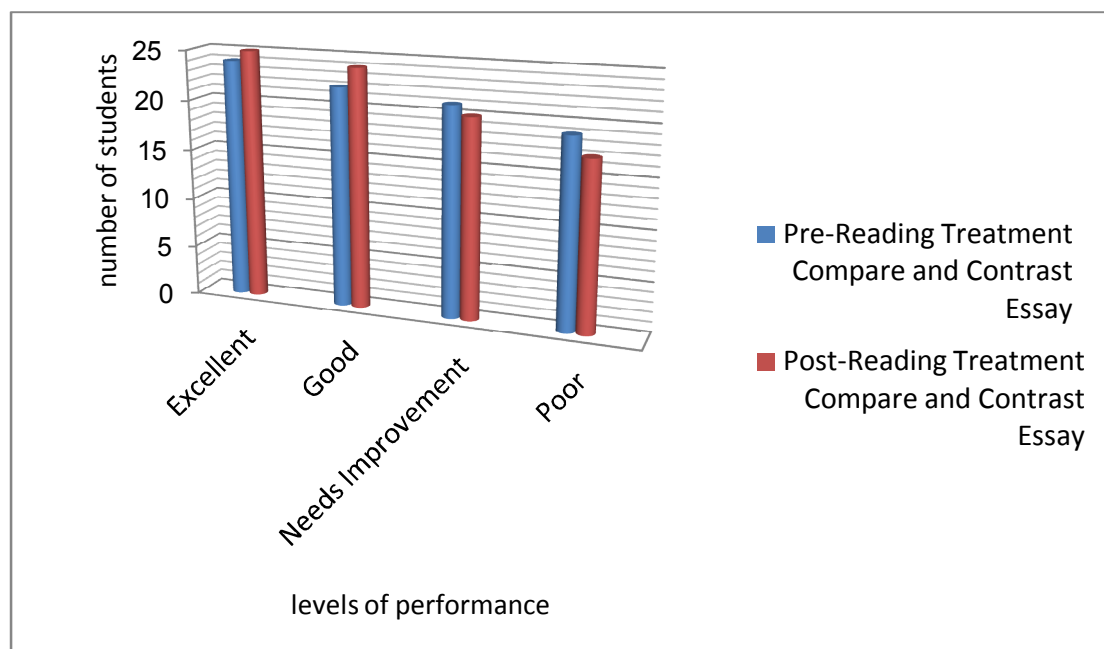


- Lastly, students' problem with *grammar, spelling, and punctuation* remained in the post-treatment essay assignment. No important improvement was revealed in that area of students' writing performance indeed.

It is worth reminding here that progress in these items was not expected as the reading treatment participants received (and which involved reading and studying model compare and contrast essays from a writer perspective) did not emphasized them.

Nevertheless, students' performance displayed that they generally lacked the skills of proofreading and editing even though they (proofreading and editing) are considered as recursive elements of the writing process. Students' performance is illustrated through the following graph.

Graph 3.19: Students' Grammar, Spelling, and Punctuation in the Pre- and Post-Reading Treatment Compare and Contrast Essay Writing Assignment



To sum up, it can be assumed that students' improved performance from the pre-reading treatment essay to the post-reading treatment essay indicated that exposing them to sample readings before writing positively affected their writing performance. Indeed, reading enabled them to draw attention to relevant features of the model compare and contrast essays, and therefore, they were more prepared to replicate that acquired knowledge in their own writing of that type of essays.

3.2.3.1.4.5 Results and Interpretation of Classroom Observation

Classroom observation undertaken by the researcher (who is also the instructor) during the 'Comprehension and Written Expression' module's sessions devoted to implement the model essays reading treatment discussed earlier, revealed the following notes:

- A great majority of students showed a positive attitude toward using reading samples to support their writing. This was somehow expected because in the sessions devoted to the explicit instruction on essay writing (i.e., before the reading treatment), many students seemed confused and lost and repeatedly asked the teacher if she could bring samples so that they can see the tips they learned into action.

- While moving around the rows, during the reading treatment sessions, the researcher noticed that students were annotating the model essays provided. And in the process, they paused to ask the teacher some questions for more clarification. They seemed very motivated and engaged using reading to learn about writing.
- Most students explicitly stated that things became clearer for them after being exposed to model essays, and that they could start writing their post-treatment essays with more confidence.

3.2.3.2 Topic Background Reading Instructional Practice

The second instructional practice used in the reading-to-write instructional phase involved three main stages (the pre-, during-, and post- background reading treatment stages) each of which will be described in details in this section as well as the data collected through the research instruments used.

3.2.3.2.1 The Pre-, During-, and Post-Topic Background Reading Treatment Stages

As explained earlier in this third chapter (section 3.2.3) and in chapter one (section 1.12.2.1.1.3), a second instructional procedure was employed by the researcher to explore the impact of reading on students' writing performance. The same 86 second-year EFL students were involved, and the following steps were undertaken:

- 1. The Pre-Topic Background Reading Treatment Stage:** In one session of 'Comprehension an Written Expression' that lasted one hour and a half, the participants were given a topic to write a five-paragraph essay about. The instructor (the researcher) required them to consider the stages involved in the writing process (i.e., pre-writing – brainstorming and planning –; drafting; revising; and editing) while doing so. That essay writing assignment was to be done individually and without using any material (i.e., source) to enrich its content. By the end of the session, the researcher collected their papers and asked them to make a research (as homework) collecting any reading material they could find in relation to the same assigned topic for the next session.
- 2. The Topic Background Reading Treatment Stage:** As planned, in the session following the previous one, students came to the classroom with several reading materials (e.g., articles from the net and excerpts from magazines or books) that discussed the target topic. The researcher assigned them to read and exploit the

materials they brought taking relevant notes, quoting, paraphrasing information, and summarizing main points about the topic. All that happened in one hour and a half. The teacher explained that they would use all that in an upcoming writing assignment next session.

- 3. The Post-Topic Background Reading Treatment Stage:** In the third session, students were required to use what they have gathered through their reading to write another five-paragraph essay about the same topic. One hour and a half was devoted to such a writing assignment, and the researcher, then, collected their written essays. By the end of the session, the participants were given a questionnaire to be filled in. As explained already, the questionnaire aimed at identifying students' perceptions of writing both with and without reading about the assigned topic (see Appendix K), and therefore, pinpointing the effects of reading on their writing performance. The questionnaire consisted of two questions merely but they were direct and straight to the point.

A short questionnaire, takes less time to fill in, indeed, which tends to result in better respondents' engagement and better completion rates than it might have been got from a longer one.

3.2.3.2.2 Results and Discussion

In this section, the remarks recorded by the researcher as a result of classroom observation during the background reading treatment stage will be revealed. Moreover, students' responses to the post-treatment questionnaire will be discussed and interpreted.

3.2.3.2.2.1 Results and interpretation of Classroom Observation

The notes recorded by the researcher during the reading treatment revealed the following:

- Different reading materials dealing with assigned topic were brought by the participants in the session devoted to the reading treatment.
- Students seemed too involved reading the materials, taking notes, making notes, summarizing, paraphrasing, and quoting. Some even shared and exchanged the materials they brought with classmates.

- Many among them seemed to be trying to exploit the materials as much as they can; collecting enough information to support and enrich their upcoming writing assignment.
- Some students were classifying the information gathered through their readings into distinct sections (i.e., some ideas were to be included in the introductory paragraph, some in the supporting paragraphs, and others in the concluding paragraphs of their post reading-treatment essays).

3.2.3.2.2.2 Result and Interpretation of Students' Questionnaire Responses

Students' responses to the first question of the post-reading treatment questionnaire revealed that they faced a variety of problems while writing the essay without topic background reading. Most of them ticked more than one of the items proposed. The difficulties they encountered are illustrated through the table below:

Problems	Number of Respondents / 86
I have difficulty getting started.	50
My writing was poorly planned.	47
I have limited information / knowledge regarding the topic.	43
I do not have much vocabulary.	40
I have problem in generating ideas or elaborating on them.	33
I have difficulty in developing and organizing ideas.	31

Table 3.14: Problems Faced by Students in Writing without Reading about the Assigned Topic

As shown above, more than half of the respondents (i.e., 50 students out of 86) complained about not being able to start writing their essay. They could not think of or had no clue what to write about, and therefore, they felt paralyzed and unable to take action. Such behaviour might be attributed to many causes indeed, like the following:

- Many students might look at the task at hand and feel intensely un-resourceful. They simply knew that they did not know enough about the assigned topic.
- Some might have many ideas but could not commit to any of them and thus, they all petered out.
- Some might lack passion for what they were asked to write about.

Other than that, the majority of the respondents (i.e., 47 participants) agreed on the same idea that without reading about the assigned topic, their writing was poorly planned. Indeed, they just worked on to add any information that they could on paper, and were not able to shape their ideas into a framework in which they decided and arranged in order, the points they wanted to discuss. This was somehow expected as a very important stage in the pre-writing phase was skipped; namely, reading before planning.

Besides that, 43 students among the participants revealed that they had limited information / knowledge regarding the topic they were required to write about. And because communication is so dependent on prior knowledge, those whose knowledge of the topic was limited had difficulty communicating in writing about that topic.

A total of 40 participants also admitted that they had limited vocabulary. They could not think of the right words for what they were trying to convey; there might be thoughts they could not communicate. As a result, the same words might be used repeatedly in their essay writing, and their ideas might be restricted and inhibited.

A significant number of students (i.e., 33 participants) also reported having trouble generating ideas or elaborating on them which would badly impact the richness of their final piece of writing. They were not able to come up with their own ideas and to think creatively when writing. And even if they could generate some initial thoughts, they were unable to add new ideas that expanded, extended, or added to their initial ones. One potential reason for that is that their writing was not backed with reading.

Moreover, 31 students had difficulty in developing and organizing their ideas into a well-structured whole. They struggled to create a strong, focused introduction that would catch the reader's interest; to link ideas in logically connected paragraphs that contained enough supporting details; and to conclude with a strong ending.

Students' responses to the second question of the questionnaire, however, reported their views on the ways reading about the assigned topic helped them in writing about it. Here again, the respondents chose more than one item of those suggested. The data are shown in the table below:

Responses	Number of Respondents / 86
Reading gives me some ideas / information in writing the essay.	71
Reading helps me to understand the topic better.	60
Reading helps me to elaborate on my ideas.	51
Reading provides as a guideline for me to write the essay.	48
Reading helps me to enrich my vocabulary about the topic I am writing about.	59
I can write a better piece of writing rather than writing without reading.	84

Table 3.15: Students' Views on the Ways Reading about the Assigned Topic Helps Them in Writing

Based on the table above, a great majority of the respondents (71 students out of the 86 participants) stated that reading about the assigned topic gave them some ideas or information in writing the essay. Reading gave them enough background information to refine and enrich their writing about the topic.

Also, 60 students among the respondents claimed that reading helped them to understand the topic better. In fact, when they read a variety of materials about the same topic, they got different opinions about it; they integrate information; and put ideas together from different sources. All that expanded their grasp of the topic they would write about.

A total of 51 respondents agreed that reading helped them elaborate on their ideas in writing. From their reading, they were able to select specific details relevant to the target topic to extend their ideas and develop elaboration (e.g., quotations, multiple examples, data, reasons, statistics, etc.). Those details were inserted in their writing making their essay more effective.

Besides, 48 respondents contended that reading about the topic before being engaged in writing their essay was a kind of guideline for them. Indeed, when they had at hand all their notes from their reading, they could think of a unified whole with a beginning, middle, and ending parts.

Moreover, more than half of the respondents (i.e., 59 students) viewed that such a pre-writing reading helped them in vocabulary enrichment. Their reading of the materials they brought in relation to the assigned topic made them encounter new vocabulary which they might reuse in their essay writing.

And finally, 84 students (nearly all the respondents) agreed that due to reading they could write a better piece of writing than the one they composed without some topic background reading.

As mentioned earlier, the purpose of this last stage of the current investigation was to investigate the effects of reading on students' writing performance. The findings described above revealed that reading assisted writing in many ways, and thus, reading in preparation for writing an assignment should be seen as an integral part of the writing process.

3.3 Synthesis of the Main Findings of the Two Instructional Phases

The results obtained from the data collection and discussed in the above sections seem to answer the research questions and confirm the stated hypotheses presented in the general introduction.

Indeed, as far as the first question of the present research work is concerned, and which seeks to explore whether or not assigning EFL students to write about materials they read assist their reading comprehension process, results yielded in the writing-to-read instructional phase display the following:

- The majority of the 60 first-year EFL students involved in this first instructional phase agreed that providing written answers to the variety of questions that the intensive

reading activities required helped them understand the texts read better. Many among them also agreed that generating written answers to reading comprehension questions offered them a valuable opportunity to practise different reading strategies needed for effective reading. Besides, many stated that answering questions about reading in writing kept them focused on the topic dealt with, and helped them notice and organize relevant information in the texts they read. Many claimed that their writings in the post-reading stage of the intensive reading courses, in particular, allowed them each time to reflect on the materials read making connections between texts' content and their personal experiences. Furthermore, some participants contended that writing down answers to questions helped them improve their memory and concentration, and monitor their understanding of what they have read.

- A great majority of the subjects (i.e., the same 60 first-year EFL students) stated that they usually jotted down written annotations on texts they read in the intensive reading sessions. Their marginal written annotations took many forms including: definitions of unfamiliar vocabulary; paraphrases of difficult ideas; brief comments, questions, etc. They said that annotating texts while reading assisted their reading comprehension and helped them to acquire and adopt the key characteristics of active readers. It helped them get involved in what they were reading, monitor their understanding, and therefore, be more likely to better understand the meaning within the text.
- Also, EFL students' summary writing ability has been proved to have an influence on their reading comprehension performance. A strong positive correlation has been revealed between the two variables (summary writing ability and reading comprehension of the material being summarized) indeed. And it was possible to establish a certain cause and effect relationship between the two correlated variables (i.e., between summary writing ability being the cause and reading comprehension ability being the effect).
- Furthermore, even though drawing and filling in graphic organizers as a post-reading strategy demands limited written responses, students agreed that due to it, their awareness of text organizational patterns increased. All of them also contended that using graphic organizers to record information was particularly useful for summarizing the content of texts they read and that assisted and monitored their comprehension of the target reading materials. Many also thought that graphic organizers helped them examine and show relationships between facts, concepts, or

ideas in passages they read which in turn, helped enhancing their understanding of the material. Besides, they reported that constructing and filling out post-reading graphic organizers helped them pick important information out of texts, and keep what they had read in their minds. Therefore, filling in graphic organizers - as a writing-to-read procedure – assisted their reading comprehension in many ways.

The information reported in the above paragraphs is thus confirming hypothesis one of the current research.

Concerning the second question of the present research work, and which attempts to check whether or not engaging EFL students in assigned reading for writing purposes enhance their writing ability, results yielded in the reading-to-write instructional phase suggest the following:

- The model essays reading treatment (reading and studying both argumentative and compare and contrast essays) that the 86 second-year EFL students involved in this second instructional phase received was very advantageous to the participants as it positively affected their overall writing performance in the post-treatment argumentative essay and compare and contrast essay assignments.

In fact, significant differences were noticed as far as their performance in the different aspects of argumentative essay writing is concerned before and after the reading treatment. For example, many participants showed an improvement in composing the *opening statements* of their essays compared to their performance in the pre-reading treatment stage. Through reading written models including appealing ‘attention-getters’, many students understood that their job as writers is to capture readers’ attention and make them want to keep reading (using the same crafting techniques). And therefore, they applied that in their post-treatment Argumentative essay writing assignment. Many increased their scores in the *thesis statement* they put for their essays as well due to the same reading treatment. Moreover, the model essays studied helped more students to ameliorate their performance in recording their *arguments, counterarguments and refutation*. Most importantly, exposure to written argumentative essays in the reading treatment stage helped them greatly in noticing how such a type of essays was *organized and structured* (adopting a block-to-block or

a point-to-point organizational pattern). A significant improvement was also identified as far as the use of *transitional words and phrases* is concerned.

Similarly, students displayed a better performance in the post-reading treatment compare and contrast essay than they did in the pre-reading treatment essay. More students were able to construct better *attention grabbers* than it was in the pre-reading treatment essay assignment as the reading treatment they were involved in helped many of them have a good grasp of how to construct effective opening sentences for their essays. Besides, the treatment enabled them to draw their attention to the basic features an appropriate *thesis statement* for such a type of essays, and therefore, the thesis statements many of the participants wrote in the post-treatment compare and contrast essay, successfully, summarized (controlled) the direction and the content of their essay. Moreover, students' performance regarding the *organization and structure* of the assigned essay improved in the post-treatment stage compared to their performance in the pre-treatment compare and contrast essay. And compared to their performance in the pre-treatment essay, more students showed an appropriate use of transitions (showing comparison and contrasting relationships) providing coherence between paragraphs and sentences; allowing their ideas and points to be presented in a very organized manner; and preparing the reader for what is coming next.

Thus, students' improved performance indicated that exposing them to sample readings before writing positively affected their writing performance. Indeed, reading enabled them to draw attention to relevant features of the model essays, and therefore, they were more prepared to replicate that acquired knowledge in their own writing of those types of essays.

- On the other hand, the topic background reading treatment the same sample of students received gave them enough background information to refine and enrich their writing about the assigned topic; expanded their grasp of the topic they would write about; helped them elaborate on their ideas in writing; enriched their vocabulary, etc. Reading in preparation for writing, thus, assisted students' writing performance in many ways.

These findings come to confirm hypothesis two of the present investigation.

Lastly, as far as the third question of the current study is concerned, and which seeks to reveal EFL students' affective responses toward integrated reading and writing tasks, data collected through the two instructional phases (i.e., the writing-to-read and the reading-to-write ones) reveal the following:

- Providing written answers to questions about texts read provided a purpose for reading, and set up a self-provided feedback system for the first-year EFL students, and thus, it increased their motivation and self-confidence as readers in the target language. That notion was revealed through many of their responses to the questionnaire.
- Annotating texts while reading made them (i.e., the same sample of first-year EFL students) engaged as readers since it allowed them to enter in a direct interaction with the text at hand; reflect on the reading; and add their personal touch on the page as expressed through their responses to the questionnaire as well.
- Similarly, students showed a great interest in learning how to summarize to be able to turn into effective and critical readers.
- A great majority of the participants found the creation and completion of graphic organizers after reading appealing, and many asserted that using such a writing-to-read strategy provided variety and heightened their interest in reading English. Besides, it seems that filling out graphic organizers to organize and make sense of content read had a positive effect on students' self-efficacy as readers. Indeed, when they succeeded to complete their graphic representations accurately, readers developed a sense of achievement (which subsequently leads to an increased confidence in their own ability to understand materials written in English).
- On the other hand, a great majority of second-year EFL students showed a positive attitude toward using reading samples (model essays) to support their writing. They seemed very motivated and engaged using reading to learn about writing, and they started writing their post-treatment essays with more confidence.
- Similarly, students seemed too involved reading the materials they brought in relation to the assigned topic, taking notes, making notes, summarizing, paraphrasing, and quoting. Many among them seemed to be trying to exploit the materials as much as they can; collecting enough information to support and enrich their upcoming writing assignment.

Accordingly, hypothesis three of the present research work is also confirmed.

3.4 Conclusion

This chapter has concentrated on the analysis of data collected from each of the two instructional phases discussed earlier. This analysis has, in fact, shown that the reading and writing integrated instruction which the sample of participants were subject to, has a positive impact on their reading and writing performances in the target language as well as on their self-confidence and motivation to read and write in English. In the light of these results, some recommendations and suggestions aiming at a more efficient teaching and integration of reading and writing will be proposed in the next chapter.

NOTES TO CHAPTER THREE

- (1) Unlike the analytic rubric that gives separate scores for each criterion, the holistic rubric gives a single score for each summary.
- (2) This type of scoring rubrics resulted initially in several scores, followed by a summed total score.

CHAPTER FOUR

SUGGESTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 Introduction

Drawing on the theoretical aspects of the reading-writing connection reviewed on chapter two and the findings of the present study discussed in chapter three, some recommendations about integrating reading and writing instruction are intended to be given in this last chapter. Some relevant reading-writing connection instructional principles are first identified. Then, the issue of teacher education for the reading-writing connection is dealt with. Moreover, several models of reading-writing pedagogy that can be explored in EFL classes are suggested, in addition to other practical recommendations such as: using classroom discussion as a means of learning to read and write analytically, teaching students how to read like a writer, teaching students how to write like a reader, and bringing extensive reading into the EFL curriculum. Various interactive and creative writing activities in support of extensive reading are proposed, and a set of strategies for interacting with a text are explored in a way that invites students to use reading and writing to learn. The interrelating stages involved in teaching reading strategies, a set of practical tips for better EFL academic reading and writing, as well as some guidelines for writing effective paragraphs and essays are addressed. Finally, a demonstrated lesson integrating reading and writing is presented.

4.2 Reading-Writing Connection Instructional Principles

As reading and writing run parallel and use many of the same mechanisms, they have to be viewed together, learned together, and used together to be understood and appreciated fully. Accordingly, an effective integrated reading-writing instruction ensures that reading and writing are well-linked so as to take advantage of the natural reciprocity between these two basic language skills. Such an instruction should be based on the following basic principles being essential elements necessary to maintaining a strong reading-writing connection in EFL contexts as adapted from Miller, McCardle and Long (2014):

- Students must be immersed in literacy – lots and lots of reading and writing daily.
- Reading and writing must both be taught – students do not just ‘catch them’.
- Strategies and skills of reading and writing must be taught explicitly – knowledge and process relationships made as concrete as possible.

- Instruction must be scaffolded – modeled, shared, and independent – all with an awareness of where each student is within the process.
- Students must talk about their reading and writing – accountable talk creates deeper meaning in the text being read or written.
- Students must be actively engaged in the process – students are drivers instead of passengers because reading and writing are ‘wide-awake’ processes as opposed to passive ones.
- Students must read and write for different purposes – transporting different vehicles of texts over the literacy bridge.
- Genre characteristics must be taught – knowing each genre helps guide the reading of text and helps writers include more appropriate detail and evidence.
- Students need to read and write different kinds of texts – recognizing the unique characteristics of text helps a reader analyze and predict and helps a writer know what elements must be present.
- Vocabulary and the role words play in the process of reading or writing must be taught – words and their roles are important, as they help the reader ‘reads between the lines’ and help writers improve coherency.
- Critical thinking must be intentionally taught – reading and writing are thinking activities, and readers and writers need to see beyond the obvious.

4.3 Teacher Education for the Reading-Writing Connection

A good quality teacher can guide the learning process of students, making learning relevant and stimulating. In other words, the quality and extent of learner achievement are determined primarily by teacher competence, sensitivity and teacher motivation. Teachers in EFL classrooms have generally been more prepared to teach reading than writing or the reading-writing connection (Graves, 2002). Teaching the reading-writing connection is a challenging task indeed (Achinstein and Ogawa, 2006; Crocco and Costigan, 2007). It requires EFL teachers to juggle multiple activities simultaneously and flexibly to maximize learning opportunities supporting that target goal. They are supposed, for example:

- to create safe, inclusive, and engaging learning environments where students can take risks;
- to use a wide range of formal and informal assessments to guide and plan instruction and to give students feedback;

- to engage students in tremendous amounts of meaningful reading of a wide range of genres and types of materials and facilitate responses to those texts;
- to create opportunities for students to use a process for writing a wide variety of texts for multiple purposes and audiences

Due to the complexity of the task, delineating a knowledge base for teachers who intend to teach the reading-writing connection has become a must (Snow, Griffin, and Burns, 2005; Pardo, 2006; Scott and Mouza, 2007; Malm, 2009). Simply put, what do teachers need to know to teach the reading-writing connection? In an attempt to answer this monumental question, Miller, McCardle, and Long (2014, pp.55-56) asserted:

Though there may be varying opinions about which issues are most important or need the most emphasis, the teacher who is prepared to teach the reading-writing connection – in all its complexity – should know, at a minimum, the following: how language, both oral and written, works (phonics, phonemic awareness, syntax and grammar, text structure, etc.); how reading and writing are used in context and across disciplines; pedagogies, curricula, and strategies for teaching reading on its own, writing on its own, and the two in conjunction (and the evidence base supporting these); how students develop and how that development can vary; how to interpret assessments and ways to support students with different levels of accomplishment; how people learn in general and in literacy classrooms; metacognition and the role of strategy instruction; technology, including the technology people (including students) use out of school to read and write as well as technology for teaching; and information literacies.

Further, whether reading-writing teachers know all they need, and whether they are able to put that knowledge into practice in the classroom, is of vital importance. Besides, Applegate and Applegate (2004) pointed out that teachers cannot teach what they do not know and cannot create engaged readers and writers if they themselves do not read and write.

