

READING AND WRITING CONNECTION: INSIGHTS INTO AN INTEGRATIVE APPROACH TO DEVELOPING AND TEACHING READING AND WRITING IN EFL CLASSROOMS

Salaheldin Adam Ahmed Eldouma and Alaa Eldin Ali Elmahdi Elamin

Faculty of Sciences and Arts, Albaha University, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

ABSTRACT: *This article reviews and analyses four textbooks purportedly written for teaching reading and writing integratively. It attempts to shed light on the approaches and strategies adopted to establish the connection between reading and writing. This investigation is intended to help and provide guide to language material developers, more soundly and effectively, as they embark on designing ESL/ EFL courses, specifically, reading and writing. The analysis is based on whether each textbook maintains well-balanced activities in both domains throughout its sections or units, the types of reading and writing tasks and exercises manipulated throughout these textbooks and whether these textbooks address other language aspects such as grammar, vocabulary, speaking, listening, etc. The analysis has revealed that these books maintained, to a large extent, balanced activities in reading and writing throughout their sections or units, i.e., the reading activities were set to help students to write effectively using the lexical items and sentence structures they experienced in the reading texts. Activities such as review (an activity that discusses styles and writing techniques used by the author in the reading passage), summary, paragraph and essay writing, collaborative learning activities and topics for discussion were some of the main features of these textbooks. Some of these textbooks included activities in grammar and speaking skill. Language material developers as well teachers/instructors are advised to use the outcomes of this investigation as a guide to plan and prepare connected reading and writing activities for their language classrooms. The best situation for any language context is either using these strategies and approaches to produce their own materials, adopting or adapting these published materials to suit their students' needs, taking into account the cultural and linguistic differences between their students and learners for whom these textbooks were written.*

KEYWORDS: reading and writing relationships, integration, developing reading/writing material, vocabulary in context.

INTRODUCTION AND RATIONALE

Research into reading and writing connection has revealed that the two skills are cognitively similar: "both writer and reader construct meaning from text and interpret meaning from text". Moreover, both reading and writing are interactive, recursive processes and they both activate schemata about the language, content, and form of the text that result in discovering meaning, i.e., both writers and readers have 'drafts' of meaning in their heads as they begin, and both constantly revise these drafts in light of what Stanley Straw called 'the emerging text' (Reid, 1993: 4).

To establish this connection, Tierney and Pearson (1983) developed a "composing" model of reading and writing which explicitly shows that both reading and writing share some of the

same basic processes. According to Noyce and Christie (1989: 9 - 10), reading and writing have the following characteristics in common:

1. 1 Planning: Both readers and writers set goals and mobilize their already existing knowledge. Based on their schema, writers make decisions about what they want to say and to approach their topic. Similarly, based on their reading purposes and their experience with the text topic, readers decide the way they want to approach a text and what they want to get out of it.

1. 2 Aligning: Both readers and writers make assumptions about each other. A reader assumes that the author is friendly, neutral or antagonistic. The way the reader interprets the text is influenced by these assumptions. The author also makes assumptions about the audience and based on these assumptions the author decides the writing style and how to treat the topic.

1. 3 Drafting: Both readers and writers refine their meaning. Writers do this by including, excluding and arranging information whereas readers refine meaning by inferring and adding information based on their prior knowledge.

1. 4 Monitoring: This process denotes that "proficient writers and readers constantly evaluate or monitor their efforts to see if they are achieving their goals" (Noyce and Christie, 1989: 10). Both readers and writers have "inner readers" who constantly make sure that what has been read or written makes sense.

1. 5 Revising: When monitoring does not satisfy the reader's or writer's goals, revision takes place. Writers do this by rereading what has been written, adding, deleting, rewording and rearranging. Readers do so by reflecting on the ideas they get from the text and reread to achieve better understanding.

However, the lack of attention to this connection is due to the "many disciplinary divorces in language studies" during the last fifty years: speech has moved out taking rhetoric with it; linguistics incorporated all the language skills but has given more emphasis to spoken language; sociology and anthropology confined themselves mostly to the study of the social context and meaning of literacy; and English got rid of basic reading to focus entirely on literacy criticism. As a result, writing remained an "unappreciated houseguest of literature". This situation has made it difficult for researchers and people of interest "to conceive of writing in terms broad enough to make essential connections" (Bazerman, 2000: 156-157).