In the absence of well designed professional development programmes both at the secondary and university levels, EFL teachers have been expected to learn how to improve their teaching on their own, learn from trial and error, and individually seek the required professional development. Yet, with the diverse compositions of student populations, and the changing paradigms in teaching and learning, the trial and error teaching cannot be accepted anymore and teaching without being trained becomes problematic. Indeed, the quality of today's teaching depends on the quality of the teachers which, in turn, depends to some extent on the quality of their professional development (Walter, Wilkinson, and Yarrow, 1996).

Though there is still much to learn about teacher preparation for the reading-writing connection, and studies that follow teachers into classrooms or connect teacher preparation directly to student outcomes are rare, a number of review articles offer a consensus around the characteristics of effective literacy teacher education programmes (Darling-Hammond, 2000; Hoffman and Pearson, 2000; Pearson, 2001). Indeed, an effective teacher education programme for the reading-writing connection should provide teacher candidates with:

- a strong knowledge base that includes both content (e.g., language systems, reading, and writing) and knowledge of theory and pedagogy;
- opportunities to observe models of desired teaching practices through meaningful and extensive field experiences that mirror the instruction they are expected to provide to their own students in the classroom (Cantrell, 2002; Pytash, 2012).

Furthermore, Miller, McCardle, and Long (2014, p.58) pointed out to the notion that new technologies and media are changing the ways that we read and write, and thus, “social media, tablet computers, smartphones, and online course management systems are among the many innovations that can and should have an impact on teacher preparation.” In fact, these have to be a crucial part of the content of teacher preparation today, as teachers must increasingly understand the communication technologies and modes of reading and writing students already use and will use outside the classroom (Alvermann, 2004).

As stated earlier, well-designed teacher preparation programmes are important. Yet, even though teacher education programmes are perfect and all new teachers actively took part in them, they could never be sufficient for developing the level of expertise and practice necessary to integrate reading and writing. Teachers need ongoing professional development throughout their careers – first, to help them transfer learning in teacher preparation into their classroom, and over time, to help them refine and improve practice (Pardo, 2006).

Although there is still much to learn, some researchers on teacher learning (Cochran-Smith and Lytle, 2001; Guskey, 2003; Borko, 2004) have reviewed some of the key characteristics of successful professional development. These include:

- a focus on developing teachers’ knowledge of subject matter and the pedagogical content knowledge to support students;
- content that is relevant to the teachers’ day-to-day needs and connected to their own students and contexts;

- a design of sufficient duration, including ongoing opportunities for learning, follow-up, and support;
- active learning experiences, including opportunities for teachers to engage in the pedagogy they are being asked to implement; and
- opportunities to learn and collaborate with colleagues.

In their turn, Schnellert, Butler, and Higginson (2008) viewed that one particularly strong model for professional development is the development of a community of practice. Similar practices include peer-coaching study team (Baker and Smith, 1999) and professional learning communities (Vescio, Ross, and Adams, 2008).

All of these models require groups of teachers to come together regularly to study learning and teaching (Miller, McCardle, and Long, 2014) – they read and discuss research studies, reports, or other professional literature; work together to share and evaluate students work samples; analyze classroom-, or individual-level data and plan instruction based on that data; share drafts of instructional plans and give one another feedback; or ask questions about their own teaching and learning and use classroom-based data to answer those questions.

Referring to professional development for the reading-writing connection in particular, Miller, McCardle, and Long (2014, p.60) stated that:

Communities of practice may provide a structure or mechanism to support the development of practices for teaching the reading-writing connection; however, the structure of regular teacher meetings, in and of itself, may not be sufficient to support teacher learning. Communities of practice are more successful when teachers have a strong sense of collegiality and shared purpose. Simply mandating that teachers meet once a week does not ensure that teachers will learn from one another.

Even though the key features of teacher education and professional development described earlier are a good place to start supporting the reading-writing connection in our EFL instruction, continued research is needed to identify how best to prepare teachers for the reading-writing connection. This could have long-term benefits for teachers and their students.

4.4 Models of Reading-Writing Pedagogy

Research has proposed several models of reading-writing connections instruction to be explored in the EFL/ESL classroom contexts each of which requires selecting certain instructional texts and tasks. Yet, as reviewed by Hirvela (2004), whichever model a teacher adopts, reading-writing pedagogy should strive to:

- Teach reading and writing together;
- Show students that both reading and writing are acts of composing, of meaning making;
- Demonstrate how reading supports writing and writing supports reading;
 - (a) by using reading to create an acquisition-rich environment for writing development and
 - (b) by using writing to provide a way in to reading and reading development.
- Allow students to perform reading-writing tasks that are meaningful to them;
- Create opportunities for students to talk about reading-writing connections.

Increasing emphasis on the reading-writing connection in our teaching practice requires teachers to look for ways to attach a writing component (e.g., a summary or a paraphrase) to a reading assignment and a reading component to a writing assignment (e.g., by providing appropriate source texts that will influence the writing). Asking students as much as possible to combine reading and writing activities this way makes them experience the ways in which they connect.

Key features of the most common instructional models linking reading and writing are to be described in this section. Of course, adopting a model to work with and selecting texts and tasks will depend largely on the kind of students that teachers are working with, and what they need to accomplish in their target language reading and writing

4.4.1 Computer-Mediated Model

We live in a time of rapid change which causes a transition from a world of paper, pencils, and books to one of a variety of information and communication technologies in a very small number of years.

Indeed, modern technology has affected the traditional print-based reading-writing environment giving birth to a new landscape for academic reading and writing in recent years. Referring to this change, Leu (2000, p.759) noted:

Fifteen years ago, students did not need to know word processing technologies. Ten years ago, students did not need to know how to navigate through the rich information environments possible in multimedia, CD-ROM technologies. Five years ago, students did not need to know how to search for information on the Internet, set a bookmark, use a web browser, create an HTML document, participate in a mailing list, engage in a collaborative Internet project with another classroom, or communicate via e-mail. Today, however, each of these technologies and each of these environments is appearing within classrooms, forcing teachers, students, and researchers to continually adapt to new definitions of literacy.

These new technologies are redefining literacy and literacy instruction (Yopp and Yopp, 2010). In fact, research has started to discuss revising the definitions of literacy to include reading and writing electronically, and the inclusion of these changes has begun to be reflected in the content of reading and writing instruction.

According to Hirvela (2004), this transition to multilayered, computer-based literacy as pedagogy has its benefits on linking reading and writing. The primary features of the computer-mediated model reviewed by the researcher can be summarized as follows:

- ***It can create an even closer link between reading and writing as acts of composing.*** When students conduct computer searches for source reading material to be used in writing an expository essay, for example, they will develop a sense of authority as readers as they decide which links to select and work with. And this makes them more active in processing their readings than they usually do with print materials. They also reflect on those choices while writing their essay. As a result, they become more aware of how reading, like writing, is an active process of constructing meaning.
- ***It opens student literacy activity to a wider array of text types to read and write.*** Indeed, in addition to providing all text types available in print culture, the computer-mediated environment offers students visual and aural links to be ‘read’. And they can use these materials in writing as well.
- ***It reshapes and expands the notion of the “classroom”.*** Students are not limited by the prescribed hours devoted to reading and writing in a course – they can rather share their reading and writing under widely varied conditions. They will have more control

over how and when their reading and writing take place which will positively affect their motivation to read and write.

- ***It can better prepare students to read and write in occupational contexts*** – as computer skills and computer-based literacy are increasingly required in the workplace today.
- ***The screen-based nature of computer-mediated reading and writing, together with the advantages and disadvantages associated with composing within the domain of a screen, can create meaningful opportunities for discussion of the demands and challenges of reading and writing.*** Having students discuss the differences between print and online reading and writing and the merits of each, for example, can enrich their understanding of the various dimensions of both basic language skills.

The selection of texts to be used in the computer-mediated model can be challenging for teachers knowing that there is a wide range of materials to choose from. It is worth noting, however, that it is not necessary for texts worked with to be online texts. In other words, print materials can be used as source texts even though the writing tasks based on them are ultimately computer-mediated. And for teachers who choose to work strictly with online materials, they “...must be prepared to navigate the complex assortment of links available on whatever topic is being used, in order to design assignments effectively and help students engage them.” (Hirvela, 2004, p.149).

Besides, responding to, summarizing, and synthesizing source texts are considered as appropriate tasks for such an environment, especially as computers help in revising written work. These activities can be performed via computer in a computer lab, or by e-mail for example. Moreover, students can work collaboratively - forming small groups to produce such post-reading pieces of writing.

Even though students are generally used to print reading and writing, many students, today, are highly computer literate and may feel more comfortable with online reading and writing. That is why, teachers adopting a computer-mediated instructional model need to do more in terms of learning about students’ experiences and attitudes toward reading and writing while deciding what kinds of texts and tasks to be used than it was in the past.

Further, students need new reading comprehension skills, for example, to effectively search for information on the Internet. They must develop their ability to identify and employ terms suitable to their goals, sort out through large amounts of information to determine what

is relevant and what is not, navigate from one link to another, critically evaluate websites, and integrate information across sites (Henry, 2006). Likewise, teachers have to broaden their conceptions of literacy to include the skills needed to locate, read, and analyze multilayered information on the Internet, and they must support students in their efforts to communicate and gain information using new technologies.

4.4.2 Literature/Response-Based Model

Reading literature and responding to it through writing is the core of this instructional model. The effectiveness of using literary texts in reading instruction had been researched and discussed by many researchers like Carter and Long (1991) and Maley (2001) who advocated using it "... to enrich language learning and cultural knowledge, to gauge reading response, to teach literary criticism, and to raise the level of literacy and language competence." (Ling et al., 2003, p.122). Further, literature influences writing ability (Deford, 1981; Eckhoff, 1983; Lancia, 1997) and deepens knowledge of written language and written linguistic features (Purcell-Gates, McIntyre, and Freppon, 1995).

Besides, Hirvela (2001) suggested that reading can be a meaningful part in writing courses if students read and write in response to literary texts. This can develop students' ability to learn with texts; to expand their ability to think broadly, deeply, and critically about ideas in texts; to promote personal responses to texts; to nurture a desire to read; and to develop lifelong learners who can use texts information to satisfy personal needs and interests (Yopp and Yopp, 2010).

A variety of pedagogical activities linking reading and writing can be provided by using literary works indeed (Lazar, 1993). Teachers can, for example, ask students to read stories and respond to them in writing. Reading and then composing their own poems is also possible as an instructional task to associate reading and writing.

Moreover, journals and reading logs in which students write tentative responses to what they have read, and more formal essays in which they provide a detailed response to themes, characters, or events in the readings are appropriate tasks to be used with literary materials within the response mode. Referring to this last type of activities in particular, Hirvela (2004, p.159) added:

To enhance the journal or reading log experience, having students exchange their writing and comment on it in written responses can be a good idea. I have long favoured an approach in which students write on one side of a page and leave the other side blank so that classmates can compose responses to the entries during pair or group discussion sessions. When students

respond to this more informal writing, they can reinforce reading-writing connections because their written responses are tied to classmates' readings of the text assigned. This draws attention to reading, and the use of writing to examine the reading creates a connection between the two skills.

According to Belcher and Hirvela (2000), approaches to literature and response-based reading and writing can be classified into three main categories: experiential, sequential, and collaborative.

In the experiential approach, choosing texts for reading and activities for writing focuses on students using the literary experience to reflect on their own personal experiences and lives. For this context, exploring themes with which students can relate personally is more appropriate than topics related to the culture of the target language (Vandrick, 1997).

The sequential approach, however, is based on having students work through a sequence of writing activities related to their reading moving from "... pre-reading writing (write-before-you read) of a more unstructured nature to more conventional academic essays." (Hirvela, 2004, p.157).

The collaborative approach to linking reading and writing through a combined literature/response format, as explained by Shulman (1995) and Hirvela (1999), engages students to work as communities of readers and writers negotiating literary texts. Students, then, can explore together and help each other unravel the mysteries and complexities of reading and writing in the target language.

4.4.3 Content-Based Model

Like the two instructional models described above, the content-based model is well suited to attempts to link reading and writing. Nevertheless, the model aims at enabling students "...to focus on the specific types of reading and writing – and the connection between them – that are relevant to their interests and needs as students." (Hirvela, 2004, p.167).

One of the most prevalent approaches to the content-based reading and writing instruction is the theme-based (Brinton, Snow, and Wesche, 2003). The theme-based approach works out of a topic-oriented framework where one specific topic (or theme) serves as the focus of the course. Indeed, all texts and tasks employed are to be related to that topic or theme in particular, and the topic or theme chosen is ideally one that students will want or need to know about for other purposes. Learners' autonomy in EFL learning, for example,

will be a topic of considerable relevance to many students. Accordingly, students will be required to read a variety of materials – and probably different text types – related to EFL learners’ autonomy, in association with writing activities incorporating material from source texts. And because all of the reading and writing involved center around the same core theme, the content-based course would provide students with continuity which could, in turn, equip students with a sense of confidence as they tackle the assorted reading and writing.

Moreover, such a type of courses encourages students to work with the same core vocabulary and content – they are not supposed to encounter new concepts and vocabulary as they are not required to move among various themes. Even more, Hirvela (2004, p.168) said that theme-based courses:

...can lead to highly focused discussions of reading and writing and can help students better see the ways in which reading and writing activities overlap and connect. For instance, there could be detailed discussion of reading strategies to use in processing the different text types assigned (e.g., editorials, information-based articles, website-based newsletters, or essays), ... just as there could be for the writing strategies or techniques necessary for different writing tasks assigned (journal or reading log entries responding to the readings, summaries, syntheses, students-generated editorials, etc.). Ways of directly linking the reading and writing could also be discussed.

This set of tasks will enhance the possibility of students making meaningful connections between the two basic language skills - reading and writing.

4.5 Teaching EFL Students Read Like a Writer

Writers learn about writing by reading. As teachers help shape students’ writing, it is important that they offer examples of what good writing looks like. They need to expose their students to a variety of reading materials indeed so that students will be able to figure out how texts are constructed, and therefore, learn how to build texts for themselves.

Yet, in order to learn how to write well, students first have to learn how to read differently – they first have to learn how to ‘read like a writer’. As expressed by Olmstead (1997, p.1):

To learn to write you must master the small aspects of the craft, and to master them you must learn to read like a writer. If a writer doesn’t read with an eye toward noticing specific, technical strategies, development is almost always slow and torturous, an endless cycle of trial and error. By reading insightfully, a writer improves more quickly, develops a sense of what good writing sounds like, and how it works. The stories, essays, novels, and nonfiction books of masterful writers can, and should, act as guideposts.

One excellent tool teachers can use to improve their students' writing performance then, is to teach them how to 'read like a writer'. The idea here is that by explicitly teaching students to notice and discuss writer's craft as they read, writers become mentors for students' writing. Nevertheless, it is worth noting that "...noticing what authors do and teaching students 'how to read like a writer' is frequently a missing piece in our writing curriculum, which we often artificially separate from reading." (Routman, 2012, p.61).

Writing with the eyes of a writer requires students to focus less on what the writer is trying to say and more on how the writer is saying it. In helping students doing so, teachers are supposed to direct them to pay a careful attention to a writer's intentional use of craft. As Ehmann and Gayer (2009, p.4) defined it, author's craft is "any purposeful and meaningful technique an author uses to capture the reader's attention."

Johnson (2010) listed a few techniques used by professional writers and which students (readers) might notice as they read like a writer, these may include:

- Repetition: repeating a word or a phrase
- The Power of Three: three words or phrases used in a row to create emphasis
- Onomatopoeia: sound words
- Big and Bold: text written in bold, capital letters to express an idea
- Interesting Punctuation: ellipses, dashes, colon, parentheses
- Figurative Language: simile, metaphor, personification
- Stretching out the print
- Intentional sentence fragments: used to create rhythm and flow
- White space
- Hyphenated adjectives

Besides, teachers are required to instruct students in five major steps that research has outlined for the process of reading with a writer's eye (Ray, 1999). To read like a writer, students need to:

- Notice something about the craft of the text.
- Talk about it and make a theory about why a writer might use that craft.
- Give the craft a name.
- Think of other texts / writers they know. Have they seen this craft before?
- Try to envision using this crafting in their own writing.

Taking the above five steps into consideration, and for the purpose of training students to read through the eyes of a writer, Laminack (2007) suggested for teachers to use the following line of questioning with them:

1. Notice the Craft / Name the Craft:

- What did you notice as I read this aloud?
- What do you notice on this page?
- What has the writer done with the print here?
- How is the white space used differently here?
- What I noticed next was...
- Many people who write often...

2. Form a Theory:

- Why would a writer do this?
- How does this help you as a reader?
- Are there other places in this text where the author has done this?
- When you find other instances of this, how does that affect your theory? Does it make you more certain? Does it nudge you to reconsider?
- Does this help your theory grow? If so, how?

3. Explore Other Writers:

- Do we know other writers who do this?
- Let's explore one of these reading materials and see if we notice any other writers who do this.
- What do you notice in these texts?
- Consider your theory and check it in this title. Are both writers doing this for the same purpose?
- Is there more than one reason to use this crafting strategy? What other possibilities are you thinking of?
-

4. Think About your own Writing:

- How would you employ this in your writing?
- Can you imagine this working for you?
- Would this work in the writing you are composing now?

To assist students analyzing the writer’s craft, the following reading sheet can be suggested:

Reading like a Writer	
1. <u>Notice the Craft/Name the Craft</u>	
What is one craft technique you noticed the author using?	

2. <u>Form a Theory</u>	
List reasons the writer might have used this technique:	

3. <u>Explore other writers</u>	
Do you know any other writers who do this?	

4. <u>Think About Your Own Writing</u>	
How might you use this technique in your own writing?	

To encourage students to learn about the craft of writing, teachers can also have them intentionally address questions as these while reading:

- What is the writer’s purpose for this piece of writing?
- How effective is the language the writer uses? Is it formal? Informal? Or a combination?
- Is the vocabulary simple, complex or a combination?
- Is there lots of dialogue or a little? Not at all?

- How does the writer move from one idea to another? Are the transitions between ideas effective?
- What is the writer's style? How does the writer vary sentence structure and vocabulary to avoid flat writing?
- Does the writer's descriptive writing create a believable character, setting, etc.?
- What kind of evidence does the writer rely on to support his/her claims? Does he/she use personal experiences? Statistics? Quotes from famous people?
- How does the writer use time and sequencing of ideas to create an effect? Does the writer use flashback and foreshadowing effectively?
- Does the writer weave all the ideas into a satisfying conclusion?

Noticing word choice, diction, sentence structure and focus, figurative language, format, genre, writer's purpose, etc, are therefore, all to be considered when reading like a writer. Most importantly, to read like a writer is to read with a sense of possibility as the reader is required, in the process, to constantly ask himself / herself: 'what's possible to do in my own writing?' In this concern, Bunn (2011, p.75) stated:

Reading like a writer can help you understand how the process of writing is a series of making choices, and in doing so, can help you recognize important decisions you might face and techniques you might want to use when working on your own writing. Reading this way becomes an opportunity to think and learn about writing.

Research has shown that as readers must think like a writer, writers must think like a reader (Rowell, 2007). This last notion is to be discussed in the section below providing some tips to help students write like a reader.

4.6 Teaching EFL Students Write like a Reader

Placing oneself in the mind of the reader as text is composed will bring clarity and direction to anyone's writing. As the reader's job is to construct meaning from text, stimulating EFL students to 'write like readers' makes them constantly ask themselves what the reader will make of what they have to say. Therefore, they are more likely to focus on meaning while writing.

In helping students approach the process of writing from a reader's perspective, teachers can use a series of questions to prompt them to think like readers, for example,

“What did you try to say in this sentence? Is your sentence clear or confusing to a reader? What can you change in this sentence so that meaning is clear?” (Hong Xu, 2010, p.219). Students need to be aware that the words they write are to be read by another person; they need to consider ‘the reader’ as they write and to provide that ‘reader’ the support necessary to engage with the piece of writing in meaningful ways. Referring to this point in particular, Donohue (2011, p.14) pointed out that:

Students need to visualize, question, infer, predict, make connections, determine important information, and synthesize texts in order to deepen their understanding of the content. But if reading, as we know it, is a conversation between the reader and the writer, then the author can intentionally include things in writing that would make it easier for the reader to apply these strategies when interpreting the text. If writers were to think like readers, then they would think of the reading strategies that the audience will use to connect to a text and find ways to integrate them into their writing.

Here are some guiding tips teachers can use to help their students consider reading strategies while writing:

4.6.1 *Visualizing*

Visualizing is one of the many skills that make reading comprehension possible. Readers create mental images based on text they read, and these images help them gain a more thorough understanding of the material. Visualizing utilizes readers’ senses including sounds, tastes, smells, sights, and feelings working in collaboration with their imagination to engage with a text. If readers rely on such a reading strategy to facilitate comprehension, what can a writer do to better facilitate this? The answer is simple: in order for the reader to be able to capture meaning from writing by visualizing, the writer has to describe.

Hollingsworth (1988) referred to descriptive writing as “...giving dimensions, colours, surroundings, origins, placement and other information to help readers get a mental picture of an object, person, or idea, and how it operates.” (as cited in Black, 1993, p.8). In her turn, Black (1993, p.9) defined descriptive writing as “a process of particularizing and clarifying selected notions using precise words and appropriate phrases to describe something vividly, and sharing experiences with the reader.” Accordingly, to enable the reader to visualize content, the writer is supposed to rely on vivid description and use sensory details that appeal to the reader’s five senses. Using similes, metaphors and other figures of speech can also help readers construct a picture by comparing the subject being described to something they know.

Here are some prompt questions that can promote writers (students) to think like readers, and therefore, incorporate the reading strategy of visualizing into their writing:

- What words or phrases can you employ that will help the reader see, hear, taste, smell and touch through your writing?
- How can you provide enough details to give your reader a clear image of your ideas?
- What feelings do you think are important to include?
- How do you want your reader to feel after reading your piece of writing?
- What are you envisioning in your mind as the writer?

4.6.2 *Connecting*

To make meaning from text, readers search for connections between what they know and new information they encounter in their reading (Orehovec and Alley, 2003). They may make connections between a text and their own life (text-to-self). They may make connections between two or more reading materials (text-to-text). Or they may make connections between a text and real-world knowledge and events (text-to-world).

Gear (2014, p.11) said: “when I make a connection to something I’m reading, it’s not that I, as the reader, have made the connection happen: often it is the writer inviting me, through the writing to make that connection.” The writer can help readers then to connect meaningfully to the text read by delivering a content including sufficient information and personal elements. Some prompt questions that can support writers (students) with providing their readers with connections include:

- How can you provide content similar to things that happen in the real world?
- Which part do you think the reader may most easily connect with?
- What can you remind the reader of through the material you write?
- What personal aspects of life your writing involve?
- What feelings do you think the reader will experience while reading what you are presenting?

4.6.3 *Inferring and Predicting*

Efficient reading involves approaching a text with a critical and analytical perspective. This entails creating meaning that is not stated explicitly in the text. Indeed, there are times when readers are supposed to ‘read between and beyond the lines’ to pick up on clues

provided by the writer in order to extract meaning. In addition to making inferences, readers make predictions while reading anticipating information and events that could happen next in the text.

In other words, “writers don’t spill their thoughts onto the page, they leak them slowly, one idea at a time, until the reader can make an educated guess or an appropriate inference about an underlying theme in the text or a prediction about what is to come.” (Harvey and Goudvis, 2007, p.18). Thus, “when writing, it is important to hold back some information, or include some elements of suspense, so the reader can fill in the gaps.” (Donohue, 2009, p.65).

Indeed, keeping their readers in mind while writing can help writers make good decisions about material to include. Below are some prompt questions that can support students (writers) in providing opportunities for readers to make predictions and inferences:

- What conclusion do you want the reader to draw after reading your work?
- What is the theme, message, moral or lesson you want to convey to the reader through your writing?
- How can you employ some suspense or foreshadowing to give the reader some clues about what could happen next?
- How can you direct the reader to think a little harder through intentional ambiguity?

4.6.4 Determining Importance

Determining important ideas and information when reading is central to comprehension. Readers need to “sift and sort the important information from the details and merge their thinking with it.” (Harvey and Goudvis, 2007, p.176). They need to distinguish between what's essential versus what's interesting, distinguish between fact and opinion, determine cause-and-effect relationships, compare and contrast ideas or information, discern themes, opinions, or perspectives, pinpoint problems and solutions, name steps in a process, locate information that answers specific questions, or summarize (Harvey and Goudvis, 2000).

All this can be challenging for a reader. And as there is an intimate link between the reader’s thinking and the writer’s intent, this key reading strategy (determining importance) can be considered from a writer’s perspective also. Indeed, in order to help readers determine what is important in the reading, writers are supposed to aid them sift through the information.

Klein and Stuart (2012, p.78) referred to that notion saying that writers have to: "... include text features to tell the reader: 'Hey, look at me, this information is important!'"

Text features employed by writers may include bold print words, headings, glossaries, index, etc. Besides, writers need to present information in a clear, well-organized and focused way so that the reader can easily identify the purpose and the intent of the piece of writing. Here are some guiding questions that can help students (writers) to incorporate the reading strategy of 'determining importance' into their writing, and therefore, write like a reader:

- What is the general idea discussed in the piece of writing?
- What is the most important piece of information that you want the reader to remember after reading your writing?
- How will you make sure that reader knows that some points dealt with in the writing are important things to remember?
- Are there key words that you might employ to attract the reader's attention to specific points in your writing?

4.6.5 Questioning

Questioning is a strategy that readers rely on to engage with the text. Asking questions as they read helps them not only to interact with the text to make meaning, but also to monitor their comprehension of they are reading. And in order for reading to be a collaboration between the reader and the writer, writers are supposed to anticipate the reader's questions and plant questions in the reader's mind. They may even include thoughtful questions in their writing in order to guide the reader's thinking. Donohue (2009) proposed some prompts that teachers might find helpful to promote students (writers) to consider the reading strategy of 'questioning' while writing:

- What questions do you think the reader might still have after reading your work?
- Are there things that you want the reader to continue thinking about after reading your writing?
- How can you make your ideas clear for the reader? Do you think there are parts that may confuse someone? How can you make them better?
- Are there any thoughtful questions that you want to pose in your writing?
- Do you think your writing will satisfy the reader's curiosity?
- How will you make sure that you don't leave any loose ends?

4.7 Discussion as a Means of Learning to Read and Write Analytically

Discussion can support the development of literacy (Miller, McCardle, and Long, 2014). The nature of the communication process between writer and reader is such that the writer presents ideas and information to readers and readers strive to understand what the writer intended. Involving students in group discussion about materials read can help them understand the roles and responsibilities of readers and writers, and getting them work together to understand and evaluate written texts enhances the development of language, reading, and writing among them (Beck and McKeown, 2006).

As expressed by Olson (2011, p.264):

Realistically, inexperienced readers and writers may need just as much teacher modeling and guided practice in sharing their responses to texts as they do in learning how to be strategic in reading and writing texts. The teacher should use question asking as a teaching tool that leads to authentic dialogue and prepares students to become independent inquirers.

Teachers are, then, advised to assist students in learning how to learn from discussions about texts (Wilkinson, Soter, and Murphy, 2010). In other words, some guidance is needed to encourage students to express ideas and interpretations about a text, to support their ideas by close examination of the text, and to engage in exchanges of different perspectives (Beck and McKeown, 2006).

Scholars have identified three general characteristics of group discussions and teachers' instructional practices that facilitate the development as well as the interrelations of language, reasoning, reading, and writing (Miller, McCardle, and Long, 2014). These involve: active participation, extended talk, and cognitive challenge.

4.7.1 Active Participation in Discussion of Texts

Students involved in discussion of texts need to see themselves as members of a discourse community (Nystrand et al., 2003). They must be encouraged to express their ideas. They must understand that their views and interpretations are valued and that they share the responsibility of thinking about and talking about the text. Of course, the teacher is required to play the role of a guide having control over the topic and the text chosen for discussion (Wilkinson, Soter, and Murphy, 2010), while the students have interpretive authority and control of turns (i.e., who gets the floor).

Indeed, as the discussion leader, the teacher's role is not to have the 'right' answers for prepackaged questions already in mind but to promote conversation by "creating an atmosphere of freedom, clarity, and equality" (Costa, 1991, p.194).

Besides, students must be praised for their contributions to the discussion (Goldenberg, 1992), and their knowledge-driven and affective comments must be supported to engage them personally and emotionally. Yet, according to Olson (2011, p.268):

Nothing brings a class discussion to a screeching halt faster than saying 'very good' or 'excellent' in response to the first volunteer. Students assume that their lucky classmates got the answer the teacher was looking for and are not willing to risk a second place or wrong answer.

Accordingly, Costa (1991) noted that authentic praise may be useful with reluctant, unmotivated, and inexperienced learners, but cautioned to use it sparingly.

4.7.2 Sustained and Extended Discussion

Teachers often find it hard to foster sustained discussion in their EFL classroom. Discussion usually entails brief exchanges which are not likely to contribute to students' development of skills of argumentation. According to Miller, Peggy, and Long (2014, p.86):

Sustained conversations are necessary for students to develop the ability to formulate and articulate their views, adjust their thinking through reflecting on each other's ideas, and reach some kind of closure. Extended discussion as dialogic and effective communication is a cooperative endeavor.

As students will be more likely to share their ideas about topics they are familiar with or relevant to their personal experiences than when they are not, it is recommended for teachers to choose reading materials that may affect students' interest or willingness to engage in sustained discussion (Almasi, O'Flahavan, and Arya, 2001).

Besides, Lowery and Marshall (1980) referred to the notion that the actions a teacher takes after a student answers a question actually influence student behaviour more than what the teacher asks or tells students to do. Similarly, Costa (1991) pointed out that some teacher response behaviour may determine or close down student thinking; others open up or extend student thinking.

For instance, when the teacher responds to a student's answer using negative words like 'poor', 'incorrect', or 'wrong', students tend to "give up and stop thinking" (Costa, 1991:200). Indeed, Christenbury (1994) suggested that responding with 'I'm not sure' or 'I

don't think so' are more effective ways of dealing with a student response that is misguided or mistaken.

Furthermore, Rowe (1986)'s research on wait time revealed that some complex, open ended questions need to be processed and reflected on. Thus, Teachers' moments of silence after asking such a type of questions signify that the question is worth pondering (Good and Brophy, 1997). Besides, "giving students two minutes to do some expressive writing in response to a question before initiating class discussion will also allow time for ideas to percolate." (Olson, 2011, p.268).

Accepting students' responses is another behaviour a teacher can rely on to open up students' thinking. Indeed, an alternative to responding with 'poor' or 'excellent' is to acknowledge students response, either passively or actively. In 'passive acceptance', the teacher can, for example, write the student's answer on the board, or respond with 'I understand'. Responses of this kind reveal that the teacher has heard the student's message but leaves room for others to add their views and ideas. 'Active acceptance', however, requires restating the student's answer using different words ("so what you mean is ...") to summarize what has been said. As Costa (1991, p.202) put it: "when students feel accepted, they are much more willing to take risks in the classroom."

Asking for clarification or asking students to explain their responses is also useful (Olson, 2011). Phrases like "Can you elaborate on that idea?" or "Can you give more details, please?" let students feel that the teacher is genuinely concerned about understanding the full meaning of their responses.

Like Costa (1991), Johnston (2004) believed that a teacher can facilitate or close down conversations, enfranchise students or silence them. He suggested some responses that acknowledge students as thoughtful readers during discussion, like:

- How did you figure out that?
- What questions do you have?
- What have you learned most recently as a reader?
- Let us see if I get this right. (Teacher summarizes the student's extended comment.)

The discourse actions (discussed so far) to foster extended talk were reported by other researchers (O'Connor and Michaels, 1993; Nystrand et al., 2003; Boyd and Rubin, 2006) in advice like:

- “Revoice” a student’s contribution (i.e., clarify the student’s idea for others to understand and respond to).
- Use open-ended questions (i.e., those for which there is no single right answer).
- Engage in contingent responding (i.e., the teacher requests a student to expand on or clarify a comment or idea).
- Create opportunities for students to practise initiating topics, elaborating on their own responses, and responding to questions from members of the group – including the teacher.
- Avoid close-ended questions as they do not allow for a coherence in the sharing of information (i.e., they are not conducive to sharing the process of constructing meaning of a text).

In the following table, Olson (2011) provided advice about what not to do and what to do when asking questions to initiate and orchestrate a whole class discussion.

Do not	Do
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask yes/no, one-word, or fill-in-the-blank questions. Nothing can make discussion more deadly than questions that cannot go anywhere. Christenbury (1994: 209) notes that this can make your classroom interaction seem like an interrogation rather than a discussion. • Fish for a specific answer that you have in mind to a question. If you can't resist fishing, avoid casting the same line out in different phrasing if the students don't bite. • Ask isolated questions that are disconnected from one another and don't lead anywhere. • Answer the questions yourself if you don't see a hand go up immediately. • Be the center of the discussion in such a way that your questions generate dialogue only between you and the person who is responding. • Expect to have a meaningful, interactive discussion when students are all sitting in straight rows facing forward and able to see only the teacher. • Call on the same four or five students repeatedly. Also, avoid focusing on only one side of the room. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask open-ended questions beginning with words like <i>why</i>, <i>how</i>, or <i>to what extent?</i> – questions that lend themselves to multiple responses and points of view. • Pay attention to students' responses rather than promoting your own. Look for the rationale behind student responses to questions. Extend the discussion by asking, "What in the text caused you to think that?" • Develop a sequence of scaffolded questions that lead students to a deeper level of meaning construction – even if you don't end up asking them all. • Practice wait time so that students have an opportunity to generate thoughtful responses to your questions. Research indicates that longer wait time leads to more active participation by a larger number of students as well as to higher-quality responses (Rowe, 1986). • Orchestrate opportunities for students to respond to classmates' comments without the teacher mediating every exchange. Asking students to turn to a partner to discuss an issue and then reconvening the whole group can also get the teacher out of center stage. • Arrange the seating so that students can see one another. Sitting in a circle or placing the desks in a U shape will help foster genuine dialogue. • Make it a goal to engage everyone in the discussion. Interspersing talk between partners may increase the number of students who volunteer to share their ideas in the large group. Some teachers also find giving participation points an incentive.

Table 4.1: Don'ts and Dos When Asking Questions (Olson, 2011, p.267)

4.7.3 Cognitive Challenge

The extent to which the content, activities, and group discussion are challenging and therefore stimulating to students, is a key factor upon which the quality of classroom talk is based (Wolf, Crosson, and Resnick, 2005).

One relevant aspect of cognitive challenge is instruction in effective argumentation. This might involve teaching students to provide enough evidence to support their ideas, to look at the quality of such evidence, and to evaluate counterclaims during discussions (Miller, McCardle, and Long, 2014). For that purpose, teachers might employ instructional practices like these:

- Asking follow-up questions such as: How did you know that ...? What do you think about ...? And why do you think ...? And other questions that demand reasoning and reflection instead of questions that focus on facts merely.
- Directing students to use text to provide evidence to support their reasoning.
- Initiating students' uses of or references to the text with prompts such as: Where in the text did you find that?

Both theory and evidence suggest that participation in such group discussions contributes to the development of students' written argumentation (Michaels, O'Connor, and Resnick, 2008). When students are made aware that writing is a conversation with the reader, they can understand that written arguments, like oral arguments, are dialogic in nature (Wolf, Crosson, and Resnick, 2005). Indeed, students who participate in collaborative reasoning discussions are better formed in providing greater number of arguments and counterarguments and better use of information in their written argumentation.

Yet, it is worth noting that, in many ways, written arguments are more complex than oral arguments as writing places additional demands on students (e.g., use of appropriate academic language, punctuation, grammar). That is why explicit instruction is needed to help students make the transition from orally crafting arguments to composing written arguments (Nussbaum and Schraw, 2007).

4.8 The What and Why of Extensive Reading

The idea behind extensive reading is simple, "by reading regularly and in quantity, students learn to read better and come to enjoy reading more." (Jacobs and Farrell, 2012, p.2).

To elaborate on the notion above, Bamford and Day (1997) presented ten basic principles of extensive reading providing a theoretical framework for putting it into action in the language classroom:

- ***Students read as much as possible, perhaps in and out of the classroom.*** Day and Bamford (1998) pointed out that there is not upper limit to the amount of reading that can be done, but a book a week is probably the minimum amount of reading necessary to achieve the benefits of extensive reading.
- ***A variety of materials on a wide range of topics is available so as to encourage reading for different reasons and in different ways.*** According to Bamford and Day (2004), variety means that learners can find things they want to read, whatever their interests (e.g., books, magazines, newspapers, fiction, non-fiction, texts that inform, texts that entertain, etc.). Therefore, learners are lead to read for different reasons (e.g., entertainment, information, passing the time), and consequently, in different ways (e.g., skimming, scanning).
- ***Students select what they want to read.*** Students are more likely to read materials in which they are interested as they do in their L1, they are also free, indeed, encouraged to stop reading anything that is not interesting or which they find too difficult.
- ***The purposes of reading are usually related to pleasure, information, and general understanding.*** Unlike usual classroom intensive reading practices and reading for academic purposes which involves a complete understanding of the reading material, extensive reading encourages learners to read with the goal of sufficient understanding to fulfill a particular reading purpose as it is in learners' everyday reading in their L1 (e.g., obtaining information, enjoyment of a story).
- ***Reading is its own reward. There are few or no follow-up activities exercises after reading.*** This implies that learners will only skill the joy of reading. Reading then becomes the chore.
- ***Reading materials are well within the linguistic competence of the students in terms of vocabulary and grammar. Dictionaries are rarely used while reading.***

In extensive reading, the material is well within students' reading comfort zone in the target language. Students are unlikely to read extensively if they have to struggle with difficult material, as Nuttall (1982, p.172) stated "We cannot expect students to read from choice, or to read fluently if the language is a struggle. Reading improvement comes from reading a lot of easy material."

- ***Reading is individual and silent, at the student own space, and, outside class, done when and where the student chooses.*** Extensive reading as most of one's day-to-day reading is done silently and individually so that the reader is swept up and involved in what he or she is reading. In this concern, Henry (1995, p.xv) commented that "...the most beautiful silence on earth, that of students engrossed in their reading."
- ***Reading speed is usually faster rather than slower.*** This is not surprising as students read materials they can easily understand.
- ***Teachers orient students to the goals of the programme, explain the methodology, keep track of what each student reads, and guide students in getting the most out of the programme.*** In other words, teachers need to explain to students what extensive reading is, why they are doing it, and how to go about it. Knowing what students are actually reading, and what are their reactions to what was read is also crucial.
- ***The teacher is a role model of a reader for students.*** In this concern, Richards and Renandya (2002, p.297) stated: "We are less likely to be successful in encouraging our students to read if we ourselves do not read. This advice is particularly important when beginning an extensive programme." In other words, reading teachers who are not seen by their students as good readers have very few if any chance to succeed in motivating learners to read widely. Many reluctant students-readers need a role model or someone who gives them the lead to discover the treasures of reading by themselves.

A great deal of research has supported the notion of extensive reading. Indeed, a large number of studies with different samples and in different regions worldwide have enumerated the benefits of extensive reading, and its positive effects on EFL and ESL learning in general and on EFL and ESL reading ability in particular (Hafiz and Tudor, 1989; Krashen, 1993; Nation, 1997; Day and Bamford, 1998; Bell, 2001).

Summarizing the principal claims, it seems that extensive reading can provide opportunities for practice and improvement in the following areas:

- ***Extensive reading builds automaticity of word recognition.*** One of the characteristics of ER is that learners read as much as possible. By doing so, they will encounter certain words repeatedly. As a result of multiple encounters, the words get registered in the learners' sight vocabulary. Due to familiarity of the words, they will automatically recognize and recall those words without much effort when they see them in print (Day and Bamford, 1998). This will allow them to read faster (Bell, 2001). As they read faster, they will begin to see words in 'chunks of language', which allows them to move from word-by-word decoding to the processing of ideas, thus increasing reading fluency which is essential to higher level reading and thinking skills.

- ***Extensive reading extends, consolidates and sustains language learning in such areas as spelling, vocabulary, grammar, and text structure*** (Krashen, 1993; Nation, 1997). By reading widely and constantly, learners are exposed to a lot of language. When they are in constant contact with the language they start noticing and learning the patterns in that language. This will improve their grammar skills. Also, they can learn how words are being used in different contexts. By encountering words again and again in different contexts, they will be able to remember and use the words more easily. This will expand their vocabulary (Nagy, 1988). Similarly, learners who read extensively are likely to improve their spelling without any focused instruction. According to Krashen (1989), the most likely candidate for building spelling competence is reading. This conjecture is supported by studies showing that each time readers read a passage containing words they cannot spell; they make a small amount of progress in acquiring the correct spelling. Therefore, there is a positive correlation between spelling competence and the amount of reading done.

- ***Extensive reading facilitates reading comprehension.*** A number of studies have demonstrated reading comprehension gains from Extensive reading. Hayashi (1999), for example, examined improvements of Japanese EFL University students after receiving Extensive reading instruction for approximately 10 months. Scores in four sub-sections of the TOEFL were reported; Reading Comprehension, Vocabulary, Structure and Writing, and Listening. The reading comprehension section displayed larger improvement than the other sections. Furthermore, Bell (2001) compared two groups of elementary level English language learners in Yemen (extensive vs. intensive reading groups) in terms of gains in reading comprehension and speed over two semesters. The two groups improved in reading comprehension and speed, but the magnitude of improvement was greater for the Extensive reading group.

- ***Extensive reading enhances learners' background knowledge.*** By reading widely, learners are exposed to diverse topics and information which they can use in future reading.

- ***Extensive reading may be the only genuine way for students to develop and maintain reading strategies and skills, and to become more strategic readers*** (Grabe, 1995). According to Bell (1998), for example, extensive reading facilitates the development of prediction skills. This is supported by the fact that the reading process is the platform for readers to predict the content of a text by using their pre-existing schema. When learners read extensively, they gather and store more and more information in the memory. When activated, their schema will help them to decode and interpret the message beyond the printed words. Guessing the meaning of unknown words from context is another skill that can be developed by learners as the use of dictionaries is not recommended when reading extensively (Nuttall, 1982).

- ***Extensive reading leads to improvement in learners' overall language proficiency.*** As Nuttall (1982, p.168) commented: "The best way to improve your knowledge of a foreign language is to go and live among its speakers. The next best way is to read extensively in it." Elley and Mangubhai (1981), for example, conducted a study with a sample of EFL learners in a Fijian Primary school. The

findings showed that children who were exposed to extensive reading had advanced in receptive language skills, namely, reading and listening, at twice the progress of the control group. Besides, Cho and Krashen (1994) conducted a study with a group of adult ESL students in the United States of America who were involved in an extensive reading programme, and showed that the subjects' speaking abilities have improved greatly after reading a large amount of texts in English. Writing proficiency is also impacted by reading extensively. In England, Hafiz and Tudor (1989) were impressed by the gains their subjects (ESL adolescents students) made in writing in English, even though they were not given any special instruction on writing. And in the United States, Janopoulos (1986), in an investigation of university ESL students, found a significant correlation between reading and proficiency in written English. Indeed, writing skills can be acquired consciously or subconsciously through extensive reading.

- ***Extensive reading promotes learners' positive attitude toward reading, and fosters their confidence and motivation to read in the target language*** (Tudor and Hafiz, 1989). In other words, extensive reading with its reliance on comprehensible, attractive, and extended reading materials helps to build confidence. Students' initial successful experiences in extensive reading result in the discovery that they can read in the target language. It is rewarding and pleasurable. This stimulates the development of positive attitude towards reading in the new language, and the growth of motivation to read in it.
- ***Extensive reading offers a higher possibility of developing a reading habit.***
- ***Extensive reading is a key means for students to continue learning the target language on their own when they complete instruction.*** It makes learners feel more autonomous over their learning and more likely to take more initiative—becoming more 'independent readers', being able to read for different purposes and to change reading strategies for different kinds of texts and so on. This is what Maguire (1997, p.36) wanted to say when he claimed that: "Reading is one of the basic pillars on which self-development rests. It's through reading that we begin to extend our learning outside the classroom and so gradually develop the capacity to learn without a teacher. This is the beginning of our independence as learners."

- *Through extensive reading, students will be more prepared for further academic courses as they have read large quantities.*

Based on the positive points reported earlier, the outcomes of programmes using an extensive reading approach are impressive. So, if EFL teachers are impressed by those results, the next step for them will be how to integrate extensive reading into their EFL curricula. Many possibilities for this are to be discussed in the section below.

4.9 Bringing Extensive Reading into the EFL Curriculum

Extensive reading supports all aspects of an English-language programme (Day and Bamford, 1998). Therefore, it can be blended into any EFL curriculum, regardless of methodology and approach (Shankar, 2010). Broadly speaking, there are at least four main ways to integrate extensive reading in an EFL curriculum:

1. as a new separate course (a stand-alone course) which would be solely extensive reading
 2. as part of an existing course – this could be any type of course (for example, writing, grammar, reading)
 3. as non-credit addition to an existing course
 4. as an extracurricular activity
- a. As a separate course:* The establishing of an independent extensive reading course, just as with other courses, requires a classroom, a teacher, a syllabus, materials, and a set time slot. Setting up such a stand-alone course, is indeed, reported to be the ideal way to incorporate extensive reading into the EFL curriculum inviting students to read and report on their reading to the teacher and other students. The amount of time devoted to the course has to be decided depending on the overall objectives of the entire curriculum.
- b. As part of an existing course:* This involves inserting a certain amount of extensive reading (e.g., the reading of a certain number of books per week or per semester, both in class and for home work) into an already existing course with nothing taken away or eliminated from that course. Here it is important to set reading targets for students and a scale of credits in relation to the amount they read (i.e., to grade them in terms of books or number of pages read).

- c. As non-credit addition to an existing course:* The extra reading here is an optional assignment and not a formal part of the course. Students are, then, encouraged to read on their own, according to their interest and for enjoyment. As an inducement to read, teachers could make their students aware of the rewards of extensive reading. Moreover, the attitude the teacher shows for extensive reading is crucial. As Day and Bamford (1998, p.42) put it: “If a teacher is firmly committed to extensive reading and promotes it actively, then students generally catch the teacher’s enthusiasm and are drawn to doing it.”
- d. As an extracurricular Activity:* This is another form of optional extensive reading. An extracurricular club can be open to anyone in the foreign language programme. The club members would meet after school and a teacher would be in charge. For this extracurricular activity in particular, Shankar (2010) suggested:
- Setting up a membership fee if suitable reading materials are not available and need to be purchased.
 - Setting up goals and having regular reading activities to sustain motivation and interest.
 - Meeting once or twice a week to present oral reports on books members read individually.
 - Reading copies of the same book silently and individually, and then as a group, discussing it chapter by chapter and helping each other with the meaning of unknown words.
 - Organizing reading marathons in which each student aims to read a certain number of pages during a set period of time.

4.10 Encouraging Extensive Reading among EFL Students

The benefits students can reap from reading are endless. Unfortunately, EFL students have less and less inclination to pick up a book as distractions. Ideally, every student would be motivated to read for the sheer intrinsic pleasure of the activity, yet it is sometimes hard to get students read more than the short texts used in the classroom. Still teachers must not let this stop them from instilling in their students the love for reading and the ability to comprehend what they read, and from creating lifelong readers out of them.

In this concern, Blachowicz and Ogle (2008, p.263) pointed out:

In the process of students’ becoming lifelong readers, interest and self awareness and confidence as readers are big keys. How useful will well-

developed reading strategies be if students leave our classrooms not wanting to read?

In a similar vein, Collins (2004, p.11) reported:

We want our students to be readers for life and not just readers in school, we're aiming to affect lives and thinking habits, not just test scores and state rankings.

Below are some ideas that teachers could consider for encouraging EFL students who are reluctant or nonreaders to read, enjoy reading, and do more reading in the TL:

- Talk to the class about the purposes of extensive reading and why students should do it. Refer to research and anecdotal evidence on extensive reading's effectiveness, and how reading has future academic, social, and career benefits.
- Tell students about books you have been read yourself. Teachers must model being readers and the joy that comes with reading.
- Take time to show students any new books.
- Read aloud to students to interest them in new titles, authors, and book types. Since the teacher generally knows what books are particularly good, reading aloud a few good stories and then suggesting others that are similar can go a long way toward leading students to read. If a reluctant student realizes that his or her classmates are captured by the 'magic' of a story, he or she may feel that he or she is really missing something and he or she will join the crowd.
- Auctioning off books by reading the first few paragraphs in one book and offering it to the most interested students, and then repeating this procedure with the next, is an excellent way of using the competitive spirit in all of us to sell reading.
- Encourage students to always carry a book with them to read when they have time.
- Invite students to act out scenes from the books they have read (do role play and other dramatic follow-up activities based on the reading material). Extracts from internet, or book summaries in that case are useless as students are to invest the whole book to be able to perform the role they are playing.
- Ask students about their reading progress from time to time. Indeed, Nuttall (1982, p.186) pointed out that "Students will read more willingly if they have visible signs of their own progress."

4.11 Interactive and Creative Writing activities in Support of Extensive Reading

When engaged in extensive reading, the reader focuses mainly on the insights derived from the information contained in the reading, the entertainment value of reading itself, or the thoughts provoked by the reading material. From this perspective, it seems reasonable to assume that any attempt to require post-reading work may spoil students' reading enjoyment.