Objectives and Method

This article reviews and evaluates four textbooks purportedly written for teaching reading and writing integratively. It attempts to shed light on the approaches and strategies adopted to establish the connection between reading and writing. For those interested in making the connection, some principles for designing such materials would be discernible through this systematic study of established practices.

Based on the level, content, methodology and objectives stated in the preface and introduction of each textbook, four textbooks have been selected for investigation and analysis: (1) *Invitations to Reading and Writing* (O'Keefe, 2000); (2) *Composing Through Reading: An Integrated Approach to Writing* (Sotiriou, 1994); (3) *Reading and Writing with*

confidence (Khan, 1998) and (4) *Communication and Culture: A Reading-Writing Text* (Gregg, 1993).

As far as the objectives were concerned, the following questions were formulated to investigate the connection of reading and writing throughout these textbooks:

1. To what extent does each textbook maintain consistent features of reading and writing from the beginning to the end? In other words, does it offer well-balanced activities in both domains?
2. What are the types of reading/writing tasks and exercises manipulated throughout the texts?
3. To what extent do the reading activities address the learning goal of writing?
4. What are the other types of language aspects (grammar, vocabulary, etc) manipulated in these exercises?
5. What are the similar/ different features these textbooks have in common?

To address the above questions, six passages/ topics or three chapters/units from each textbook, i.e., (beginning, middle and end) were selected and the content of the activities and exercises were investigated.

"Invitations to Reading and Writing"

The objective of this textbook is to encourage and invite students to read and write. It is arranged around thematic units of readings and writing - the assignments are built on these units. The themes of these texts provide students with several different views on each topic to help them later to write intelligently about them. In the early parts of this book, the writing assignments are designed to improve expressive writing. Students are required to write about themselves and their families in relation to the themes of each unit. As students acquire some fluency and confidence in writing, this book encourages them to write essays and a synthesis paper - with explanation of how to use sources.

There are about six reading passages in each unit of this textbook. Almost every reading passage consists of the following features:

Introduction: This part introduces the reading and its objectives.

Vocabulary in Context: This section explains the meaning of the vocabulary that the reader will encounter in the reading passage.

Pre-reading: The pre-reading includes instructions and guides to the reading selection such as reading the title, the first and the last paragraphs of the selection as well as writing a prediction of what the reading will say or reveal.

Reading Response Journal: It is a summary and practice in comprehension and writing skills. After each reading passage students are provided with sample directions for their reading response journal. In this part of their reading, students are required to do the following activities: (1) Write a summary of the reading passage (usually one paragraph). (2) How students can relate reading to their own experiences or lives of those around them or whether

there are other connections of the ideas in the reading passage to their world. For example, in "I was a Remedial Student: from Lives on the Boundary", Mike Rose describes the education he receives as the son of an Italian immigrant in Los Angeles. Rose tells of his struggles as a dreamy shy adolescent mistakenly placed in the remedial track at his catholic high school because he was confused with another student who had the same last name. Despite some personal and family problems, Rose battled to attend college and, later, graduate school, training to become a teacher and finally a professor of English at UCLA. After reading this story, students are asked to write a few sentences explaining how this reading might relate to their lives or lives of those around them and whether there are other types of connection between the ideas in the reading passage and their world. (3) Comprehension questions. (4) At the end of the questions students, are also required to write their own experience in relation to the reading or paraphrase some sentences.

Writing from Reading: In this part of the reading selection, the author describes and explains the writing techniques and strategies such as prewriting or brainstorming, first and final drafts, clustering, topic sentence, organization, types of essay writing (comparison and contrast, the definition essay), using multiple sources, and etc. With reference to the reading passage, students are also asked to write a paragraph(s) or a long paper about their own experience or similar incidents in their society. It is an activity whereby writers can connect what they write to what they have read by referring to the vocabulary, organization and style of the author.

Collaborative Learning Activity: In addition to the above activities, students are given a choice of writing assignment and a collaborative learning activity that helps them write and learn together, with other students forming an "audience" for each writer. This activity includes writing and learning grammatical items, too.

Writing Tips: Another feature of the reading selection is the writing tips. Here, the author reminds students of other writing techniques such as simile, using transition, writing purpose, etc. Students may also be asked to write about these points.