However, if carefully designed, post-reading activities can serve useful purposes. For the teacher, such activities determine if the reading was actually done and what the students got out of it. For the students, follow-up reading activities may reinforce what they have gained from their reading, give them a sense of progress, help them share information about materials being read, and give them a chance to reflect on their reading.

A collection of interactive and creative writing activities (adapted from Day and Bamford, 1998; Bamford and Day, 2004) teachers may use with their students in support of extensive reading are presented below.

4.11.1 *Writing Book Reports*

A book report offers a summary or a brief description of the key points of the book being read; giving an account of the major plot, characters and main ideas of the work. Besides, a book report often provides a short appraisal of the strengths and weaknesses of the work.

A good book report may take the following format:

Book Report :

Your name: **class:**

Title of the book:

Author:

Publisher:

Year published:

I read all / pages of the book (circle all or indicate the number of pages read)

Topic:

The most important information:

.....
.....

Summary:

.....
.....
.....
.....

Writer's message:

.....
.....
.....

Write your feelings about the book bellow:

.....
.....

In case the material chosen is a story or a novel, the following reading sheet is suggested:

Title: Author: Publisher: Year published:
Where the story takes place (setting): When the story takes place (time): Who tells the story (narrator): Main character (protagonist): Secondary characters:
Sequence of important events (plot):
How the story ends:
Was the story/novel well written?
Would you recommend this novel/ story to others? Why or why not?

4.11.2 *Getting Personal*

Through this activity, students are offered a smorgasbord of ways to respond personally and creatively to what they read. The aim is to help them connect what they read with their personal lives; to encourage fluent writing. The activity involves following procedure:

1. The teacher gives students a ‘Personal Responses List’, and goes through it with them, providing enough explanation of it. It is important to make them know they

have to choose one task from this list when they have finished reading a book. And, of course, the teacher will set a time and word limit for the task.

2. Students complete their chosen tasks for homework.
3. The teacher collects, responds and returns.

The 'Personal Responses List' below can be employed for the task:

Personal Responses List

- ***Strength and Weaknesses:*** which character in the story do you most or least identify with? What are the character's strengths and weaknesses? What are yours?
- ***Interior Monologue:*** Choose a particular situation from the book. If you were (name of character), what would you do in such a situation? What decisions would you make, and what actions would you take? Why? Write down your thinking for one particular situation.
- ***Lessons for Living:*** What was the most surprising or interesting lesson you have learned from the story? Why? How does that lesson connect to your own life?
- ***Letter or Diary Writing:*** Imagine you are (name of character). Write a letter to a friend about what is happening or has happened to you. Or write a diary entry for a particular point in the story.
- ***Neighbours:*** Imagine one of the characters in the story has moved in next door to you. What is life like with such a neighbour? Describe an imaginary day in your life when you spend time with your new neighbor.
- ***Film Director:*** You are going to make a film of the book, but you can only include two-thirds of the story. What will you cut from the story so that you can make your film? Which parts are not needed? Why?
- ***Story Journey:*** Make a visual representation of the progression of the plot (opening, conflict, complications, climax and resolution).
- ***Agony Column:*** One of the characters in the story turns to you for advice about how to solve a real or an imaginary problem in his or her life. Explain the problem and write a short letter to the character about what he or she should do to deal with the problem.

4.11.3 One-Sentence Summaries

As its name implies, this activity requires students to summarize what they read in one sentence. The aim of such a task is to help students identify main ideas and improve their writing skills as well. In order to model this activity, the teacher is supposed to select a book students are familiar with and summarize it in one sentence. The teacher is required, in the process, to jot down the steps he or she uses in writing his or her summary.

4.11.4 Picture It

Instead of asking them to write a regular book report, this activity requires students to draw a picture and write about what it shows. This is supposed to give students a creative and interesting way to report about books they have read. The task can be inserted using the three following steps:

1. The teacher models the activity on the board by drawing a scene from a book and talking about it.
2. The teacher tells students, after finishing a book, to draw a picture based on it (from their imagination, not copied from the book).
3. The teacher, then, asks them to write briefly about what the picture shows, and about what happens in the story before and after the picture.

It is worth noting, here, that the worse artist the teacher is when modeling the activity, the better. Students then realize that the quality of their art is not important.

4.11.5 Gifts

This activity requires students to choose gifts for the main characters of a story, and to explain their choices as well. It can be employed through the procedure below:

1. For homework the teacher tells students to list the names of two to four of the main characters in a novel they have read. Then, students are supposed to choose a gift for each of these characters. They write the gift next to the character's name, and write briefly why they have chosen that gift for that particular character.
2. When students have done the homework, in class students present their work in groups.

4.11.6 *Once Upon a Time*

Here students use words from books they are reading to write their own stories. The activity aims at: improving writing proficiency; reviewing vocabulary; and raising awareness of parts of speech. The following steps are required:

1. Students should bring to class books that they are reading or have read.
2. The teacher writes on the board *nouns*, *proper nouns*, *conjunctions*, *adjectives*, *verbs*, and *adverbs*. The categories (parts of speech) depend on the language he or she is teaching.
3. The teacher asks students about words from their books that belong in the different categories. The teacher, then, writes these words on the board, listed under their categories. If the students are going to write a half-page story, the teacher solicits about thirty words, or as many as the students can give him or her in five minutes. The result is a list of random words from various stories, divided into parts of speech.
4. The teacher tells students that they are to create their own stories using some words on the list. The stories all start with the phrase, *once upon a time*. For a half-page story, students are required to use at least ten words from the list; the rest of the words in their story do not have to be from the list.
5. Students share their stories in small groups, and their written stories will then be posted in the classroom.

4.11.7 *A Different Ending*

This activity requires students to write new endings for stories they have read. The main objective is to help them improve their writing skills and think creatively. The procedure used involves a set of steps:

1. For homework, students are supposed to summarize a book they have read, but instead of writing the actual ending, they should write another ending.
2. When they have done the homework, in class students are placed in groups sharing their summaries and different ending.

4.12 Strategies for Interacting with a Text: Using Reading and Writing to Learn

Strategies as defined by Afflerbach, Pearson, and Paris (2008, p.368) are “deliberate, goal-directed attempts to ... construct meaning of text” whereas skills operate automatically, without “deliberate control or conscious awareness.” And as explained by Olson (2011, p.125):

A student utilizes skills when a process has been used often, the reading or writing text is easy, knowledge about the task is robust, and little scaffolding by the teacher is necessary. However, students utilize strategies when a practice is new to them, the text is difficult, knowledge is meager, and scaffolding by the teacher is required.

In this section, a range of pedagogical strategies teachers can purposefully employ in the classroom to help students interact with a text in order to construct meaning will be provided. These reading / writing strategies are designed to serve as “a tool for learning rather than a means to display acquired knowledge.” (Applebee, 1981, p.101).

4.12.1 *Before-Reading Strategies*

Here is a variety of pre-reading activities that implement writing designed in a way that creates meaningful opportunities for students to interact with the target text before reading it. They can be used by the teachers to get their students hooked and ready to read on.

4.12.1.1 *Easy as 1, 2, 3!*

Inexperienced readers can quickly abandon a text when they encounter unfamiliar words or a complicated story line. The strategy of easy as 1, 2, 3! sparks students’ curiosity, acquaints them with the text, and builds personal investment so that they would be more likely to keep reading (Olson, 2011). It entails three main steps:

1. *Title (Tapping Prior Knowledge and Making Predictions)*. The teacher asks students to think about the title of a text in light of their own knowledge and experiences, and then to use that background to write down and discuss their predictions of what the reading material will be about.
2. *Picture (Visualizing and Revising Meaning)*. The teacher selects a significant picture that accompanies the text and asks students to ‘read’ the picture by visualizing (to examine it closely). Students then record their predictions about the content of the text based on the picture they have interpreted. If there is a disparity

between students' predictions based on the title and those based on the picture, the teacher can ask students if anyone wants to revise their predictions about the title of the text.

3. *Words (Making connections, Expanding Schemata, and Revising Meaning)*. In this final stage, the teacher reads a passage from the text (if possible stopping at a spot that leaves the students in suspense). Students jot down their new or revised predictions based on the words they have received, and then compare their predictions with a classmate or with the whole class.

<p style="text-align: center;">What Do You Know about This Text?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. This is what I think I know because of the Title _____2. This is what I think I know because of the Picture _____3. This is what I know because of the Words _____
--

The sheet above can be used by students to record their thoughts (predictions) in the 'Easy as 1, 2, 3!' activity.

4.12.1.2 Anticipation Guide

The anticipation guide is designed by Readence, Bean, and Baldwin (2008) to help students to tap background knowledge, make predictions, and ask questions before launching into a text, and to step back after reading, rethink what they know, and perhaps revise meaning by identifying initial misconceptions. It involves the following steps:

1. Before reading a text, students are asked to respond to a set of controversial questions or statements about the topic that is to come in a yes/no or agree/disagree fashion.

2. Students look back at the anticipation guide after reading the text to see if their views or opinions were confirmed or changed (i.e., they reassess their pre-reading responses and compare them to their reactions after reading).

Below is the form an anticipation guide may take:

Anticipation Guide		
<p>Directions: Read each statement below. Put an X under agree or disagree to show your opinion.</p>		
Before	Statement	After
Agree/Disagree		Agree/Disagree
_____	1	_____
_____	2	_____
_____	3	_____
_____	4	_____
_____	5	_____

4.12.1.3 Clustering

‘Clustering’, developed by Rico (1983), can be used primarily as a pre-reading/ pre-writing strategy which involves “...providing a stimulus word – such as a topic for writing, the title of a book, the name of a character, a specific historical period, or an abstract concept – and then generating ideas, images, and feelings around that word until a pattern becomes discernible.” (Olson, 2011, p.130). Using clustering as a pre-reading activity, students branch out from a central word or phrase that represents a topic or concept to be read about. The strategy centers on the following steps:

1. Students write a word or phrase in the center of a page and then circle it.

2. They let their thought flow and jot down every word that come to their minds around the first word.
3. They circle the new words and draw lines to connect so that the new words radiate outward from the central word. They should cluster around them too.
4. Students continue to expand this web of words until you have run out of thoughts.
5. After several minutes, the teacher collects students’ ideas and creates a collaborative cluster on the board. In the process, the teacher explains and clarifies the clustering ideas and vocabulary for the students.
6. After reading, the teacher foster the connection of prior knowledge to new learning by having students review their collaborative cluster, adjust ideas, and add new information.

4.12.2 During-Reading Strategies

Another set of strategies linking reading and writing as tools for discovery and interpretation while reading a text is to be highlighted below.

4.12.2.1 Dialectical Journal

The dialectical journal is a double-entry note-taking/note-making process students can engage in while reading a text. The strategy provides them with two columns which are in dialogue with each other, enabling them to conduct “the continual ‘audit of meaning’ that is at the heart of learning to read and write critically.” (Berthff, 1981, p.45). In the left-hand column, students are required to choose and copy down a passage from the target reading material that they find intriguing, puzzling, or illuminating in some sense. In the right-hand column, however, they write their thoughts and feelings, thinking out loud on paper.

Students then are invited to read their journals aloud and discuss their interpretations. The sheet below can be used to accompany the dialectical journal.

Note Taking: What the Text Says	Note Making: What the Text Means to Me

4.12.2.2 *Reciprocal Teaching*

Reciprocal teaching is an instructional activity that encourages students to think about their own thought process during reading. It helps students learn to be actively involved and monitor their comprehension as they read. Palincsar and Brown (1985) identified four complementary strategies in the reciprocal teaching model: summarizing (or self-review); question generating (or self-testing); predicting (or setting the stage for further reading); and demanding clarity (or noting when a breakdown in comprehension has occurred). And as explained by Olson (2011, p.132):

The term *reciprocal* refers to the back-and-forth interchange that takes place as the teacher and students engage in a dialogue about a section of the text they have just read together or independently, using these four cognitive strategies. Initially, the teacher provides ‘expert modeling’ as well as orchestrating the ‘structured practice’ while students rehearse in order to acquire and refine the strategies. In time, the teacher’s aim is to back out of the process and enable a selected student to act in the teacher’s role.

Thus, before reciprocal teaching can be used successfully by students, they need to have been taught and had time to practise the four strategies (summarizing, questioning, predicting, clarifying). And once students have learned the strategies, they take turns assuming the role of teacher in leading a dialogue about what has been read.

One way to implement the reciprocal teaching involves the following:

1. The teacher puts students in groups of four.
2. The teacher distributes one note card to each member of the group identifying each person's unique role: (a) Summarizer; (b) Questioner; (c) Clarifier; and (d) Predictor.
3. The teacher has students read a few paragraphs of the assigned text selection and encourages them to use note-taking strategies such as selective underlining or sticky-notes to help them better prepare for their role in the discussion.
4. At the given stopping point, the ‘Summarizer’ will highlight the key ideas up to this point in the reading. The ‘Questioner’ will then pose questions about the selection: unclear parts, puzzling information; connections to other concepts already learned, and so forth. The ‘Clarifier’ will address confusing parts and attempt to answer the questions that were just posed. And the ‘Predictor’ can offer predictions about what the author will tell the group next or, if it is a literary selection, the predictor might suggest what the next events in the story will be.

5. The roles in the group then switch one person to the right, and the next selection is read. Students repeat the process using their new roles. This continues until the entire selection is read.
6. Throughout the process, the teacher's role is to guide and nurture the students' ability to use the four strategies successfully within the small group. The teacher's role is lessened as students develop skill.

The following reciprocal teaching sheet can be used:

Prediction: Before you begin to read the selection, look at the title or cover, scan the pages to read the major headings, and look at any illustrations. Write down your prediction(s).	
Prediction:	Support:
Main Ideas: As you finish reading each paragraph or key section of text, identify the main idea of that paragraph or section.	Questions: For each main idea listed, write down at least one question.
Main Idea 1:	Question 1:
.....
Main Idea 2:	Question 2:
.....
Main Idea 3:	Question 3:
.....
Summarize: Write a brief summary of what you read.	
Clarify: Copy down words, phrases, or sentences in the passage that are unclear. Then explain how you clarified your understanding.	
Word or Phrase:	Clarify:

4.12.2.3 *Highlighting Confusion*

Another strategy that reinforces the concept of monitoring comprehension is highlighting confusion (Olson, 2011), and it involves the following steps:

1. The teacher asks students to read a challenging text with a pink and yellow highlighter in hand for example.
2. Students must highlight in pink any portion of the material they feel they understand well enough to explain to someone else.
3. Students must highlight in yellow portions they do not understand.
4. The teacher then asks everyone to hold up their pink and yellow copies, noting that each student's copy looks somewhat different.
5. The teacher rereads the text aloud, stopping occasionally for those who highlighted that portion in pink to clarify the text for those who marked it in yellow.

Engaging students in such a strategy helps them understand that knowing where they are confused is a sign of a strategic learner, and will therefore, enable them to apply fix-up strategies (Blau, 2003).

4.12.3 *After-Reading Strategies*

Other pedagogical strategies that use reading and writing as learning tools for exploration and discovery after reading a text will be described below. Such post-reading activities deepen students' understandings of the material read by providing structures to help them reflect on the text; organize, analyze, and synthesize information and ideas; and share and build interpretations with classmates.

4.12.3.1 *Dialogue with a Text*

This strategy involves providing pairs or small groups of students with copies of a booklet containing a set of questions "designed and arranged to encourage reflection on several aspects of the act of reading." (Probst, 1988, p.35). Students read a text and take a moment to reflect on it. Then, they turn to the next page and start reflecting on and answering the questions. After students dialogue with one another and with the text, they are invited to discuss their reactions to the activity in a whole group.

The complete list of questions proposed by Probst (1988) for this activity begins with the reader's initial responses and gradually moves toward a consideration of the author, other readings, and other readers as shown in the following sheet.

Focus	Questions
First reaction	What was your first reaction or response to the text? Describe or explain briefly.
Feelings	What feelings did the text awaken in you? What emotions did you feel as you read the text?
Perceptions	What did you see happening in the text? Paraphrase it; retell the major events briefly.
Visual images	What image was called to mind by the text? Describe it briefly.
Associations	What memory does the text call to mind – of people, places, events, sights, smells, or even of something more ambiguous, perhaps feelings or attitudes?
Thoughts, ideas	What idea or thought was suggested by the text? Explain briefly.
Selection of textual elements	On what, in the text, did you focus most intently as you read – what word, phrase, important idea?
Judgments of what is important	What is the most important word in the text? What is the most important phrase in the text? What is the most important aspect of the text?
Identification of Problems	What is the most difficult word in the text? What is there in the text or in your reading that you had the most trouble understanding?
Author	What sort of person do you imagine the author of this text to be?
Patterns of response	How did you respond to the text – emotionally or intellectually? Did you feel involved with the text or distant from it?
Other readings	How did your reading of the text differ from that of your discussion partner (or the others in your group)? In what ways were they similar?
Evolution of your reading	How did your understanding of the text or your feelings about it change as you talked?
Evaluations	Do you think the text is a good one? Why or why not?
Literary associations	Did this text call to mind any other literary work (poem, play, film, story – any genre)? If it did, what is the work and what is the connection you see between the two?
Writing	If you were asked to write about your reading of the text, on what would you focus? Would you write about some association or memory, some aspect of the text itself, something about the author, or some other matter?
Other readers	What did you observe about your discussion partner (or the others in your group) as the talk progressed?

Table 4.2: Dialogue with a Text (Probst, 1988, p.32)

4.12.3.2 *Polar Opposites*

This post-reading activity offers a structure for students to analyze characters in a reading selection. Indeed, students are required to rate characters on a variety of traits and draw examples from the text to support their ratings (Yopp and Yopp, 2010). To develop a polar opposites guide, the following steps need to be followed:

1. The teacher starts by choosing a character and generating a list of characteristics that describe him or her (these traits are not explicitly stated in the text).
2. The teacher then identifies the opposite of each of those traits. For example, if a character is not sure of himself, has not many friends, and is not easily angered, the list might include ‘unsure’, ‘unpopular’, and ‘easygoing’. Opposites of these might be ‘confident’, ‘popular’, and ‘hot-tempered’.
3. Each pair of opposites makes up its own scale.
4. Students must examine the character’s behaviours and thoughts in order to form judgments about him or her, and after reading the selection, they rate the character by placing a mark on each scale.
5. Students may work individually to rate characters, or they may work in pairs or small groups.
6. Any rating should be considered acceptable as long as students support their responses with information from the text or from their own knowledge or experiences.

4.12.3.3 *Powerful Passages*

The powerful passages activity (Yopp and Yopp, 2003) requires students to identify in a reading selection an excerpt that they find compelling, interesting, or in some way personally meaningful and to share it with their classmates. Indeed, after reading a text:

1. Each student skims it for a short passage he or she wishes to share. The selections are then of personal appeal.
2. After each student has made a selection, he or she types and prints it or copies it on a piece of paper.
3. These papers are then displayed around the classroom; the room becomes a gallery of powerful passages.
4. The teacher and students circulate around to read the passages, carrying pencils so that they can write a response on any of the papers. Responses might be lengthy or brief and often take the form of comments such as “Oh, yes! I really enjoyed this portion,

too!”, “I felt so bad when I read this part”, “This was very funny!”, and “Many of us selected this same passage!”

5. At the end, the group discusses the experience as a whole.

4.13 Teaching Reading Strategies

Reading strategies indicate how readers conceive a task, what textual clues they attend to, how they make sense of what they read, and what they do when they do not understand a particular text. In other terms, when reading comprehension breaks down, EFL students need to find ways to repair their understanding.

This is where the importance of knowing how to teach reading strategies comes in, so as to facilitate the reading process and give students a clear sense of what they are reading. According to Duffy (2009, p.44):

It is often difficult for us to provide explanations for how to read. Explanations are our attempt to “demystifying” the reading process for struggling readers so they can do what others appear to do effortlessly.

In fact, one of the most important goals of teaching reading is to help students become strategic and independent readers, and this will not happen without the explicit teaching of reading strategies. However, effective instruction in reading strategies entails not just teacher talk about how to use a skill or strategy, but instead a number of classroom processes or stages that guide learners-readers towards independence. These interrelated stages involve: general strategy discussion, teacher modeling, guided practice, and independent practice.

4.13.1 General Strategy Discussion

The teacher explains and discusses to the class why learning and practising reading strategies is important. This type of discussion makes students aware of the effectiveness of reading strategies in improving their reading comprehension as well as efficiency in reading. Students, for example, realize that strategies help them to process the text actively, to monitor their understanding and to connect what they are reading to their own knowledge and so on.

In this concern, Guthrie, Wigfield, and Perencevich (2004, pp.103-104) pointed out:

At the outset of instruction, it is useful to provide a brief explanation about the strategy. In general, we want students to learn the who, what, why, when, and where of cognitive strategies for reading. At the outset of teaching, teachers can provide a discussion of what it means to ‘activate background

knowledge.’ It means, ‘using what we know.’ It means, thinking about our experiences before we read.’ It means asking ourselves, ‘how this does connect with information I already know?’ To the degree that students are able to follow the message, teachers can explain who - all readers use background knowledge during reading, when - we use background knowledge before and during reading many different types of texts, and why – what we know helps us build our knowledge more securely.

In this way, students gain a deeper understanding of their reading behaviour.

4.13.2 *Teacher Modeling*

This is a second important feature of strategy instruction. The teacher explains the strategy, demonstrates how to apply it successfully, reads aloud a short portion of text and thinks aloud while reading to model the mental processes used to construct meaning (e.g., asking questions, making predictions, checking those predictions...etc.). Modeling is more than reading directions; it involves providing students with a window opening into the mind of a proficient reader (i.e. making the invisible visible, and the implicit explicit). When thinking aloud, teachers can stop from time to time and orally complete sentences like these:

- So far, I have learned....
- This made me think of....
- I think ... will happen next.
- I reread this part because....
- I was confused by....
- I wonder why....

However, Duffy (2009, p.52) pointed out that:

Making sense out of reading is an individual process. Not two people process information in precisely the same way. Therefore, modeling how to do a skill or strategy, does not mean giving students rules to follow. Your explanation is, instead, representative of the thinking one does. Students use your explanation as a guide, not as a script to follow.

This implies that students can use teachers’ model as a starting point for developing their own way of doing it. When modeling the strategy of predicting, for example, teachers’ think-aloud might go something like this:

“Let me show you how to make predictions. Pay attention to what I do so you can use it as a starting point when you try to do predictions. When I made predictions, I look at the

topic we are reading about and I think about what I already know about that topic and base my prediction on that experience. I say to myself, ‘what does my experience tell me is likely to be happening in this story?’ For instance, this story has the word museum in the title, so I think to myself, ‘what do I already know about museums?’ Then I say, ‘I have been to a museum. What happened when I went to the museum is probably what will happen in this story.’”

4.13.3 Guided Practice

After explicitly modeling the thinking involved in reading, the teacher gradually gives students more responsibility for task completion with less and less help. At first, students are dependent on teacher’s assistance. The teacher and students practice the strategy together. Moreover, students share their thinking with each other through paired reading and small group discussions. The identification and analysis of strategy use is intermixed with teacher feedback on the reader’s behavior. This feedback can include prompting to use specific strategies or eliciting suggestions from other students as to what strategies might be appropriate and so on.

The idea of guided practice which is also sometimes called ‘scaffolding assistance’ is to provide initial support and then to gradually reduce the support as students gain confidence and experience in responding, and therefore, become able to build their own understanding. This implies that students become conscious of their mental processes when using the different reading strategies. That is, they are put in metacognitive control of their own thinking as they read. According to Duffy (2009, p.55):

The length of time spent on scaffolding assistance depends entirely on how quickly students learn. Sometimes a student catches on after just a few responses, and sometimes assistance must be provided over several days or weeks. The key is to watch students’ responses. If they respond satisfactorily, assistance can be reduced and ultimately eliminated. If they respond in ways that reveal confusion or hesitation, you may need to continue providing help and sometimes provide even greater support.

What follows is the last phase in strategy instruction; that is independent practice.

4.13.4 Independent Practice

This phase of instruction occurs after strategies have been explicitly taught and practiced under teacher direction and supervision. After working with teachers and with peers, students try to practice the strategy in different texts and contexts, as they take ownership of

these strategies, adapting them to these different reading situations. Besides, they may be asked to write down the strategies they use, as well as when and why these strategies are used. Students receive regular feedback from the teacher as soon as text reading is completed. This will help students develop flexibility in their choice of strategies.

The following chart may be filled by students:

Strategies used	When			Why
	Before reading	While reading	After reading	

Strategy use may be reinforced outside the classroom through homework in which students keep track of the reading they do for pleasure or for other courses. Students note down what they have used in reading, and their evaluation of the text.