Vocabulary Development/Application to Writing: Some units in this textbook include vocabulary development whereas others consist of application to writing. These topics aim at providing readers with guides and methods on how to deal with the new word vocabularies. For example, readers are advised not to waste time looking up the new words while reading, they should try to guess the meaning of the new words (from its context) and keep reading. After finishing reading the section students look them up in a dictionary.

Review: it is a brief summary of the main reading and writing principle(s) for each chapter. This activity discusses styles and writing techniques used by the author in the reading passage. For example, in an essay titled "Stone Soup" in which the writer describes and analyses marriage and family life in different stages of America's history, readers are asked to take notes how the good writer uses many different kinds of sources, as well as stories and personal experiences, to build a good essay. In reviewing, the writer also summarizes the writing techniques included in the reading.

Word Demons: At the end of each unit there is a treatment for words that may confuse or mix up students - words that are pronounced very much alike, however, they have different spelling and/or meanings such as *quiet* (adjective) meaning "silent, still" and *quite*, an adverb,

means "very"; *new* and *knew*; *no* and *know*. In this activity students are required to write or complete sentences with these problematic words.

Studying the content of this textbook, it is quite obvious that the book maintains consistent features of reading and writing from the beginning to the end, i.e., based on each reading passage; students are encouraged and guided to do a number of writing tasks. This activity stands as a factual representation of connecting reading and writing. Writing activities such as "Reading Response Journal", "Writing from Reading", "Writing Tips" and "Review" are well designed to fulfill the purpose. The book also includes different types of both reading and writing tasks: there are short questions and answers, writing summary of the reading passage, essay or paragraph writing. Moreover, almost all the reading activities address the targeted learning, which is writing. Not only reading and writing activities, but also other language skills receive some emphasis. Each reading selection of this textbook is preceded by vocabulary in context. There are also grammatical items that students need to know as they engage in writing, pre-reading questions, peer learning (collaborative learning activity) and review of the styles and writing techniques used. Generally, this textbook aims at inviting and encouraging students to read and write in a systematic and productive way.

"Composing Through Reading: An Integrated Approach to Writing"

Composing Through Reading "is both a reader and a rhetoric, based on the assumption that reading interesting and challenging material is the single most important factor influencing writing improvement" (Sotiriou, 1994: xiii). This book contains interesting reading passages to introduce various issues of grammar and usage and to stimulate student essay writing.

Based on the assumption that all significant learning requires a context and that reading isolated articles on several topics does not provide students with sufficient background information for writing successful essays on the articles, *Reading Through Composing*, includes twenty five reading selections divided into five provocative topics which are described in the next section.

The Organization of the Book

This book is divided into five parts in which each part deals with a particular topic of interest and teaches various language skills. There are three chapters in each part, and each part contains a reading selection on the topic of interest. At the end of the three chapters, two additional readings are presented. Based on the selection criteria mentioned in the previous chapter of this study, parts one; three and five of this textbook have been chosen for analysis (each part deals with a particular topic and teaches various language skills).

Part One: Reading Experiences: Essential Reading and Writing Practices

The first part of this textbook focuses on the key reading and writing practices that students will use throughout this text. The first chapter explains how an essay is set up; the second chapter teaches students the necessary activities that they use when they pre-read, read, and reread or rewrite, write and revise whereas the third chapter focuses on the organizational patterns that structure much of what students read and write. Each part throughout this book begins with "reading-writing preparation". Before they begin each part, students, first, answer questions that help them respond to the issues that the reading selection introduces.

The first chapter defines the essays and explains two kinds of information that an essay provides: general and specific. The chapter also explains how essays are organized - most essays follow a three-part pattern: a beginning, or introduction; a middle, or body; and an ending, or conclusion. The importance of summary and how to summarize and reading essay questions correctly are also the concern of this chapter.

The second chapter focuses on points such as critical reading; paraphrasing; a journal reading; pre-reading and prewriting; a free-writing journal; writing/drafting; how reading and writing work together when one writes an essay about an article; revising and the writer's audience. The third chapter teaches students how organizational patterns can help them understand the essay format and improve their reading and writing practices. The organizational patterns discussed are: (1) Thesis Support (2) Cause and Effect (3) Sequence of Events (4) Description (5) Comparison and Contrast, and (6) Definition and Classification. The chapter also gives some emphasis on transitions. They are powerful reading and writing tools because they show how an argument is developing, provide signals showing where the writer's thinking is going and tell readers how the writer's ideas are developing.

Part Three: Turning Points: Reading and Writing about Literature

This part focuses on reading and writing about an issue that all of us eventually face: important events that change the course of our lives. The five selections of this part describe characters who take some action or make some major decision in their lives and then must deal with the sometimes painful implications of these actions or decisions. These selections present interesting and intricate psychological studies. They introduce to students ways to read and write about literature, skills that are in some ways different from reading and writing in the social sciences.

Part Five: Nutrition and Health: Reading and Writing in the Natural Sciences

This final part of the book focuses on reading about "How Diet Affects Our Health". The five selections show how various substances - vitamins, garlic, chocolate, and olive oil - affect our health. The main objective of these selections is to teach students how to read and write about materials in the natural sciences: students will see how natural science material differs from the social science, literary and humanities writing they have already studied in parts two, three and four respectively.

However, the following are the common features of the parts and chapters throughout this textbook:

Reading-Writing Prep: This is a pre-reading and writing activity in which students are asked, before they read the selection, to answer some questions in free writing or discussion. For example, before reading "You'll Have to Teach Your Child to Read Yourself", students are instructed to answer or discuss the following questions:

1. How did you learn to read?
2. If you were not at school, what would you be reading regularly?

Activity 1: Preview Skimming and Outlining: In this activity students are either guided or asked to preview skimming a reading selection and finally write about it. For example, in a reading passage about "Hands", which discusses reading and writing about literature, students

are first briefed on how to preview skimming literature such as reading the title and author, then looking at the beginnings and endings to get some sense of the story line and style. Finally, the students are encouraged to move quickly through various paragraphs to see if the story falls under the genre of description, narration, or dialogue. When they finish skimming the reading selection, students are asked to write, for example, a tentative main idea for the reading selection.

Activity 2: A Second Reading: It is an activity in which readers are instructed to reread some or the entire selection and answer specific questions and summarize a paragraph (s) or even the text.

Activity 3: Writing Topics: Based on the reading selection, students are required to write on one of given essay topics (usually two or three). As they compose, students are reminded to refer to the inside front cover to check certain points on essay writing techniques they have already studied.

Activity 4: Student Writing: In this activity, students answer questions about a draft written in response to one of the reading selections. The questions include rereading specific paragraphs, adding or deleting, editing and summarizing.

Activity 5: Peer Responses: It is an activity in which students answer questions to respond to their peer's draft. They should try to make specific comments so that their peer can use them to productively revise his or her draft.

Reading and Writing Suggestions: This section teaches students how to deal with the different types of reading and writing: social, natural or literary text. As they read and write about each selection, they are advised to do the following: identify the key sections of the article, mark/underline or make notes, make margin comments and answer specific questions.

Follow-up: At the end of each part throughout the book, students are asked to write or discuss several questions about the topic they have been reading. For example, in part five and after they have read several selections on nutrition and health, students are asked to answer the following questions in writing or discussion to develop critical thinking:

1. How do you now think diet affects health? What substances do you think improve health? What substances do you think hurt one's health?

2. What selection changed your thinking most? Why?

In addition to the above activities and exercises, each reading selection of this textbook includes reading comprehension questions. These questions take the form of completing given outlines. For example, after reading an article about "*From Black Boy*" by Richard Wright, students are asked to complete the following outlines:

1. The problem that Richard faces.
2. Richard's conflicting feelings about reading.
3. What Richard plans to do when he goes North.

Moreover, at the end of each reading passage there is an explanation to the vocabulary items that students encounter as they read. The textbook also includes a section on grammar and

usage practices and glossary of grammar and usage terms that students need to know as they read and write. Regarding reading and writing activities manipulated throughout the book, one can notice that there is a systematic presentation of activities in both domains. All the activities of the book aim at developing both reading and writing. Before they engage in reading and writing, the "*Reading and Writing Suggestions*" teaches students how to deal with the different texts of reading and writing such as reading and writing about social and natural sciences and reading and writing about literature and humanities. In addition the textbook also offers information about writing techniques, styles of writing and grammatical items necessary for writing. The textbook also encourages speaking; at the end of each part, students have to answer questions in writing or discussion.