This type of homework is meant to reinforce strategic behavior and to encourage transfer of strategy training to other tasks. The following reading sheet may be used by students:

Title of the material read	Number of pages being read	Evaluation of the text	Strategies used

In short, the shifting of responsibility for learning from the teacher to the learner allows the struggling reader to adapt and internalize strategic reading.

4.14 Practical Tips for Effective EFL Academic Reading

Reading for academic study is different from reading for pleasure. When reading a short story or a novel in the target language, EFL students might read the book from cover to cover but academic reading can be more of a selective process. When reading required texts and doing reading for research and assignment purposes, they will often need to read merely the pages or chapters that are relevant to the subject they are researching.

As academic reading tends to be hard work and requires concentration, time and effort, equipping EFL students with some tips to improve their academic reading skills will inevitably help them tackle the different types of reading required on their course and reduce unnecessary reading time and this will enable them read in a more focused manner.

Below is an array of techniques (adapted from Leedy, 1963; Raygor and Wark, 1980; Glendinning and Holmstrom, 2004; Burns and Sinfield, 2012) EFL students can employ when reading English-language academic materials:

1. Preparing to Read:

- Make sure you have enough time and you are in the right mood to read an academic text. Before you start reading it is useful to consider how much detail is required and the amount of time you are able to devote to the task. This will help you set realistic goals of what you can accomplish within a given time.

- Have everything you need at hand: dictionary, key texts (photocopied), pens, pencils, highlighters, key words notes, etc.

2. First Encounter with the Text:

- Before reading, ask yourself: Why am I reading this? What do I want to find? What information do I already know, and will the text ‘fill in the gaps for me?’
- Use the skimming and scanning reading skills to familiarize yourself with the text – its content and structure:
 - Look at the title page to discover the general area with which the book will deal. The title nearly tells you to what general subject area the book belongs, and frequently it indicates what particular emphasis the book will have.
 - Read the subtitle carefully: the subtitle is usually a descriptive phrase amplifying the title and indicating further the nature of the material, and / or the way in which the author will treat it.
 - Search the title page for a hint as to the type of discussion the book will present: frequently on the title page is some indication of the nature of the discussion: “An outline of ...”, “Selected Readings in ...”, “Lectures on ...” etc.
 - Note the author: Who is he? What status has he in the area of knowledge about which he writes? These and similar questions are important, especially when you are reading for information, for formulating an opinion, etc.
 - Read the date of publication to see: How old is the text? Still relevant? Latest research?
 - Look at the table of contents analytically to discover the organization and overall plan of the book. Note the relative importance of each item in the table of contents. Look at the column indicating the number of pages allocated to each chapter and / or section. Presumably, the more pages allocated to a discussion, the more significant it is in the material as a whole.
 - Look at the index to locate and assemble all the references to one particular subject.
 - Look at the bibliography of the material and use it to find other books that may be of use.

3. Getting the Gist of the Text:

- Start by reading the foreword, preface, or introduction as they will often summarize the purpose of the book. This will help you know what to expect from it – and what not. Pay particular attention to any section of the introduction labelled ‘Advice to the Reader’, ‘To the Student’, ‘How to use this Book’, etc.
- If you are reading a research article, thesis, review, or a conference proceeding, check if there is an abstract and read it to get a concise overview of the text. Many articles have key words assigned to them sometimes by the author, or sometimes by the journal’s editor. Read them as they can be useful in two ways: they will again give you clues as to what the article is about and whether you need to read, and they can provide ideas for search terms you may not have thought of when you go on to search for similar material.

4. Working with the Text (Reading Actively and Critically):

- If all the above indicates that the material is worth reading, set aside time to actively and critically read it:
 - Read for ideas, not words.
 - Read carefully, breaking up your reading into small manageable sections, looking for main ideas.
 - As you are reading, pick out and underline or highlight in the text what you think are the most important parts of what you are reading. And here you have to make decisions about the information in order to select what is most important (be selective enough).
 - Make notes to help you remember key points.
 - Use aids to comprehension that are furnished, such as charts, graphs, italics, boldface type, etc.
 - Be sensitive to new vocabulary. Some words have very specific meanings in a particular discipline area, so it may be useful to find to find a glossary of terms for your discipline.
 - Engage with the text. Read each section with questions in mind. Look for the answers and make up your new questions if necessary: Do you understand what you are reading? Could you sum up the key points in a few words? What is the author’s opinion or theoretical perspective? What supporting evidence is given? Is

this evidence relevant, valid, reliable and used appropriately? Think of reading as an active reflective task that requires more than passive receptivity on your part.

- Try to enjoy reading – consider its value to you.

4.15 Principle Keys of a Better EFL Academic Writing

Good academic writing is all about communicating ideas clearly and effectively. It is about having something to say, adopting a clear and logical thinking, and using the appropriate style and format. And as with any skill, good academic writing is inherently learnable.

The tips and strategies below are adapted from Venolia (2001), Warburton (2007), and Naphthine, Beardwood and Pohl (2011), and are supposed to help EFL students build their confidence and ability to write academically in the target language:

1. Read Widely and Often:

The more you read, the better writer you will become, for several reasons:

- You will learn ideas from other writers.
- If you are reading critically, you will learn to evaluate the ideas of different writers and the effectiveness with which these ideas are expressed – you will recognize the choices writers have made and you will understand why they made these choices.
- If you read a variety of materials, such as novels, short stories, magazines, newspapers and biographies, you will become more familiar with the different writing styles used for particular forms and audiences.
- You will build opinions about what works well and what does not in different styles of writing.

2. Make Writing a Habit:

Write every day, even if it is only one paragraph or two per day. And if you can think of nothing to write about, write about not being able to do so. Do not worry about the quality of your writing – you can edit later. Indeed, it is better to write something even if you are not satisfied with it than to write nothing.

3. Build Your Writing Skills:

What you say and how you say it are the building blocks of good writing, and both require time and efforts to develop. Apply these tips to develop your writing skills:

- **Develop a rich vocabulary:**

- Use varied and precise language to generate and clarify ideas.
- Develop word banks for different subject areas.
- Keep lists of new words learned from any sources – your reading, class discussion, the media, etc.
- Look for synonyms and antonyms of existing or new words and note different grammatical forms: noun, verb, adjective and adverb.
- Use a dictionary and thesaurus regularly.

- **Write with strong verbs:**

Well-chosen verbs are one of the foundations of powerful writing. Pass up colourless verbs in favour of lively ones as shown in the following examples:

<i>Colourless</i>	<i>Lively</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - exhibit a tendency to - conduct an investigation - make a comparison between - perform an assessment of 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>tend</i> - <i>investigate</i> - <i>compare</i> - <i>assess</i>

Besides, relying too frequently on weak verbs like ‘to be’ or ‘to have’ robs your writing of vitality. It is not to say that you should eliminate all forms of the verbs ‘to be’ or ‘to have’ from your writing. But with a little ingenuity and effort you can probably become less dependent on them; replacing them with stronger and more specific verbs instead.

Strong verbs clearly state an action taking place; they provide more description than weak verbs. Here are some examples:

Weak verb: She *is* loud when she *is* telling her children to do their homework.

Strong verb: She *bellows* when telling her children to do their homework.

Weak verb: The restaurant's food *is* excellent.

Strong verb: The restaurant *serves* excellent food.

Weak verb: He *was* sad.

Strong verb: Sadness *consumed* him.

Weak verb: The medicine *has* a soothing effect on the patient.

Strong verb: The medicine *soothes* the patient.

Moreover, some action verbs are stronger than others in saying the right word and 'not almost the right word'. They are stronger in:

- a. creating a detailed picture in the reader's mind , for example:

• **Weak verb:** The lion *is fighting* with a zebra.

• **Strong verb:** The lion *attacked* a zebra.

Replacing *is fighting* with *attacked* creates a more detailed image of the zebra's struggle to survive.

- b. conveying a degree of meaning to the reader, for example:

• **Weak verb:** The customer *asked* the clerk to check the price.

• **Strong verb:** The customer *demanded* the clerk to check the price.

The degree of difference between *asked* and *demanded* assists the reader in determining how the customer spoke to the clerk. In the example, *demanded* conveys a degree of rudeness.

Here are some examples of simple action verbs with the stronger verbs listed below them:

SAID
<i>announced, commanded, declared, echoed, emphasized, exclaimed, mumbled, murmured, ordered, predicted, quoted, reiterated, repeated, replied, shouted, stressed, verbalized, whispered.</i>
WENT / WALKED
<i>advanced, ambled, crawled, continued, dashed, embarked, flew, followed, hiked, hobbled, hurried, journeyed, marched, patrolled, proceeded, ran, sailed, sauntered, sprinted, stormed, travelled, trudged, waddled.</i>
GET / GOT
<i>achieved, acquired, attained, borrowed, bought, derived, earned, guessed, inherited, obtained, produced, received, won.</i>
DO / DID
<i>accomplished, achieved, arranged, completed, discharged, executed, fulfilled, performed.</i>

- **Write in the active voice:**

In the active voice, the subject acts instead of being acted upon. The passive voice is wordy and lacks the vigor of the active voice. Changing a sentence from passive to active usually improves it. Here are some examples:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Passive: The jar <i>is filled</i> with sand. • Active: Sand <i>filled</i> the jar.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Passive: The town <i>was destroyed</i> by the fire. • Active: The fire <i>destroyed</i> the town.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Passive: An award-winning novel <i>was written</i> by her. • Active: She <i>wrote</i> an award-winning novel.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Passive: The deer <i>could have been killed</i> by the poacher. • Active: The poacher <i>could have killed</i> the deer.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Passive: Hazardous chemicals <i>should never be poured</i> into the sink. • Active: Never <i>pour</i> hazardous chemicals into the sink.

It is worth noting, however, that the use of the passive voice in writing is required in the following situations:

- When the thing acted upon is more important than the person performing the action. For example: The meeting *was canceled*.
- In technical material. For example: The test apparatus *was divided* into two zones.
- Where anonymity of those performing the action is appropriate or cannot be avoided. For example: The information *was leaked* to the press.

- **Use a positive form:**

Statements in positive form are better, more concise, and quicker to be understood. Watch for the word ‘not’ and other negatives (*never, nothing, no one*, etc.), and see if you can restate the idea more effectively, for example:

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Negative Form: She often did <i>not</i> come on time.• Positive Form: She often came late.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Negative Form: He did <i>not</i> think that was not a very nice thing to say.• Positive Form: He thought that a mean thing to say.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Negative Form: I do <i>not</i> think the gift will meet her expectations.• Positive Form: I think the gift will disappoint her.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Negative Form: It is <i>not</i> unlikely that the clown will frighten the kids.• Positive Form: The clown may frighten the kids.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Negative Form: There is <i>nothing</i> wrong with this idea.• Positive Form: This idea is perfectly all right.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Negative Form: <i>No one</i> missed the movie.• Positive Form: Everyone saw the movie.

Try replacing a word or phrase plus *not* with its antonym, for example:

<i>Negative</i>	<i>Positive</i>
- do not remember	- <i>forget</i>
- was not present	- <i>absent</i>
- did not pay attention to	- <i>ignored</i>

Certain uses of the negative help though. It is especially effective in a phrase that is followed by a contrasting positive phrase, for example:

- “Ask not what your country can do for you; ask what you can do for your country.”
- “I am not your friend; I am your sister.”

- **Use simple words:**

Avoid fancy words and phrases when simpler, more direct ones convey the idea. Indeed, writing that is hard to understand is just poorly written, not profound. Below are some examples of stuffy words with their simpler counterparts:

<i>Stuffy</i>	<i>Simple</i>
- modification	- <i>change</i>
- deficiency	- <i>lack</i>
- subsequent to	- <i>after</i>
- abbreviate	- <i>shorten</i>
- assumption	- <i>belief</i>
- encounter	- <i>meet</i>
- furnish	- <i>provide</i>
- transmit	- <i>send</i>

- **Be specific and concrete:**

Whenever possible, replace abstract words (ideas or concepts that have no physical referents) with concrete ones (ideas or concepts that are available to the senses). Help readers visualize what you are writing about, for example:

<i>Abstract</i>	<i>Concrete</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - colour - emotion - food - vehicle 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>green, red, white</i> - <i>hatred, confusion</i> - <i>salad, pizza, soup</i> - <i>car, bicycle, truck</i>

- **Omit unnecessary words:**

Impressive writing does not come from long words strung together in convoluted sentences. Redundancy refers to presenting information more information, often in different words, than is necessary for the reader to be able to understand the idea. For example:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The information is confidential. It is top secret and not to be shared with anyone else.</i> <p>The sentences here convey the same idea in three different ways. The same information could be conveyed using just the first sentence.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>‘General consensus of opinion’</i> <p>The phrase uses four words where only one is correct. Indeed, <i>‘consensus’</i> means <i>collective opinion</i> or <i>general agreement</i>.</p>

In fact, redundancy and sloppy usage are widespread in writing. Look for redundancy in your own writing, and delete any words or phrases that repeat an idea you have already stated.

Redundant expressions like the ones below should be avoided:

'added bonus', 'both men and women alike', 'join together', 'limited only to', 'may possibly', 'past history', 'regular routine', 'unexpected surprise', 'various different', '9 a.m. Friday morning', 'completely filled', 'in conjunction with'.

Other common redundancies include:

- The word ***rather*** in a sentence with another comparative

Wordy: It would be better to edit your essay rather than to write another one.

Better: It would be better to edit your essay than to write another one.

- Leisurely openers such as ***There is***, ***There are***, and ***It is significant to note that***

Wordy: There is some evidence that suggests ...

Better: Some evidence suggests ...

- ***As well as*** when used with ***both***

Wordy: The email was sent both to employees as well as shareholders.

Better: The email was sent both to employees and to shareholders.

Trim wordy expressions as much as possible. Whenever you write something, go back and revise again for the best cure for wordiness is to revise. Here are some instances of doing so:

<i>Wordy</i>	<i>Trimmed</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - It is often the case that - be of the opinion that - be in possession of - owing to the fact that - in advance of - in spite of the fact that - is indicative of - take into consideration - had occasion to be - in connection with - in regard to - in view of the fact that - on condition that - at the present time - before long - It would thus appear 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>frequently</i> - <i>believe</i> - <i>have</i> - <i>since (or because)</i> - <i>before</i> - <i>although</i> - <i>indicates</i> - <i>consider</i> - <i>was</i> - <i>with</i> - <i>about</i> - <i>since</i> - <i>if</i> - <i>now</i> - <i>soon</i> - <i>apparently</i>

- **Use intensifiers with care:**

Relying on the word **'very'** to convey a strong emotion may signal sloppy writing – and sloppy thinking. It may actually weaken the emotion you wish to convey. Indeed, absolute words such as **'unique'** and **'final'** stand by themselves; you do not make them more emphatic by adding the word **'very'**. If a word seems weak without **'very'**, use another word that does not require such buttressing. Here are some examples:

<i>Weak</i>	<i>Strong</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - very stubborn - very weak - very surprised - very angry 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>obstinate, bullheaded</i> - <i>frail, feeble, fragile</i> - <i>astonished, astounded,</i> <i>amazed</i> - <i>livid, incensed, irate</i>

- **Vary your sentences:**

Using sentences of different lengths and types within a paragraph and throughout any piece of writing helps to create fluency and retain reader interest. For example,

in the two short paragraphs below, the same idea is expressed, but the first paragraph sounds choppy and repetitive relying on the same sentence structure throughout. Varying the sentence structure in the second one makes it far more lively and engaging however.

- “In times of conflict a person’s true character is revealed. Under stress, an individual’s inner values are shown. In physical confrontation, our real qualities are displayed.”

- “In times of conflict a person’s true character is revealed. Our inner values and qualities become evident in stressful situations, particularly when we are involved in a physical confrontation.”

- **Use an organizing principle:**

The way you organize your writing is fundamental to the coherence and fluency of any written piece. An organizing principle will help you to create a strong structure. An organizing principle may be:

- Chronological order (e.g., in a short story)
- Sequential pattern (e.g., in a process-analysis essay)
- Moving from the general to the particular or from the particular to the general (e.g., in an expository piece)

- **Strengthen your structure with linking words:**

Transitions are important to the flow of your writing because they direct the reader through the chain of thought you are presenting. They are especially important in expository and argumentative writing. They can signal the development of an idea – ‘*moreover*’, ‘*additionally*’ – or modify the reader’s mental position – ‘*nevertheless*’, ‘*on the other hand*’.

Next are some linking words that can be used to express different sorts of relationships between ideas:

• **To express a similar idea:** *similarly, in the same way, likewise, equally, so too, besides, also.*

• **To express an opposing idea:** *by contrast, however, yet, while, despite this, in comparison.*

• **To expand an idea:** *furthermore, for example, for instance, indeed, in this way, in addition, what's more.*

• **To show a logical progression:** *therefore, as a result, thus, consequently, in conclusion, for this reason, the effect of this is, this leads to.*

- **Punctuate effectively:**

Punctuation marks guide your readers. They are as language traffic signals: ‘Slow Down’, ‘Notice This’, and so forth. Misleading punctuation can, therefore, interrupt the flow of ideas and distort the meaning you want to convey to your readers, but properly used punctuation helps readers grasp your meaning.

4. Revise Your Writing:

Check for any improvements that need to be made concerning the organization, the content, clarity, and so forth. This can be done one or more times before writing your final draft.

5. Proof-Read Your Writing:

Check your work for errors in spelling and style:

- subject/verb agreement
- verb tense
- the presence of a verb in a sentence
- the presence of a subject in a sentence
- word order
- correct word class (e.g. noun, adjective, adverb, verb)
- punctuation
- Linking words to show logical progression of ideas

6. Ensure all Information You Include in Your Writing is Correctly Referenced:

Any ideas you have taken from others, whether quoted directly, paraphrased or summarized, must be referenced.

4.16 How to Write a Successful Paragraph

A good paragraph is more than just a collection of sentences. Indeed, writing well-composed academic paragraphs can be tricky. The following is a set of steps that EFL students can rely on to write effective paragraphs in the target language (Ploeger, 2000; Savage and Shafiei, 2012):

1. Understanding the Topic and Generating Ideas for Writing:

Before you can start writing, you need to know what you are writing about. Look at the writing prompt or assignment topic, and note any key terms or repeated phrases. Ask yourself questions like: “On which topic am I supposed to be writing?”, “What do I already know about the topic?” and so forth. Do some brainstorming; write down everything that comes into your head about the topic. Read about the topic and take notes, and then make an outline or a plan for your paragraph.

2. Writing a Topic Sentence:

After you decide which ideas to include in your paragraph, the next step is to write a topic sentence. Indeed, a strong paragraph is typically about one main idea or topic which is explicitly stated in a *topic sentence*.

The latter consists of a *topic* and a *controlling idea*. The topic is the subject matter covered in the paragraph, and the controlling idea is what you want to say about that topic. It is called the controlling idea because it limits or controls which information can be included in the paragraph. Accordingly, all the information in a paragraph must be relevant only to the controlling idea.

Here are some examples of topic sentences:

<i>Topic Sentence</i>	
<i>Topic</i>	<i>Controlling idea</i>
My brother	is an honest person
Smart phones	improve communication among friends and family members
Text messaging	has become popular among teenagers
My Friend	had a frightening experience as young man

3. Demonstrating Your Point (Writing supporting sentences):

After writing your topic sentence, you need to provide information to prove, illustrate, clarify, and / or exemplify your point. This can be done through the supporting sentences following your topic sentence. These may contain facts, details, examples, statistics, personal experience, data from research, definitions, explanations, arguments to support the topic sentence.

Some examples are shown in the following sheets:

<p><i>Topic Sentence:</i> Insomnia can often be cured by following a few simple rules.</p> <p><i>Supporting Sentences:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An hour before bedtime, do about twenty minutes of exercise - this will help relieve tension and relax your body. • The last twenty or thirty minutes before you go to bed, do a relaxing activity such as reading a book or listening to music. • Finally, shortly before you go sleep, have a glass of milk or a piece of cheese; dairy products contain a natural ingredient called tryptophan, which helps you fall asleep.
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Topic Sentence: Young people are too dependent on computers.

Supporting Sentences:

- Dependency on computers means that young people cannot perform normal life functions without computers.
- In the past, people memorized important information. Today's youth rely on their computers to do assignments, record numbers, and save information. As a result, young people can find themselves unprepared in an emergency, such as an electrical blackout. If their computer battery dies, these young people will be lost.
- For example, I do all my schoolwork on my computer. When my computer crashed last week, I lost my only draft of an essay that was due the next day. As a result, I got a bad grade.

Topic Sentence: Part-time jobs teach students skills they need for the future.

Supporting Sentences:

- Students learn how to be on time.
- They learn about working with others.
- They also learn about work responsibilities.

Besides, information in the supporting sentences should be presented in a systematic way. Order of importance, chronological order, and space order are most frequently used to present the supporting sentences in a paragraph coherently. And adding transitions that bridge one idea to another in your paragraph can help guide the reader to see the connection between one sentence and the next one. Transitions can be grouped by what they show or do in the sentences. Some signal a difference in place or time, while others show a different type of information.

The main groups of transitions are shown in the table below:

<i>Transitions</i>	<i>Examples</i>
show time or sequence	<i>now, then, next</i>
show location	<i>here, there, up north</i>
introduce or add an example	<i>for example, for instance</i>
concede a point	<i>although, even though</i>
make a comparison	<i>in comparison, similarly</i>
show a contrast	<i>in contrast, on the other hand</i>
provide emphasis	<i>equally important, in fact</i>
signal a change in the direction of thinking	<i>but, however</i>
show a relationship	<i>related to this, similarly</i>
summarize or conclude	<i>to conclude, and so</i>

Table 4.3: Transition Groups (Ploeger, 2000:70)

4. Concluding:

After illustrating your point with enough relevant information, add a concluding sentence. The purpose of this concluding sentence is two-fold: (1) to reiterate the main point developed by the supporting sentences and (2) to signal the reader that this is the end of the paragraph. While writing your concluding sentence, consider the following points: restate the main idea as expressed in the topic sentence using different words; summarize the points you have made in one sentence; or write a final comment (an advice, a prediction, a moral, a warning, etc.).

5. Looking over and Proofreading:

Read over your paper to make sure it says what you want it to say. Check if you need to make some additions or corrections, rewrite sentences or rearrange details. Consider the quality of your language, the correctness of grammar, spelling, punctuation, and capitalization.

4.17 How to Write an Effective Essay

Writing academic essays is a craft just as writing fiction is a craft. Students have to learn how to do it and they have to care about doing it. Here are some steps to guide EFL students through the essay writing process (Scott, Snaith and Rylance, 2001; Greetham, 2013):

1. Thinking about the Question:

Decide on your objective. If you are answering a question, think over the wording of the question, pull it apart, analyze it, and look out for key words. Indeed, Greetham (2013, p.9) pointed out that often:

...our problems in essay writing begin the very moment we are given the question. Anxious to get on with the work and not fall behind, we skip the interpretation stage and launch straight into our research. As a result, we read sources and take notes without a clear idea of what's relevant, beyond some very general idea of the subject of the essay. Then finally, after hours of toil, tired and frustrated, and no clearer about what we're doing, we're left with a pile of irrelevant, unusable notes.

Yet, just a few minutes spent interpreting the question would not only have saved us time wasted, but would have given us a better understanding of what the teacher (or the marker) is looking for in your work.

Below is a list of short definitions of 'instructional verbs' most frequently found in questions, which should to help you interpret them accurately. The list is suggested by Greetham (2013: pp.68-70):

- **Analyze:** Separate an argument, a theory or a claim into its elements or parts; to trace the causes of a particular event; to reveal the general principles underlying phenomena.
- **Compare:** Look for the similarities and differences between two or more things, problems or arguments. Perhaps, although not always, reach a conclusion about which you think is preferable.
- **Contrast:** Set in opposition to each other two or more things, problems or arguments in order to identify clearly their differences and their individual characteristics.

- **Criticize:** Identify the weaknesses of certain theories, opinions or claims, and give your judgement about their merit. Support your judgements with a discussion of the evidence and the reasoning involved.
- **Define:** Outline the precise meaning of a word or phrase. In some cases it may be necessary or desirable to examine different possible, or often used, definitions.
- **Describe:** Give a detailed or graphic account, keeping to the facts or to the impressions that an event had upon you. In history this entails giving a narrative account of the events in the time sequence in which they occurred.
- **Discuss:** Investigate or examine by argument; sift through the arguments and the evidence used to support them, giving reasons for and against both sides; examine the implications. It means plying devil's advocate by arguing not just for the side of the argument that you support, but for the side with which you may have little sympathy.
- **Evaluate:** Make an appraisal of the worth of something, an argument or a set of beliefs, in the light of their truth or usefulness. This does involve making your own value judgements, but not just naked opinion: they must be backed up by argument and justification.
- **Explain:** Make plain; interpret and account for the occurrence of a particular event by giving the causes. Unlike the verb 'to describe', this does not mean that it is sufficient to describe what happened by giving a narrative of the events. To explain an event is to give the reasons why it occurred, usually involving an analysis of the causes.
- **Illustrate:** Explain or clarify something by the use of diagrams, figures or concrete examples.
- **Interpret:** Reveal what you believe to be the meaning or significance of something; to make sense of something that might otherwise be unclear, or about

which there may be more than one opinion. So usually this involves giving your own judgement.

- **Justify:** Show adequate grounds for a decision or a conclusion by supporting it with sufficient evidence and argument; answer the main objections that are likely to be made to it.
- **Outline:** Give the main features or the general principles of a subject, omitting minor details and emphasizing its structure and arrangement.
- **Relate:** This usually means one of two things. In some questions it means narrate a sequence of events – outline the story of a particular incident. Alternatively, it can mean show how certain things are connected or affect each other, or show to what extent they are alike.
- **Review:** Examine closely a subject or a case that has been put forward for a certain proposal or argument. Usually, although not always, this means concluding with your own judgement as to the strength of the case. However, if it involves examining just a subject or a topic, and not an argument or a proposal, it will mean just examining in some detail all the aspects of the topic.
- **State:** Outline briefly and clearly the facts of the situation or a side of an argument. This does not call for argument or discussion, just the presentation of the facts or the arguments. Equally, it does not call for a judgement from you, just reportage.
- **Summarize:** Give a clear and concise account of the principal points of a problem or an argument, omitting the details, evidence and examples that may have been given to support the argument or illustrate the problem.
- **Trace:** Outline the stages in the development of a particular issue or the history of a topic.

2. **Brainstorming:**

Brainstorming is about thinking around the question. Jot down all the ideas that you can think of in relation to the topic. At this stage, it does not matter whether you use full sentences.

3. **Gathering Material:**

Once you know the focus of your essay, look for information in any available source (books, magazines, newspapers, dictionaries, encyclopedias, and the internet) which is pertinent to your chosen focus. Taking notes will be very important here. There are three main kinds of notes you can take:

- **Quotation notes:** In your notes, place quotation marks around any direct quotations so that you will know later that these are direct quotes. If you copy material from another source and do not acknowledge that information by placing quotation marks around it, you are guilty of plagiarizing material. Always keep a careful record of all your sources and the page numbers of the quotes you want to use (Scott, Snaith and Rylance, 2001).
- **Summary notes:** These involve restating the main points of a text in shorter form. A summary should answer the question, “What is the author basically saying?” It should remain faithful to the author’s emphasis and interpretation, and should not contain your own opinions or comments.
- **Paraphrase notes:** These involve saying the same thing as the author, but in your own words. Much of your essay writing will involve paraphrasing ideas from the sources you have read (note that a paraphrase can be longer than the original text).

4. **Organizing and Selecting to Make a Plan:**

In this stage, you are required to structure the material you have gathered into a sequence. Read the essay question again carefully and the notes you have taken from your readings; besides, read through all your notes from the brainstorming stage and identify the ideas that you think are the most relevant and original. Then, draw up a plan which includes main points, sub-points and the evidence you will

use to support each of these. You need to know how many paragraphs you have, what the function of each paragraph is, and how you get from one paragraph to another.

5. Writing Your Introductory Paragraph:

Your introductory paragraph acts like a map for your essay's readers. It should capture the reader's attention as well as present your thesis statement. Make sure you start with an attention getter to push the reader keep reading. The first thing your reader encounters can be a surprising fact, an interesting statistics, a direct question or an appealing quote for example. Your thesis statement goes at the very end of your first paragraph telling the reader what your essay will be about.

6. Writing Your Supporting Paragraphs (The Main Body of The Essay):

The majority of any essay consists of multiple body paragraphs, and it is in these paragraphs where the main information is presented. The following are important aspects of all body paragraphs:

- a clear topic sentence ;
- specific evidence or supporting details ;
- examples ;
- unity and cohesion ;
- transitions between sentences and paragraphs ;
- a concluding sentence that ties the evidence or details back to the main point and brings the paragraph to a close.

7. Writing Your Concluding Paragraph

Your final paragraph brings closure to the reader, summing up your points or providing a final perspective on your topic.

8. Editing:

After completing all of the paragraphs of your essay, check the order of your paragraphs, revise the content of your writing, and check your style.

9. Proof-Reading:

Read your essay one last time and check that there are no errors of punctuation, spelling, and grammar.

4.18 A Demonstration Lesson Integrating Reading and Writing

The lesson demonstrated below is adapted from *The Reading/Writing Connection: Strategies for Teaching and Learning in the Secondary School* by Carol Booth Olson (2011). Teachers need to determine which activities are best suited to their students' needs and interests.

Demonstration Lesson

Material:

- Ray Bradbury's short story "*All Summer in a Day*"⁽¹⁾- a work of science fiction set in a classroom on Venus, where the rain stops and the sun shines only once every seven years. In the story, one student called Margot is mistreated while the children anxiously await the arrival of the sun.
- Robert Vickrey's picture⁽²⁾, "*The Magic Carpet*".

Objectives:

Students will:

1. Tap prior knowledge of *summer* to make predictions about the title of the story
2. Visualize and interpret a picture to revise meaning and make further predictions
3. Make connections by bringing personal experiences to the text
4. Revise meaning before, during, and after being exposed to sections of the text
5. Practice a range of cognitive strategies by keeping marginal notes using sentence starters
6. Analyze writer's craft by playing prediction/style game, Beat the Author
7. Adopt an alignment by assuming Margot's persona
8. Project Margot into the future
9. Compose a letter to her classmates exploring why the other children treated her as they did and explaining her feelings then and now

Approximate Length of Time to Complete the Lesson:

The lesson takes one to two weeks to implement.

Pre-reading Activity:

Easy as 1, 2, 3!

1. Ask students to think about the title "*All Summer in a Day*". Have them use their knowledge of *summer* and write down predictions of what the story will be about and write it under *This is What I Think I know Because of the Title*. Ask for volunteers and write them on the board.
2. Show students Robert Vickrey's picture, *The Magic Carpet* (hide the title because it is very suggestive and will influence students' interpretations). Explain that although this painting was not created to illustrate "*All Summer in a Day*", it captures the mood of the story and the demeanor of the character. Ask students to examine the picture closely and then react to it under *This is What I Think I know Because of the Picture*. Again, volunteers can share their perceptions. Once you have noted these ideas on the board, ask the students if anyone wants to revise their predictions about the title of the story. For example, students may have predicted that the story will be about cramming all of the exciting events of summer into one day. In examining the picture, they may notice the sparseness of the surroundings, the girl's pensive expression, the patterns of light and shadow on the floor; they may sense the somber mood and feeling of entrapment. The class may at this point predict that the story will be troubling rather than light and happy.
3. Ask students if they have ever had to move from one place to another and found the experience to be difficult. What was the experience like? Was it easy or hard to make friends in the new place? Volunteers can share their stories. Then ask if anyone ever had to move from one climate to a very different climate. Again, allow volunteers to describe their circumstances. At this point, explain to students that the story they are about to read is about a young girl who has to move to a new place where the weather is dramatically different. Read the opening lines of the story aloud to the class to:

"It's stopping, it's stopping!"

"Yes, yes!"

Ask students to jot down their new or revised predictions after hearing the words, under *This is What I Know Because of the Words*. Then add some of these predictions to the board.

During Reading Activity 1:

Reading Aloud – Constructing the Gist

Read the story aloud to the class up to the point where the children lock Margot in the closet and the sun is about to come out. Ask students to listen closely and to follow along in the text as you read.

During Reading Activity 2:

Rereading Silently and Responding

Provide students with the cognitive strategies sentence starters ⁽³⁾. Then, have them reread the first part of the story silently using the sentence starters as a resource for making their marginal notations.

During Reading Activity 3:

Beat the Author – Making Predictions and Analyzing Author’s Craft

Students should set together in groups of four to six students, and think about what happens immediately after the line “*The sun came out.*” Their job is to write the next ‘*chunk*’ of the text, about four to seven sentences. They are not supposed to finish the story but just to add the next few lines. Students will need approximately thirty minutes to write their entries. Their versions of the story will be placed in competition with one another as well as with the real version. Post the entries and have groups read and vote for the one they think is the real one. Each group will need ten minutes to make a list of the author’s stylistic traits. Have the groups share their findings and explain their reasons. Whichever team most students vote for as the actual author (and which thereby ‘beats the author’) will win the game. Prizes also will go to any team that votes for the Ray Bradbury’s entry.

Post-Reading Activity:

Completing the Story and Responding

After playing ‘Beat the Author’, return to the reading of the text. Ask students to keep their predictions in mind as you read the final section of the story aloud. Then it is best to follow the story by asking them an open-ended question like “What is your initial response to the story?” Have students turn to a partner and take two minutes each to tell the story of their reading of the text – also referring to their *Easy as 1, 2, 3!* forms and the predictions on the board. Give students the phrase “At first I thought _____ but now I ...” as a way to get started.

Pre-writing Activity:

Interior Monologue – Adopting an Alignment

To help students prepare for the key cognitive task in the incoming prompt* (speculating about the thoughts and feelings of Margot and assuming her persona), invite them to engage in the following quickwrite:

Become Margot and, in her voice, write an interior monologue, revealing her thoughts and feelings while she was locked inside the closet.

Have students share their interior monologues with a partner and then ask for two or three volunteers to read their quickwrites to the whole class. Then pose this final set of questions: “What do you think will happen when the children let Margot out of the closet? Will the same Margot who went into the closet come out again?”

Planning Activity 1:

Clustering – Organizing Information

In order for students to project Margot five to ten years into the future, it is important for them to construct a personality profile of her at the time of the experience. Ask students to volunteer the personality traits that Margot exhibits. Students may, at first, list descriptive words – such as frail, depressed, and soft-spoken – that suggest that Margot is a very passive person. Ask them if they see any spark in Margot, any sign of passion or strength. You may wish to review the following passage:

They surged about her, caught her up and bore her, protesting, and then pleading, and then crying, back into a tunnel, a room, a closet, where they slammed and locked the door. They stood looking at the door and saw it tremble from her beating and throwing herself against it. They heard her muffled cries. Then, smiling, they turned and went out and back down the tunnel, just as the teacher arrived.

Students may note how desperately Margot fights to keep herself from being deprived of the sight of her beloved sun.

Planning Activity 2:

Deciding Margot’s Future – Speculating and Making Predictions

Students are now ready to make some decisions about the persona they will assume

in their letters. They must decide where Margot will be in five to ten years and how her location will influence her personality. To facilitate this decision, have students complete the following sentences:

- If Margot stays on Venus, she will be ...
- If Margot returns to Earth, she will be ...
- If Margot goes to _____, she will be ...

Planning Activity 3:

Formulating a Writing Plan – Organizing Information

To help students respond to the requirements in the prompt, ask them to plan their letters before starting to write. This Four-part structure may be helpful as a rough road map for some students:

<u>Part 1</u>	<u>Part2</u>	<u>Part 3</u>	<u>Part 4</u>
Who you are now and what you are doing.	Explain why you think the children treated you as they did when you lived among them.	Explore the children’s final act of cruelty.	Describe how the experience affected you then and what you learned from it.

Writing – Constructing the Gist

Students have a variety of resources to draw from as they write their drafts, including their marginal notes on the text, Beat the Author entry, traits cluster, and writing plan. In this first draft, have them concentrate on getting their ideas down on paper.

Revising Activity

If you want students to genuinely revise meaning and style, the most helpful time to provide feedback is at the first draft stage. Encourage students to add descriptive words and at least one simile or metaphor to their texts.

Editing Activity

Proofreading for Correctness

Ask students to edit their papers in pairs, checking errors in the convention of written

Structure in the above demonstration lesson is provided through carefully sequenced activities that guide students into, through, and beyond the story. Taking students through some of the guided reading and writing practice activities in lessons like this will expose them to a set of cognitive strategies they can implement with a variety of texts, thus expanding their options and capabilities when they read and write independently.

4.19 Conclusion

This chapter has been an attempt to advocate the integration of reading and writing instruction in EFL curricula. Recommendations and suggestions outlined in this chapter may be helpful for EFL teachers who are interested in efficaciously connecting reading and writing instruction. Indeed, through the variety of engaging reading and writing activities and the range of practical tips it proposed, they can make visible to their students what it is that experienced readers and writers do when they make meaning from and with texts.

NOTES TO CHAPTER FOUR

⁽¹⁾ See Appendix Q.

⁽²⁾ See Appendix R.

⁽³⁾ See Appendix S.

GENERAL CONCLUSION

Writing is neither secondary to reading nor something to be taught separately from it. Similarly, reading is an integral part of writing and cannot be taught in isolation from it. Basically, reading and writing are streams that flow into the same pool, and they will constantly refresh each other if our EFL classrooms take advantage of their complementarity. Indeed, by integrating reading and writing EFL teachers provide tools for the learners to comprehend better what they are learning.

In the current research work, the researcher has been primarily interested in finding how EFL learners can benefit from the interaction between reading and writing, and how EFL teachers can better adjust to incorporate the uniqueness of reading-writing connection to facilitate students' reading and writing in the target language.

The work was divided into four main parts. Initially, the target learning/teaching context and the profile and characteristics of the participants were identified. Moreover, a description of the data collection tools was introduced. The next step consisted in reviewing major researches in the area of reading and writing connection. Indeed, the basic assumptions underlying the connection between reading and writing were synthesized and some researches undertaken based on such a connection and the techniques used to apply it were discussed. Out of this theoretical framework, it was possible to explore the link between reading and writing and how they complement and enhance each other. Consequently, a collection of research tools used through two separate yet complementary instructional phases (the writing-to-read and the reading-to-write ones) allowed data collection, the results analysis of which revealed that participants have shown an improvement in their reading comprehension due to writing, and a better writing performance due to reading.

In the writing-to-read instructional phase, providing written answers to comprehension questions about the reading materials dealt with in the intensive reading courses first-year EFL students were involved in, allowed them to make visible their grasp of the target texts and therefore, assisted their reading comprehension process. Indeed, the act of seeking and recording answers allowed them to read with a purpose in mind, offered them an opportunity to practise different reading strategies needed for successful reading, and helped them reflect on what they read.

Besides, jotting down written annotations here and there on the page while reading was also proved to be beneficial to the same sample of students as it trained them to be too close to the text at hand – recording their comments, questions, reactions, and reflections directly on it. Such a direct interaction with the reading material allowed them to develop the habit of reading actively, and their reading comprehension performance developed accordingly. In other words, as students read and write, the processes of comprehending and composing reinforce each other.

Similarly, those who were able to write an effective summary of the material they read were more successful in answering comprehension questions about the same assigned text than those who wrote poor summaries. Being able to write an effective summary of a reading was, thus, shown to be a strong predictor of reading comprehension. Furthermore, students' ability to draw and fill in graphic organizers as a post-reading activity that required writing assisted their reading comprehension in many ways.

On the other hand, second-year EFL students who were subject to model essays reading treatment in the reading-to-write instructional phase revealed a better performance as far as several aspect of essay writing is concerned (e.g., opening statements – attention grabbers – ; thesis statement; structure and organization; the use of transitional words and phrases to create coherence within the essay, etc.). Through reading and studying those model essays from a writer perspective (knowing that they would use the knowledge acquired for an upcoming essay writing assignment), participants became familiar with the genres studied in particular (argumentative and compare and contrast essays), and collected specific information to be able to apply it in their future writing of the same genres.

Besides, when the same students were assigned to read about a given topic before being required to write a composition involving the same assigned topic, the participants were able to draw their own conclusion about the difference between writing with and writing without topic background reading. Indeed, students realized the significance of reading as a pre-writing activity; and therefore, came to see reading as an integral part of their writing process.

Findings of this study may offer several implications for teaching reading and writing in EFL contexts as reported in the last part of this investigation. In fact, implementing instruction in ways that enable reading and writing to support each other is needed in our EFL instruction.

Curriculum designers are required to develop language skills courses in a fashion that gears integration of both reading and writing and acknowledges the connection between both skills; as such EFL teachers should receive professional trainings that brush up on their skills to use an ‘integration pedagogy’ that involves all language skills.

Several models of reading-writing pedagogy need to be explored in EFL classes; namely, the computer-mediated model, the literature/response-based model, and the content-based model. Moreover, classroom discussion about materials read can be an effective means of learning to read and write analytically. Teaching students how to read like a writer and training them on how to write like a reader are also required. Indeed, offering students opportunities to examine reading materials that exemplify what good writing looks like can help them figure out how texts are constructed, and can, therefore, teach them to build their own texts. Similarly, instructing them to consider the reader while composing will allow them to bring clarity and direction to their writing.

Furthermore, bringing extensive reading into the EFL curriculum and supporting it with a variety of interactive and creative writing activities can also be of great benefit for EFL students’ reading and writing improvements. Besides, EFL teachers are invited to employ and explore a set of pedagogical strategies that are in a way that allows students to use reading and writing to learn. And finally, a set of practical tips for better EFL academic reading and writing, as well as some guidelines for writing effective paragraphs and essays are addressed.

The findings cited above help the researcher conclude that the hypotheses set for the current research work are confirmed and that the assumptions are correct, yet it is still necessary to note the limitations of this research work and suggest avenues for further research. Indeed, the findings of this investigation are limited to a small selected group of first-year and second-year LMD English students enrolled for the licence degree in the English Languages Department at Djillali Liabes University of Sidi Bel Abbes. And since a sample is not a whole population; there will always be a margin of error. In other words, the real patterns in the population are unlikely to be exactly the same as those in the sample. As such, the findings would not be applicable to all learners who study English as a foreign language throughout Algeria. In order to investigate the situation more thoroughly future research could be conducted by taking samples from a wider population, and for a longer period.

Moreover, just as this research was informed by the tremendous amount of work that preceded it, subsequent research can expand upon the issues that are herein brought to the fore. The connection, or interface between reading and writing is a dynamic issue that can offer exciting areas for further research which have the potential to inform how we help today's students become better readers and writers. Indeed, more research is required not only to examine the complex nature of the link between reading and writing but also to add depth to the synergistic relationship they may have. Experimental studies that further demonstrate the cause-effect relationship between reading and writing are also needed.

Besides, there remains a need for additional research on reading and writing theory, modeling of the developmental processes involved in both skills, the preparation of teachers for the reading-writing connection instruction as well as the role of affect and that of technology in strengthening the reading-writing connection. And as technology has changed the way students seek, access, and read information, and has begun affecting their writing as well, much additional research is necessary to understand the exact nature of online reading and writing.

New approaches to assessment also merit investigation as assessment is recently gaining traction as a means of gathering data that can guide the tailoring of instruction and to document progress in response to classroom instructional interventions or treatments. Studies are needed of the interplay between reading and writing in assessment. Such studies can help teachers tease apart the attributes and aptitudes that characterize students who struggle with one of these skills and better describe the factors that characterize students who struggle in both reading and writing.

More research is also needed to explore in more depth the various methods used to integrate language skills in the EFL classroom. It would be interesting as well to study the effect of extensive reading on EFL student' writing performance, and the application of information from reading for writing tasks. Efforts should be made to work explicitly on paraphrasing skills to help EFL students use text information more appropriately. The nature of reading-writing relationship in EFL should be subject to further analysis with focus on some more qualitative aspects such as vocabulary and spelling. Likewise, studies investigating factors that hinder EFL teachers from employing reading texts in their writing classrooms and inserting writing in their reading classes are needed.

In conclusion, the researcher could not help but think about her own connections between reading and writing in the process of composing this dissertation. The researcher read multiple texts in the writing of this research work and paused frequently to read what she had written. Besides, she took notes on everything related to the target topic, jotted down written annotations on materials read, summarized key points, paraphrased key ideas, and quoted from reading sources. Further, she read and re-read and wrote and re-wrote on her process.

All these interrelated acts brought her processes of reading and writing much closer together. Without reading, the researcher could not write; and without writing, she could not shape what she had read. Reading and writing are indivisible processes then. And thus, the more the nature of the relationship between the two is explored, the more EFL teachers can help their students improve both.

APPENDIX A

First-Year Students' First Questionnaire

Dear Student,

I shall be very grateful for your cooperation in completing the questionnaire below.

Part One

1. Age:
2. What was your branch of studies at the secondary school?
.....
3. How long have you been studying English?
.....
4. If you are studying English as a second speciality, say what was your first speciality or degree? And why you are studying English now?
.....

Part Two

5. Which language skill do you think is the most important to be developed?

Speaking listening reading writing

Justify your choice:
.....
.....
.....

6. As an EFL university student, why do you need the reading skill in the target language?

.....
.....
.....
.....

7. As an EFL university student, why do you need the writing skill in the target language?

.....
.....
.....
.....

8. What are the difficulties that you usually encounter in EFL reading?

.....
.....
.....
.....

9. What are the difficulties that you usually encounter in EFL writing?

.....
.....
.....
.....

10. What do you want to learn in the 'Comprehension and Written Expression' module?

.....
.....
.....
.....

Part Three

11. Answering questions about texts you read in writing (during the while- and after-reading phases of the intensive reading sessions you were involved in) helped you:

- a. to understand the text better
- b. to notice and recognize relevant information in the text
- c. to integrate information from different sections of the text

- d. to practise different reading strategies (skimming, scanning, guessing from context, making inferences, etc.)
- e. to improve memory and concentration (to stay focused and to remember information about the text)
- f. to read with a purpose in mind
- g. to reflect on the text
- h. does not improve my understanding of the text
- i. Others, please specify:

.....

12. Have you jotted down some written annotations on the page while reading texts dealt with in the intensive reading sessions?

Yes No

- If yes:

a. What form(s) did your written annotations take?

- paraphrases of difficult ideas in the text
- definitions of unfamiliar vocabulary
- comments on information in the text
- questions to interact with the text or for later discussion in class
- summaries of key information in the text

b. Why have you relied on such a strategy?

.....

- If no, say why:

.....

Thank You

APPENDIX B

Second-Year Students' First Questionnaire

Dear Student,

I shall be very grateful for your cooperation in completing the questionnaire below.

1. Which language skill do you think is the most important to be developed?

Speaking listening reading writing

Justify your choice:

.....
.....
.....

2. As an EFL university student, why do you need the reading skill in the target language?

.....
.....
.....
.....

3. As an EFL university student, why do you need the writing skill in the target language?

.....
.....
.....
.....

4. What are the difficulties that you usually encounter in EFL reading?

.....
.....
.....
.....

5. What are the difficulties that you usually encounter in EFL writing?

.....
.....
.....
.....

6. What do you want to learn in the 'Comprehension and Written Expression' module?

.....
.....
.....
.....

Thank You

APPENDIX C

Sample Intensive Reading Worksheets Used

Module : Comprehension and Written Expression

I. Before Reading

Read the title and try to guess what information you would expect to find in the passage.

Text 1: The Lost Art of Conversation

What has happened to the art of conversation? By ‘conversation’ I do not mean merely word exchanges between individuals. I am thinking, rather, of one of the highest manifestations of human intelligence – the ability to transform abstractions into language; the ability to convey images from one mind to another; the ability to build a mutual edifice of ideas: in short the ability to engage in a civilizing experience.

Where does one find good conversation these days? Certainly not in the presence of the television set, facebook, twitter, e-mailing and texting, which consume half of the non-sleeping, non-working hours.

So, what makes good conversation? And what are some elementary rules for general conversation? Russian poet Alexander Pushkin correctly identifies the willingness to listen as one of the vital ingredients of any exchange. When two people are talking at the same time, the result is not conversation – it’s collision. Nothing is more destructive of good talk than for one participant to hold the ball too long, like an overzealous basketball dribbler.

It has been said that if speech is silver, silence is golden. Certainly silence is preferable, under most circumstances, to inconsequential chitchat. ‘Made conversation’ should not be a necessity among intimates. If there is nothing to say – don’t say it.

Certain topics should be taboo. Kitchen topics, business, bus schedules, and other dull or specialized things should be barred. Moreover, let us remember that our illnesses and operations are not something to be offered gratuitously to friends at conversation time.

Conversation need not always be purposeful, but it must at least be for pleasure. It should be congenial, aiming, for example, at knowing better our partner. Above all, it should be joyful and amiable.

(Adapted from ‘Saturday Review’)

II. While Reading answer the following questions:

1. What is the general idea discussed in the text?
2. Which phrase in the first paragraph summarizes the writer’s definition of ‘conversation’?
3. What does Pushkin insist on?
4. What does the writer mean by ‘made conversation’?
5. Which subjects should not appear in conversation according to the writer?
6. Find in the texts words that are closest in meaning to the following:
 - a. components
 - b. very good friends
 - c. boring

7. Find in the text the word whose definition follows:
'Light, informal conversation'

III. After Reading

In a very short paragraph, write your own definition of good conversation.

Module: Comprehension and Written Expression

I. Before Reading

1. What do you understand by healthy eating?
2. Why do you think there is so much talk nowadays about healthy eating?

Text 3: Healthy Eating

Most of us would like to live a long and healthy life. Increasingly, doctors are telling us that, in order to do so, we must eat healthy diet. Too often we ignore the advice.

In most countries of the developed world there is no shortage of food, but their inhabitants could be suffering from a form of malnutrition. This is something that we are accustomed to associate with poor countries which regularly suffer from famine, caused by primitive agricultural methods and over-population.

The problem in the developed countries is that all too many of us are eating food which is far from being nutritious and which is lacking in many of the vitamins essential to health. Because of our busy way of life, we rely too much on convenience foods, not taking the time to prepare a nourishing meal for ourselves. Instead, we grab something from the supermarket shelves or freezer and put it in the microwave.

Even when we decide to eat in a restaurant, many of us decide that we have very little time and that our food must be served instantly. It is for this reason that there are, in many countries, so many restaurants that specialize in serving fast food. Unfortunately, much of this food is also junk food, and even more unfortunately many children have become addicted to this, refusing to eat healthier alternatives.

In general, we are eating too much processed food and not enough wholefood. Ideally, we should eat more cereal products in order to increase our intake of fibre, since there is some evidence that this reduces the risk of certain cancers. Antioxidants, too, are thought to have some effect in preventing cancer and these are found in significant quantities in fruits and vegetables.

Formerly, it was considered important to eat plenty of eggs and dairy products to remain healthy. Such foods are now known to be high in cholesterol, which can be a contributory factor in heart disease.

Fashions in healthy eating may have changed, but the message remains the same. Watch what you eat!

II. While Reading

Activity One: Circle the most suitable answer from the three possible answers provided.

1. To live a long and healthy life, doctors advise people to
 - a. exercise regularly
 - b. eat a healthy diet
 - c. have regular check-ups
2. People in poor countries suffer from malnutrition because of
 - a. poor soil conditions
 - b. poor eating habits
 - c. food shortage
3. People in developed countries may suffer from malnutrition because of
 - a. unhealthy eating habits
 - b. insufficient food
 - c. an inactive life-style
4. People like to eat fast food as
 - a. It is nutritious
 - b. it is served hot
 - c. it is served quickly

Activity Two: Based on information found in the text, answer these questions in full sentences.

1. What does the writer mean by convenience foods?
2. Why do people buy convenience foods?
3. Name the kinds of food that are recommended for health?
4. What is the health risk in taking too much dairy products?
5. Two categories of food mentioned in the text are opposite in meaning. Identify them.

Activity Three:

1. Find in the text words that are **closest** in meaning to the following:
a. feel pain b. substitutes c. statement
2. Find in the text words that are **opposite** in meaning to the following:
a. unused to b. modern c. increases

III. After Reading

The questions below ask for **your opinion**. Answer each question in **one or two paragraphs**.

1. Do you think that people need to be educated on eating healthily? Why or why not?
2. Imagine a world without fast food. Would it be a nuisance to you? Give your reason.

Module: Comprehension and Written Expression

I. Before Reading

1. Think of possible reasons that would cause you to change a plan?
2. Defining idioms.

Text 4:

A Change of Plan

A letter explaining the postponement of a visit

03/06/2002

Dear Stan,

I'm sorry. My plans to come and visit you next weekend **have gone pear-shaped**. I was really looking forward to seeing you and to having some fun in the big city. Life here can get boring with so many of my friends away at college.

Unfortunately, two things have happened to make me change my plans. We're really **under the cosh** at work just now. It's coming up to the end of the tax year and, like all accountants, we're **up to our ears**. To try and cope with the workload the boss has asked us if we could all work overtime this weekend. As usual, I'm **on my uppers** and could really use the extra cash. Also, I'd like to help the boss out if I can. He's a decent bloke and has always **played** very **fair** with me. It would be difficult to refuse to work when everyone else is going to.

Then, there's a problem with my grandfather. He's **not getting any younger** and he's been a bit **under the weather** recently. Mum was worried about him and so he's come to visit for a while. Truth to tell, he's not really recovered from my grandmother's death last year. My mother doesn't like leaving him alone in the house and she's agreed to babysit for my sister on Saturday night. Dad's away at a conference that weekend and so it's down to me.

So, there it is. **What with one thing and another**, this weekend is not possible and it would be best from my point of view to leave coming up until some other weekend. **Looking on the bright side**, I can see that the delay will mean I have more money to spend when I do finally get there, thanks to the overtime.

I hope all is well with you. Drop me a note and let me know if there's any weekend that's not suitable for me to come up, or if there's any weekend that's specially suitable. I would give you the news from home, but there isn't any – or if there is, I'm working so hard that I haven't heard about it!

Sorry again about the change of plan. I hope it hasn't messed up any of your arrangements. I'll think of you **living it up** in the **bright lights** while I'm watching the telly with granddad!

Cheers,
Jeff

II. While Reading

Activity One: Based on information found in the letter, answer these questions in full sentences.

1. What was the purpose of Jeff's letter to Stan?
2. What had Jeff's boss asked of him?
3. What were the reasons that Jeff was willing to oblige his boss?
4. What would Jeff have to do for his grandfather on Saturday night?
5. What did Jeff see to be the advantage of a later visit?

Activity Two: From what you know of Jeff in his letter, make a short **character sketch** of him. For **each characteristic** you identify, give **supporting evidence**. You should be able to pick out at least **05 characteristics**.

III. After Reading

Activity One: Fill in each of the blanks in the passage below with one of the idioms provided.

what with one thing or another

had gone pear-shaped

he was not getting any younger

live it up

looking on the bright side

on his uppers

Robert couldn't wait for the holidays to start as his father had promised him a trip to Bali. Two weeks before the day, his father told him their plans _____ . The reason was that he had been retrenched and would be _____. He worried that finding another job would be hard as _____. _____, Robert's father was in no mood to _____ and thought it best to cancel the trip. Robert took the news well, and _____, told his father that now he could attend the school camp.

Activity Two: Instead of giving detailed reasons, Jeff could have explained to his friend the change of plan in a short email. Write that **short email** to communicate **the main points in the letter**.

Module: Comprehension and Written Expression

I. Before Reading

- Pointing out to the difference between **'illiteracy'** and **'aliteracy'**.

Text 7: Why Read?

The affliction of illiteracy is all but wiped out in the republic. But a new disease is replacing it – “aliteracy”, in the jargon of reading specialists. “Aliterates” can read, but will not. They buy newspapers and magazines, even books on occasion, but only scan **them**. Their reading skills atrophy and their bellies grow bigger in front of TV sets. Only 0.5 percent of the population over 14 now is classified illiterate. An estimated 20 percent to 40 percent over 14 can read and write a little, but not well enough, say, to read want ads, fill out forms, understand a new story or follow safety instructions. They are called functional illiterate and are lucky if they can make out the comic pages.

Absolute illiterates and functional illiterates love network television. They turn it on in the morning and live it on all day like a furnace or air-conditioning system. TV is a utility shining and blaring away for **these** poor souls. Leave these folks be. I am concerned about an upper blob, those people who graduated from high school or college, and are regarded as literate. They account for the two thirds of the population that should be running the country, making decisions, keeping business and schools going, tending to our health and safety, even voting on occasion. These millions have allowed their reading interests, and therefore their reading skills, to slip. The less they read, the more their reading skills diminish.

Schools share the blame for this situation with the home. Many teachers are addicted to visual aids, and are incapable of instilling a love of reading in anyone. That is because they do not like to read themselves. They pray for more government money to install more movies projectors, slide shows and TV sets in the schools.

Then, there’s the generation, now in its 30s, reared in the TV age. They spent nearly as many hours in front of TV sets as they did in classrooms. They often become scanners of reading material. Naturally, they pass their habits on to their children, now of school age. Their children will become even more TV and audio-visual minded, and so the cycle continues.

TV proliferates. It is watched in airports, college-student lounges, on patios and pleasure boats. Some limousines have TV sets, perhaps so **their** rich owner will not be bored looking out at slums. If TV sets were placed in libraries, I am sure many people drop their books and watch. I am not against TV, nor do I agree with the bluenoses that it must be banished from the republic. But I am for reading because it is fundamental to thinking. Reading makes the mind work. TV usually does not. Minds that do not work become flabby. The result is mediocre society.

Nick Thimmesch, LA. Times

II. While Reading

Activity One: Are these statements **true, false** or **not mentioned**?

- a. Aliterates are incapable of reading.
- b. Schools encourage pupils to read.
- c. Teachers prefer more TV sets in schools.
- d. There are TV sets in libraries.
- e. 85 percent of illiterates prefer watching TV.
- f. TV is not essential to thinking.
- g. Teachers are devoting much time for reading.

Activity Two: Answer these questions according to the text.

1. What is the main idea discussed in the text?
2. What are the negative effects of TV mentioned in the text?
3. What does the writer mean by ‘functional literates’?
4. Is the writer worried about illiterate people? Justify your answer.
5. Give another title to the text.

Activity Three:

1. What or who do the underlined words refer to in the text?
 - a. but only scan **them**
 - b. away for **these** poor
 - c. perhaps so **their** rich
2. Find in the text words that are **closest** in meaning to the following:
 - a. eliminated
 - b. a group of people
 - c. old houses or buildings
 - d. deteriorate

III. After Reading

Do you prefer reading books or watching TV in your free time? State your reasons.

Module: Comprehension and Written Expression

I. Before Reading

- Analyzing the title of the text.

Text 8: A Day of Misfortunes

A letter recounting events and experiences on the day

Dear Jenny,

It was great to get your letter. You sound as if you're really enjoying college and I can't wait to join you. I'm beginning to wish that I had **turned a deaf ear** to my dad's suggestion that I spend a year getting some work experience before going to college.

I've just got back from work and I've had a really **bad hair day**. For starters, I got up late. I must have switched off my alarm clock when it went off and I didn't wake up till an hour later. **Panic stations!** Instead of having a leisurely bath, washing my hair, choosing my clothes carefully and having a nourishing breakfast, I climbed into yesterday's clothes, grabbed a couple of biscuits and headed for the door.

I could still have caught a bus that would get me to work on time, but **as luck would have it**, I saw old Mrs Smart next door struggling to put her rubbish bin out on the street. I stopped to help her and got to the bus stop just as the bus had left it. There was no possibility of taking a taxi because I'm **on my beam ends** until pay day next week. I seriously thought of calling the office to say I was sick, but I decided to go in and **face the music**. When I got to the office, I waited until I thought **the coast was clear** and hurried past reception without being seen by any of the bosses. 'Hurray!' I said to myself, 'I've got away with it!' **I spoke too soon**.

When I got to my desk, there was my supervisor, Mrs Mason. 'At long last!' she said sarcastically, 'you've decided to favour us with your presence. My office now! By this time I had a very bad headache and was badly in need of a cup of coffee. Instead, I had to listen while Mrs Mason **read me the riot act**. From what she said I'm completely useless and totally unreliable. It didn't do much for my morale! The thing is that it was so unfair. I work hard for very little money and I'm hardly ever late. Naturally, I didn't say this to Mrs Smart!

Sorry this is such a moaning letter, but I badly need somebody to grumble to. I'll write a more cheerful one soon.

Love,

Linda

II. While Reading

Activity One: Based on information found in the letter, answer these questions in full sentences.

1. What was the reason that Linda was working?
2. What was her usual morning routine?
3. At the office, what did Linda do to try and avoid being seen by her bosses?
4. Why did Linda think that Mrs Smart was unfair in what she said?

Activity Two: Linda told Jenny about four unpleasant experiences she had in one day. Pick out these experiences and say why they happened. Note that for one of the experiences, the reason was not given and you are encouraged to guess the reason.

Linda's unpleasant experiences

Why they happened

- a.
- b.
- c.
- d.

III. After Reading

Activity Use the following idioms to make the following sentences more colourful.

bad hair day panic station on her beam ends face the music spoke too soon
read him the riot act

1. You _____ that the weather will hold. Here comes the rain.
2. Trembling in fear, the group had no choice but to confess their wrong doing and _____.
3. I've had enough of Jim's bad behavior and this time I'm going to _____.
4. My _____ was a nightmare, beginning with the moment I slipped in the bathroom first thing in the morning.
5. _____ ! Mr Clark is checking uniforms today and I've got the wrong shoes on.
6. Having spent all her savings on a holiday, she was _____ till she received her salary.

Activity Two: Write a letter to a friend to tell him/her of your own bad hair day. In your letter, state the following:

- The things that went wrong with you
- Why they went wrong
- The results of things going wrong
- How you felt about the incidents

APPENDIX D

Sample Graphic Organizers Used in the Treatment

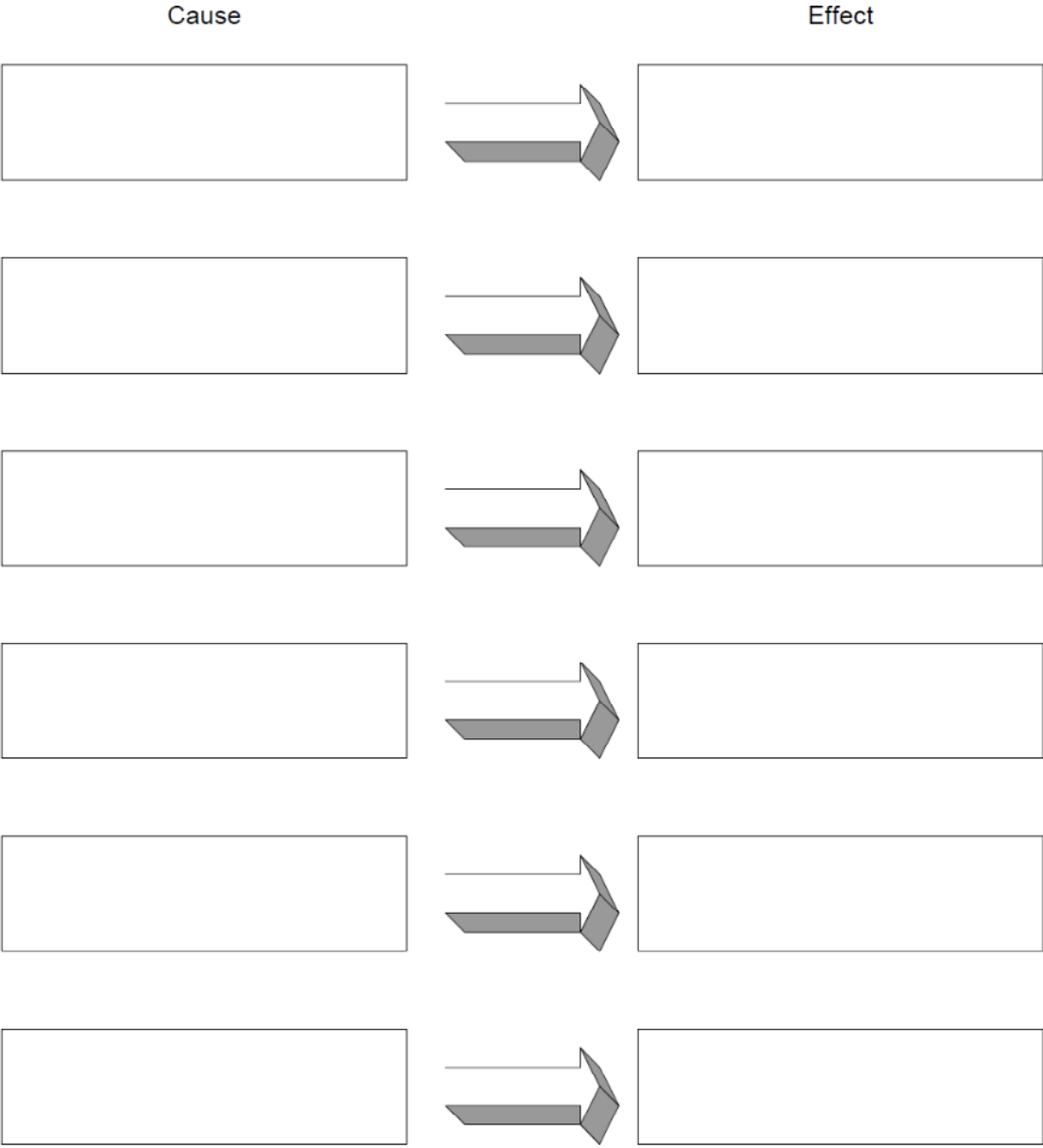
Compare and Contrast Chart Graphic Organizer

Item #1 _____	Item #2 _____
---------------	---------------

How are they alike?

How are they different?

Cause and Effect Chart



APPENDIX E

First-Year Instrumental Group Students' Graphic Organizers Questionnaire

Dear Student,

I shall be very grateful for your cooperation in completing the questionnaire below.

Questions	Yes	No	Don't Know
1. Do you think that using graphic organizers helped you improve your knowledge of text organization?			
2. Do you think that using graphic organizers helped you pick important information out of texts read?			
3. Do you think that using graphic organizers helped you summarize large quantities of information in a creative and interesting way?			
4. Do you think using graphic organizers helped you examine and show relationships between facts, concepts, or ideas in texts read?			
5. Do you think using graphic organizers helped you remember what you have read in texts?			
6. Overall, do you think that using graphic organizers helped you improve your English reading skills?			
7. Do you think that using graphic organizers encouraged you to interact more closely with texts?			
8. Do you think that graphic organizers improved your reading confidence?			
9. Did you enjoy using graphic organizers?			
10. Do you think that using graphic organizers encouraged your interest in reading English?			
11. Overall, do you think that using graphic organizers was a useful activity for you ?			

Thank You

APPENDIX F

The Summary Writing Assignment

Read the text below and write a summary of its content:

Government officials, advocacy groups and economists in the United States are grappling with solutions to reduce high poverty rates. The U.S Census Bureau says that the last year, the number of poor Americans was the highest since such data started being collected five decades ago.

People living in poverty in the United States in 2009 was 14.3 percent, according to the Census Bureau, nearly a full percentage point higher than the previous year. In terms of overall numbers, the bureau says 43.6 million people last year were living in poverty, which is defined as a yearly income of less than \$22,000 for a family of four.

Avis Jones-DeWeever of the National Council of Negro Women examined the data closely and says that more than one in four African Americans and Hispanics in the United States live in poverty as well as one in five children. "Frankly, these statistics need to serve as a wake-up call for America," said Avis Jones-DeWeever. "The time is now to once again mount a serious attack on poverty. In fact, this imperative might be more critical now than ever, given what I would characterize as the tattered state of our safety net."

But at a panel of poverty analysts meeting in Washington this week, the director of Deloitte Consulting, Wade Horn, warned that the U.S. political environment is not conducive to more government spending. "I am not sure that we are in a political context at the moment in which it is an easy sell to dramatically increase government spending", said Wade Horn. "In fact, given the focus on the debt and the deficit, I think we may at the beginning of a retrenchment in government spending, not an expansion of government spending." Horn called for aggressive government economic policies to create job growth in the private sector, while pursuing anti-poverty strategies.

The high poverty rate comes amid high unemployment, particularly in male-dominated sectors of the economy, such as construction and manufacturing. Avis Jones-DeWeever of the National Council of Negro Women says this makes equal rights issues regarding women even more pressing. "I do think it is important that people look at how well women do because for many two-parent families, they are now the only ones working," said Jones-DeWeever. "And

so it is that much more important that women receive pay equity and get fair pay because it not only benefits them, it benefits their entire family.”

LaDonna Pavetti from the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities said several U.S. states have initiated programs to subsidize jobs in the private sector, with great success. “What we have seen with these programs is that they have been a huge benefit, particularly to small businesses,” said LaDonna Pavetti. “And what has happened in those small businesses is that it has allowed them to be able to keep their businesses moving during times of low demand. And it has allowed some businesses to expand so that they are actually creating new jobs by that.” Pavetti said that many of these programs are running out of money, and that hundreds of thousands of people who have been employed might lose their jobs.

But Nicholas Eberstadt with the American Enterprise Institute warned against making government subsidized employment a permanent part of the U.S economy. “Many of the Western European countries that have pursued some of these programs, over time you see labor force rigidities and barriers to entry actually developing there”, said Nicholas Eberstadt. “So I think you have to be very cautious about this.”

President Barack Obama says his economic policies, such as stimulus spending, are keeping millions more Americans out of poverty. The president has blamed the policies by his predecessor, George W. Bush, for creating the current economic hardships of many Americans. But opposition Republicans say huge government spending has made the situation worse. The new poverty figures come only weeks before November's Congressional midterm elections.

**Source: Voice of America, News / USA
Nico Colombant
September, 15, 2010**

APPENDIX G

The Post- Summarizing Reading Comprehension Test

Answer the following questions about the text you have summarized:

1. What is the main idea discussed in the text?
2. According to the passage, what is considered as a poor family in the USA?
3. Which group communities are more concerned with this problem?
4. Did the problem exist only with the coming of president Obama to power? Justify your answer.
5. Who are the people concerned with finding solutions to this problem?
6. Find a suitable title to the passage.

APPENDIX H

The Post-Graphic Organizers Treatment Reading Comprehension Test

Read the text and answer the series of questions below:

Plant Growth and Development

Whereas plants' roots grow down into the soil, their stems grow up into the air. These movements occur because plants respond to their environment. Although plants lack a nervous system and usually cannot make quick responses to environmental stimuli, they do have mechanisms that enable them to respond to their environment. For example, plants grow, reproduce, and shift the positions of their roots, stems, and leaves in response to environmental conditions such as gravity, sunlight, temperature, and day length. Plants have two kinds of responsive movements, tropisms and nastic movements.

A tropism is a plant's response to an external stimulus that comes from a particular direction. A tropism can be either negative or positive, depending on the relationship between the direction of the external stimulus and the plant's response to that stimulus. If the tropism is positive, the plant grows toward the stimulus. If it is negative, the plant grows away from the stimulus. Tropism can also be classified in terms of the environmental stimulus that elicits the response. Two examples are phototropism and gravitropism. Phototropism is a plant's responsive movement to the direction of a light source. The tendency of stems to bend toward light is an example of a phototropism. Stems exhibit positive phototropism because they grow towards the direction of a light source. The positive phototropism exhibited by stems is an adaptation that enables the plant to obtain a maximum amount of sunlight. Gravitropism is a plant's response to gravitational force. Gravitropism is associated with the upward growth of stems and the downward growth of roots. Stems show negative gravitropism because they grow against gravitational force. In contrast, roots show positive gravitropism because they grow with gravity. Tropisms are not reversible because tropisms involve growth, and growth is not reversible. For example, the position of a stem that has grown several inches in a particular direction cannot be changed. But if the direction of the stimulus is changed, the stem will begin growing in another direction.

The second kind of responsive movement is nastic movement. In contrast to tropisms, nastic movements are responsive movements of a plant that are not dependent on the direction of stimulus. Also unlike tropisms, nastic movements do not involve growth. Thus, nastic movements are reversible. An example of a nastic movement is the sudden drooping of the leaves of a Mimosa when the plant is touched.

Plants, like animals, have hormones that regulate growth. A hormone is a chemical that is produced in one part of an organism and transported to another part, where it causes a physical change. Only a small amount of the hormone is needed to make a physical change. There are two types of plant hormones that regulate growth: auxins and gibberellins.

Auxins are growth hormones that affect many aspects of plant development. First, auxins are responsible for regulating phototropism in plants. Thus, auxin regulates a plant's movement toward light. Second, auxin produced in the tip of the stem, or apical meristem, stimulates cell elongation in the stem and inhibits the growth of side branches. This is why gardeners often

pinch the tip off a plant to encourage the side branches. That is, pinching the tip reduces the amount of auxin present in the stem and allows side branches to form. Third, auxin also plays a role in a plant's development of fruit. High concentrations of auxin promote development of fruit and inhibit the dropping of fruit from the plant. In the autumn, auxin concentrations in plants decrease. The decrease of auxin concentration in the autumn causes ripened fruit to fall to the ground and causes trees to begin dropping their leaves. In summary, auxins are plant hormones that affect growth and development of plants in many ways.

Gibberellins are also plant hormones that promote growth. These growth hormones cause plants to grow taller because, like auxins, they stimulate cell elongation. Gibberellins also increase the rate of plants' seed germination and bud development, and may stimulate the formation of flowers and fruits in some plants. In summary, gibberellins are hormones that contribute to plant growth and development in several ways.

Other hormones are involved in aging however. Ethylene gas is a hormone made of a simple compound of carbon and hydrogen that is produced on the plasma membrane of the plant cells. This hormone promotes and speeds aging processes such as ripening of fruits, dropping of leaves in the fall, and the withering of flower parts after fertilization takes place.

And while auxins and gibberellins stimulate growth, other plant hormones, called inhibitors, inhibit plant growth. One inhibitor, called abscisic acid, plays a role in closing leaf pores, or stomata, during periods of water shortages. Abscisic acid is also responsible for producing dormancy in seeds and buds during periods of unfavorable environmental conditions. In other words, abscisic acid inhibits the germination of seeds and the flowering of buds when environmental conditions are not optimal. Because of its function to inhibit plants' development in unfavorable environmental conditions, this hormone is often thought of as the hormone produced to protect the plant in stress.

Multiple-Choice Comprehension Questions

Text-based multiple-choice questions

1. Which of the following is the best description of a tropism?
 - A. A plant's direction-specific response to an external stimulus.
 - B. A plant's response to the direction of light.
 - C. A plant's ability to respond to touch.
 - D. A plant's production of carbon dioxide from oxygen at night.
2. What is the distinction between a nastic movement and a tropism?
 - A. Nastic movement is a growth away from stimulus, whereas a tropism is growth toward a stimulus.
 - B. Nastic movements involve animals, whereas tropisms involve plants.
 - C. Nastic movements do not involve growth, tropisms do involve growth.
 - D. Nastic movements are specific to the stem and leaves, whereas tropisms are more general.
3. Which part of the plant exhibits negative gravitropism?
 - A. Seed.
 - B. Roots.
 - C. Leaves.
 - D. Stem.

4. Why are “inhibitors” beneficial to plants?
- A. They eliminate the internal stress of the plants to allow growth.
 - B. They inhibit dropping of leaves to protect plants during water shortage.
 - C. They protect plants in stressful environments by conserving resources.
 - D. They facilitate plants growth and reproduction to allow for seed dispersion.

Local inference multiple-choice questions

1. Of the following outcomes, which of the following is the correct prediction for a plant that has been placed in an environment rich in Gibberellins and Abscisic acid?
- A. The plant would grow rapidly because they both facilitate growth.
 - B. The plant would grow at the same rate because they do not affect plant growth.
 - C. Plant would not grow because they both inhibit growth.
 - D. Unknown because one facilitates growth and the other inhibits growth.
2. What kind of change occurs to the plant if you pinch the tip off the stem?
- A. A plant’s growth stops.
 - B. A plant’s top begins growing faster.
 - C. A plant’s side branches begin growing.
 - D. A plant’s roots begin growing.
3. Why is an auxin classified as a hormone?
- A. Because auxins are internally produced by plants through photosynthesis.
 - B. Because auxins regulate nastic movement of the plant.
 - C. Because auxins are found in animals as well.
 - D. Because auxins are produced internally and cause physical changes in the plant.
4. What is common between the contribution of auxins and ethylene gas to plants’ growth?
- A. They both contribute to the ripening of fruits.
 - B. They both contribute to the dropping of leaves.
 - C. They both contribute to phototropism.
 - D. They are both inhibitors.

Global inference multiple-choice questions

1. What makes a plant tropism negative as opposed to positive?
- A. Growing downward
 - B. Growing upward
 - C. Growing away from the direction of stimulus
 - D. Inhibition of growth
2. Which of the following is most closely related to plants’ ability to respond positively to the direction of light?
- A. Auxin
 - B. Abscisic acid
 - C. Ethylene gas
 - D. Chlorophyll

3. Under what condition does a plant close the stomata?

- A.** Excessive sunlight
- B.** Cold weather
- C.** Water shortage
- D.** Nastic movements

4. Which of the following is an example of a positive tropism?

- A.** Root's tendency to grow downward because of gravity.
- B.** Flower's tendency to have a vibrant color because of sunlight.
- C.** Stem's tendency to grow upward because of gravity.
- D.** Leaves' tendency to wither because of touch.

APPENDIX I

Argumentative and Compare and Contrast Essay Writing Assignments

a. Choose one of the two following topics to write a five-paragraph argumentative essay:

1. Do you think that women should work or stay at home?
2. Are you for or against inter-cultural marriage?

b. Choose one of the two following topics to write a five-paragraph compare and contrast essay:

1. Compare and contrast two books you have read recently?
2. Compare and contrast two movies you have seen recently?

APPENDIX J

The Assigned Topic Before and After the Background Reading Treatment

- **Write a five-paragraph essay on the topic below:**

How many different causes of stress can you think of? And what would you recommend to someone who is under stress to reduce or overcome it?

APPENDIX K

First-Year Students' Post-Topic Background Reading Treatment Questionnaire

Dear Student,

I shall be very grateful for your cooperation in completing the questionnaire below.

1. What problems have you faced in writing your essay without reading about the assigned topic? Put a tick in the box next to the answer of your choice (you can choose more than one).

I have difficulty getting started.	
My writing was poorly planned.	
I have limited information / knowledge regarding the topic.	
I do not have much vocabulary.	
I have problem in generating ideas or elaborating on them.	
I have difficulty in developing and organizing ideas.	

2. In what ways has reading about the assigned topic helped you in writing your essay? Put a tick in the box next to the answer of your choice (you can choose more than one).

Reading gives me some ideas / information in writing the essay.	
Reading helps me to understand the topic better.	
Reading helps me to elaborate on my ideas.	
Reading provides as a guideline for me to write the essay.	
Reading helps me to enrich my vocabulary about the topic I am writing about.	
I can write a better piece of writing rather than writing without reading.	

Thank You

APPENDIX L

Steps to Writing a Summary

1. Read the whole text you are summarizing carefully and with full concentration at least twice to make sure you understand it.
2. Highlight the main idea.
3. Identify the portions of the text that support the main idea; underline these sections (main points / key supporting ideas).
4. Cross out useless information (minor details) such as illustrations, quotations, etc. from the original text.
5. Paraphrase the key points (rewrite them using your own words; don't quote anything word-for-word).
6. Combine your sentences using transitional words or phrases.
7. Your summary should be shorter than the original text. It reduces to about one third of its original size.
8. Do not add anything beyond the author's ideas (do not include your opinion).

APPENDIX M

Holistic Scoring Rubric for Evaluating Written Summaries

Score Point	Score Point Description
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- The summary clearly identifies the main idea of the original passage.- The summary uses all the significant details to support the main idea.- The summary does not include irrelevant information.- The summary is written in the student's own words.- The summary exhibits logical organization and fluent language use.- The summary is shorter than the original passage.
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- The summary clearly identifies the main idea of the original passage.- The summary uses most significant details to support the main idea.- The summary introduces very little or no information, or opinion not found in the original passage.- The summary is written in the student's own words.- Most of ideas are in a logical order, and the summary shows general control of grammar and conventions except some minor errors in sentence structure, word choice, usage and mechanics (i.e., spelling, punctuation, and capitalization).- The summary may be too long or too short than required.
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- The summary partially identifies the main idea of the original passage.- The summary does not use relevant details to support the main idea.- The summary includes irrelevant information.- The summary is written only partially in the student's own words as some sentences are copied directly from the source text.- Organizational, linguistic, and lexical errors compromise the summary's comprehensibility.
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- The summary does not identify the main idea.- Supporting details are weak and not clear what idea they are supporting.- The summary includes irrelevant information.- The summary is almost entirely borrowed from the original passage.- The summary shows a limited control of grammar and conventions which impedes its comprehensibility.

APPENDIX N

Holistic Scoring Rubric for Work Done in Graphic Organizers

Level of Performance	Description of the level of performance
Above goal	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- All of the information is on the topic.- All the information is accurate.- There are enough details without overdoing it.- All the information in the graphic organizer is placed correctly.- Vocabulary related to the topic is especially well-chosen.- The work is very neat and presentable.
Goal	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Most of the information is on the topic.- Most of the information is accurate. No major errors are made.- There are a few too many or too few details.- Most of the information in the graphic organizer is placed correctly.- Vocabulary related to the topic is well chosen.- The work is very neat and presentable.
Need work	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Most of the information is off the topic.- Most of the information is incorrect.- There are too few details or no details.- Many mistakes are made in placing information in the graphic organizer.- Vocabulary related to the topic is not well chosen.- The work is neither neat nor representable.

APPENDIX O

Analytic Scoring Rubric for Argumentative Essays

Levels of performance Criteria for evaluation	4	3	2	1	Score
Opening Statements	Introduction grasps reader's attention starting with an interesting question, surprising fact, etc.	Introduction only partially develops attention-grapping opening.	Introduction's opening is relevant but does not engage reader's attention.	Introduction's opening is dull.	
Thesis Statement	A well-defined thesis that presents writer's point of view.	The thesis presents writer's opinion but is somewhat vague.	The thesis hints at an issue but is unclear and omits writer's opinion.	The thesis is omitted.	
Arguments	Clear and accurate reasons are presented with relevant evidence (facts, statistics, examples, comparison, and expert opinions).	Relevant reasons are presented but some need more specific evidence.	No evidence supported any stated reasons.	Irrelevant or confusing reasons are presented.	
Counterarguments and Refutation	Counterarguments are presented and strong rebuttal statements are offered to draw their weaknesses or invalidity.	Counterarguments are presented but rebuttal statements are less persuasive.	Counterarguments are presented but without any refutation.	Counterarguments are not acknowledged.	

Organization and Structure	The essay breaks information into block-to-block arguments -to-counterarguments, or point-by-point structure. It follows a consistent order.	The essay breaks information into block-to-block arguments -to-counterarguments, or point-by-point structure, but does not follow a consistent order.	The essay breaks information into block-to-block arguments -to-counterarguments, or point-by-point structure, but some information is in the wrong section.	There is little sense that the writing is organized.	
Transitional Words and Phrases	Effective transitional words and phrases create coherence throughout the essay.	Transitional words and phrases create coherence in most sections of the essay.	Occasionally, transitional words and phrases appropriately connect ideas, but sometimes they are used inappropriately.	Transitional words and phrases are neglected.	
Conclusion	It clearly restates opinion or concisely summarizes reasons. In addition, it includes a final thought about the topic.	It restates opinion or summarizes most reasons but no final thought is provided.	It repeats thesis directly from the introduction, or only vaguely sums up the topic.	Formal conclusion is omitted.	
Grammar, Spelling and Punctuation	Grammar, spelling and punctuation are used appropriately throughout the essay.	Few problems with grammar, spelling and punctuation.	Enough errors in the essay that distracts the reader from the content.	Numerous errors make the paper hard to read.	
					Final Score

APPENDIX P

Analytic Scoring Rubric for Compare and Contrast Essays

Levels of performance Criteria for evaluation	4	3	2	1	Score
Opening Statements	The essay opens with attention grabbing introduction.	Introduction only partially develops attention-grapping opening.	Introduction's opening is relevant but does not engage reader's attention.	Introduction's opening is dull.	
Thesis Statement	The essay contains a clear thesis statement presenting two items to be compared and contrasted.	The thesis statement presents two items to be compared and contrasted but it is somewhat vague.	The thesis is unclear and suggests confusion about the topic.	The thesis statement is absent.	

Supporting Details	The essay compares and contrasts items clearly. It points to specific examples to illustrate the comparison, and it includes only the information relevant to the comparison.	The essay compares and contrasts items clearly, but the supporting information in general. It includes only the information relevant to the comparison.	The essay compares and contrasts items clearly, but the supporting information is incomplete. The essay includes information that is not relevant to the comparison.	The essay compares or contrasts, but does not include both.	
Organization and Structure	The essay breaks the information into block-to-block similarities-to-differences, or point-by-point structure. It follows a consistent order when discussing the comparison.	The essay breaks the information into block-to-block similarities-to-differences, or point-by-point structure. But it does not follow a consistent order.	The essay breaks the information into block-to-block similarities-to-differences, or point-by-point structure. But some information is in the wrong section. Some details are not in a logical or expected order, and this distracts the reader.	There is little sense that the writing is organized.	
Transitional words and Phrases	The paper moves smoothly from one idea to the next. It uses a variety of comparison and contrast transitional words throughout the essay to show relationships between ideas.	Transitional words and phrases create coherence in most sections of the essay.	Occasionally, transitional words and phrases appropriately connect ideas, but sometimes they are used inappropriately.	The transitions between ideas are unclear or non-existent.	

Conclusion	It clearly restates opinion or concisely summarizes reasons. In addition, it includes a final thought about the topic.	It restates opinion or summarizes most reasons but no final thought is provided.	It repeats thesis directly from the introduction, or only vaguely sums up the topic.	Formal conclusion is omitted.	
Grammar, spelling and punctuation	Grammar, spelling and punctuation are used appropriately throughout the essay.	Few problems with grammar, spelling and punctuation.	Enough errors in the essay that distracts the reader from the content.	Numerous errors make the paper hard to read.	
					Final Score

APPENDIX Q

“All Summer in a Day” By Ray Bradbury

All Summer in a Day By Ray Bradbury

"Ready ?"

"Ready."

"Now ?"

"Soon."

"Do the scientists really know? Will it happen today, will it ?"

"Look, look; see for yourself !"

The children pressed to each other like so many roses, so many weeds, intermixed, peering out for a look at the hidden sun.

It rained.

It had been raining for seven years; thousands upon thousands of days compounded and filled from one end to the other with rain, with the drum and gush of water, with the sweet crystal fall of showers and the concussion of storms so heavy they were tidal waves come over the islands. A thousand forests had been crushed under the rain and grown up a thousand times to be crushed again. And this was the way life was forever on the planet Venus, and this was the schoolroom of the children of the rocket men and women who had come to a raining world to set up civilization and live out their lives.

"It's stopping, it's stopping !"

"Yes, yes !"

Margot stood apart from them, from these children who could ever remember a time when there wasn't rain and rain and rain. They were all nine years old, and if there had been a day, seven years ago, when the sun came out for an hour and showed its face to the stunned world, they could not

recall. Sometimes, at night, she heard them stir, in remembrance, and she knew they were dreaming and remembering gold or a yellow crayon or a coin large enough to buy the world with. She knew they thought they remembered a warmness, like a blushing in the face, in the body, in the arms and legs and trembling hands. But then they always awoke to the tating drum, the endless shaking down of clear bead necklaces upon the roof, the walk, the gardens, the forests, and their dreams were gone.

All day yesterday they had read in class about the sun. About how like a lemon it was, and how hot. And they had written small stories or essays or poems about it: *I think the sun is a flower, That blooms for just one hour.* That was Margot's poem, read in a quiet voice in the still classroom while the rain was falling outside.

"Aw, you didn't write that!" protested one of the boys.

"I did," said Margot. "I did."

"William!" said the teacher.

But that was yesterday. Now the rain was slackening, and the children were crushed in the great thick windows.

Where's teacher ?"

"She'll be back."

"She'd better hurry, we'll miss it !"

They turned on themselves, like a feverish wheel, all tumbling spokes. Margot stood alone. She was a very frail girl who looked as if she had been lost in the rain for years and the rain had washed out the blue from her eyes and the red from her mouth

and the yellow from her hair. She was an old photograph dusted from an album, whitened away, and if she spoke at all her voice would be a ghost. Now she stood, separate, staring at the rain and the loud wet world beyond the huge glass.

"What're *you* looking at?" said William.

Margot said nothing.

"Speak when you're spoken to."

He gave her a shove. But she did not move; rather she let herself be moved only by him and nothing else. They edged away from her, they would not look at her. She felt them go away. And this was because she would play no games with them in the echoing tunnels of the underground city. If they tagged her and ran, she stood blinking after them and did not follow. When the class sang songs about happiness and life and games her lips barely moved. Only when they sang about the sun and the summer did her lips move as she watched the drenched windows. And then, of course, the biggest crime of all was that she had come here only five years ago from Earth, and she remembered the sun and the way the sun was and the sky was when she was four in Ohio. And they, they had been on Venus all their lives, and they had been only two years old when last the sun came out and had long since forgotten the color and heat of it and the way it really was.

But Margot remembered.

"It's like a penny," she said once, eyes closed.

"No it's not!" the children cried.

"It's like a fire," she said, "in the stove."

"You're lying, you don't remember!" cried the children.

But she remembered and stood quietly apart from all of them and watched the patterning windows. And once, a month ago, she had refused to shower in the school shower rooms, had clutched her hands to her ears and over her head, screaming the water mustn't touch her head. So after that, dimly, dimly, she sensed it, she was different and they knew her difference and kept away. There was talk that her father and mother were taking her back to Earth next year; it seemed vital to her that they do so, though it would mean the loss of thousands of dollars to her family. And so, the children hated her for all these reasons of big and little consequence. They hated her pale snow face, her waiting silence, her thinness, and her possible future.

"Get away!" The boy gave her another push. "What're you waiting for?"

Then, for the first time, she turned and looked at him. And what she was waiting for was in her eyes.

"Well, don't wait around here!" cried the boy savagely. "You won't see nothing!"

Her lips moved.

"Nothing!" he cried. "It was all a joke, wasn't it?" He turned to the other children. "Nothing's happening today. *Is it?*"

They all blinked at him and then, understanding, laughed and shook their heads.

"Nothing, nothing!"

"Oh, but," Margot whispered, her eyes helpless. "But this is the day, the scientists

predict, they say, they *know*, the sun..."

"All a joke !" said the boy, and seized her roughly. "Hey, everyone, let's put her in a closet before the teacher comes !"

"No," said Margot, falling back.

They surged about her, caught her up and bore her, protesting, and then pleading, and then crying, back into a tunnel, a room, a closet, where they slammed and locked the door. They stood looking at the door and saw it tremble from her beating and throwing herself against it. They heard her muffled cries. Then, smiling, she turned and went out and back down the tunnel, just as the teacher arrived.

"Ready, children ?" She glanced at her watch.

"Yes !" said everyone.

"Are we all here ?"

"Yes !"

The rain slackened still more.

They crowded to the huge door.

The rain stopped.

It was as if, in the midst of a film concerning an avalanche, a tornado, a hurricane, a volcanic eruption, something had, first, gone wrong with the sound apparatus, thus muffling and finally cutting off all noise, all of the blasts and repercussions and thunders, and then, second, ripped the film from the projector and inserted in its place a beautiful tropical slide which did not move or tremor. The world ground to a standstill. The silence was so immense and unbelievable that you felt your ears had been stuffed or you had lost your hearing altogether. The children put

their hands to their ears. They stood apart. The door slid back and the smell of the silent, waiting world came in to them.

The sun came out.

It was the color of flaming bronze and it was very large. And the sky around it was a blazing blue tile color. And the jungle burned with sunlight as the children, released from their spell, rushed out, yelling into the springtime.

"Now, don't go too far," called the teacher after them. "You've only two hours, you know. You wouldn't want to get caught out !"

But they were running and turning their faces up to the sky and feeling the sun on their cheeks like a warm iron; they were taking off their jackets and letting the sun burn their arms.

"Oh, it's better than the sun lamps, isn't it ?"

"Much, much better !"

They stopped running and stood in the great jungle that covered Venus, that grew and never stopped growing, tumultuously, even as you watched it. It was a nest of octopi, clustering up great arms of fleshlike weed, wavering, flowering in this brief spring. It was the color of rubber and ash, this jungle, from the many years without sun. It was the color of stones and white cheeses and ink, and it was the color of the moon.

The children lay out, laughing, on the jungle mattress, and heard it sigh and squeak under them resilient and alive. They ran among the trees, they slipped and fell, they pushed each other, they played hide-and-seek and tag, but most of all they

squinted at the sun until the tears ran down their faces; they put their hands up to that yellowness and that amazing blueness and they breathed of the fresh, fresh air and listened and listened to the silence which suspended them in a blessed sea of no sound and no motion. They looked at everything and savored everything. Then, wildly, like animals escaped from their caves, they ran and ran in shouting circles. They ran for an hour and did not stop running.

And then -

In the midst of their running one of the girls wailed.

Everyone stopped.

The girl, standing in the open, held out her hand.

"Oh, look, look," she said, trembling.

They came slowly to look at her opened palm.

In the center of it, cupped and huge, was a single raindrop. She began to cry, looking at it. They glanced quietly at the sun.

"Oh. Oh."

A few cold drops fell on their noses and their cheeks and their mouths. The sun faded behind a stir of mist. A wind blew cold around them. They turned and started to walk back toward the underground house, their hands at their sides, their smiles vanishing away.

A boom of thunder startled them and like leaves before a new hurricane, they tumbled upon each other and ran. Lightning struck ten miles away, five miles away, a mile, a half mile. The sky darkened into midnight in

a flash.

They stood in the doorway of the underground for a moment until it was raining hard. Then they closed the door and heard the gigantic sound of the rain falling in tons and avalanches, everywhere and forever.

"Will it be seven more years ?"

"Yes. Seven."

Then one of them gave a little cry.

"Margot !"

"What ?"

"She's still in the closet where we locked her."

"Margot."

They stood as if someone had driven them, like so many stakes, into the floor. They looked at each other and then looked away. They glanced out at the world that was raining now and raining and raining steadily. They could not meet each other's glances. Their faces were solemn and pale. They looked at their hands and feet, their faces down.

"Margot."

One of the girls said, "Well... ?"

No one moved.

"Go on," whispered the girl.

They walked slowly down the hall in the sound of cold rain. They turned through the doorway to the room in the sound of the storm and thunder, lightning on their faces, blue and terrible. They walked over to the closet door slowly and stood by it.

Behind the closet door was only silence.

They unlocked the door, even more slowly, and let Margot out.

APPENDIX R

Robert Vickrey's Picture "The Magic Carpet"



APPENDIX S

Cognitive Strategies Sentence Starters (Olson, 2011, p. 21)

Cognitive Strategies Sentence Starters

Planning and Goal Setting

- My purpose is...
- My top priority is ...
- I will accomplish my goal by...

Tapping Prior Knowledge

- I already know that...
- This reminds me of...
- This relates to...

Asking Questions

- I wonder why...
- What if...
- How come...

Making Predictions

- I'll bet that...
- I think...
- If _____, then...

Visualizing

- I can picture...
- In my mind I see...
- If this were a movie...

Making Connections

- This reminds me of...
- I experienced this once when...
- I can relate to this because...

Summarizing

- The basic gist is...
- The key information is...
- In a nutshell, this says that..

Adopting an Alignment

- The character I most identify with is...
- I really got into the story when...
- I can relate to this author because...



Cognitive Strategies Sentence Starters

Forming Interpretations

- What this means to me is...
- I think this represents...
- The idea I'm getting is...

Monitoring

- I got lost here because...
- I need to reread the part where...
- I know I'm on the right track because ...

Clarifying

- To understand better, I need to know more about...
- Something that is still not clear is...
- I'm guessing that this means _____, but I need to...

Revising Meaning

- At first I thought _____, but now I.....
- My latest thought about this is...
- I'm getting a different picture here because...

Analyzing the Author's Craft

- A golden line for me is...
- This word/phrase stands out for me because...
- I like how the author uses _____ to show...

Reflecting and Relating

- So, the big idea is...
- A conclusion I'm drawing is...
- This is relevant to my life because...

Evaluating

- I like/don't like _____ because...
- My opinion is _____ because...
- The most important message is _____ because...

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ملخص

استكشاف العلاقة بين القراءة والكتابة، وربط القراءة والكتابة في تدريس اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية كانتا جوهر هذه الأطروحة. اعتمدت الدراسة على استخدام مجموعة متنوعة من أدوات البحث مع عينة الطلبة المشاركين وذلك بهدف التحقيق في تأثير الكتابة على مستوى الفهم لديهم أثناء القراءة و كذا تشخيص آثار القراءة على أدائهم في الكتابة. كشفت النتائج المحصل عليها عن أهمية و فاعلية تدريس القراءة و الكتابة وفق المنهج التكاملي لما له من أثر ايجابي في تحسين قدرات الطلبة و زيادة حماسهم للقراءة و الكتابة باللغة الهدف. وعليه تم تقديم مجموعة من التوصيات و الاقتراحات لتعليم أكثر فاعلية لمهارتي القراءة و الكتابة.

Résumé

Exploiter la relation entre la lecture et l'écriture et connecter la lecture à l'écriture dans l'enseignement de la langue anglaise étaient le mille de cette thèse, cette étude s'est appuyée sur divers moyens de recherche appliqués sur un échantillon d'étudiants participants voire contributeurs et ce pour s'enquérir de l'impact de l'écriture sur la compréhension de la lecture et aussi diagnostiquer les effets de la lecture sur l'écriture, les résultats obtenus ont soulevé l'importance et l'efficacité de l'enseignement de la lecture et de l'écriture en vertu de l'approche intégrative ayant un effet positif sur l'amélioration des compétences et la motivation des étudiants pour la lecture et l'écriture en langue cible. Enfin présenter certaines recommandations et suggestions pour un enseignement plus efficace des habiletés de la lecture et de l'écriture.

Summary

Exploring the link between reading and writing and hence, connecting reading and writing in teaching English as a foreign language were the core of this dissertation. A variety of research tools were used with the sample students involved to investigate the effects of writing on their reading comprehension, and to diagnosis the effects of reading on their writing performance. The findings revealed acknowledged the usefulness of an integrated reading and writing instruction in improving students' reading and writing abilities and motivation and confidence to read and write in the target language. And thus, a set of recommendations and suggestions for a more effective teaching of reading and writing was reported.