"Reading and Writing with Confidence"

This textbook is divided into ten chapters dealing with essential concepts that represent critical choices readers and writers make all the time. This text aims at teaching students to become better readers and writers at the same time. *Reading and Writing with Confidence* teaches reading and writing as processes to be developed and controlled and as skills to be mastered and applied. It also reinforces other language skills. To promote the transference of skills, this text contains reading selections and excerpts from a variety of sources such as periodicals, fiction, non-fiction, textbooks, and others, "so that students can have practical reading and writing experience with materials and ideas they are likely to encounter in their other college courses and in the world beyond the classroom as well" (Kanar, 1998: xiv).

Chapter Features: All the chapters throughout this book have the following features in common:

Thinking First: Each chapter begins with three provoking questions to focus students' attention on the chapter's major concepts. The objective of this activity is to help students develop the habit of thinking before they read. For example, before reading about "*Getting Ready to Read and Write*", students have to think about the following questions:

- What do reading and writing have in common?
- What are reading and writing essential skills?
- How can I improve my reading and writing?

Background Check: It is a pre-reading or brainstorming activity that aims at establishing a context for reading, assessing students' prior knowledge and making predictions about what the selection covers. Before reading an essay on "*Shopping with Children*" (chapter six), students are instructed to check their knowledge and assumptions about clothes and shopping in response to questions like these:

1. What specific items of clothing did you feel you had to have when you were a child?
2. Do you have now, or did you ever have, a favorite item of clothing, something that is uniquely "you" and that you feel you could not do without?
3. If you have children or younger brothers and sisters, would you say that shopping with them is usually a positive or negative experience? Why?

4. Based on your survey of the title, author information, and first and two paragraphs, what do you expect to follow?

5. What else do you know or think about the topic?

Vocabulary Check: To familiarize students with the new words that may cause them difficulty as they read, there is a vocabulary check list with paragraph numbers and definitions at the beginning of each reading selection.

Chapter-Opening Reading Selection: Each chapter is provided with an introduction to the reading selection. It provides information about the author and may contain a clue about the reading selection's content.

Thinking Critically: It is a post-reading activity that checks students' comprehension of the reading selection and provides structures that help them to think critically about their reading. This activity reflects the book's overall organizational plans and discusses (1) Main Idea: what is the author's main idea, or central idea? A hint is also given to students. (2) Details (3) Organization (4) purpose, audience and tone (5) Inferences and Conclusions, and (6) Making Connections in which students discuss or try to connect the theme and ideas of the reading selection to their own experiences. In an article discussing how American English has been influenced by the Spanish-speaking people who have settled in the United States, students are asked the following question: according to the author, the use of "Spanglish" may help to bring people of different cultures together. What else can people do to bridge the gap between cultures?

Thinking about Process: The purpose of this section is to encourage students to think about their own reading and writing processes and to explore practical ways to apply the skills they are learning. In the first chapter, students practise exercise on using the dictionary efficiently: word syllabus, punctuation, parts of speech, definitions, etymology of words and understanding denotation and connotation.

Thinking it Over: This activity is meant to summarize and review the chapter's concepts. It tests students' ability to recall by completing statements the chapter's concepts. Students may look back to the chapter to find the answers.

Topics for Writing: A list of suggested topics and a check list for revision are provided near the end of each chapter. The topics are either generated from the chapter-opening essay for reading or are more general but still related to the content of the chapter. Most chapters contain a topic suitable for academic writing and the checklist reminds students to revise and edit the content, organization and grammar of their paragraphs or essays.

Reflections on Reading and Writing: At the end of each chapter, students are encouraged to reflect on what they have learned and the progress they are making. This activity can be done through using a journal activity or a communication channel between instructor and students.

It seems quite obvious that there is a systematic treatment for both reading and writing throughout the content of this book. At the beginning of the book the author states that this book is not merely a reading text with writing exercises nor simply a writing text with readings but rather a combined reading and writing text that aims at teaching students to become better readers and writers at the same time. The reading and writing exercises manipulated throughout the book include short comprehension questions and answers,

paragraph and essay writing, summary and review and gap filling exercises. In addition to reading and writing activities, this book contains informal survey questions for students to determine how actively they read. The book also includes a vocabulary check exercise at the beginning of each reading selection.

Moreover, this book encourages critical thinking. Each chapter opens with three thought-provoking questions designed to focus students' attention on the chapter's major concepts. The post-reading activity "*Thinking Critically*" is designed to provide students with a structure that enables them to think critically about the reading selection.

"Communication and Culture: a Reading-Writing Text"

Communication and Culture, according to Gregg (1993), is a text that has been designed and successfully used for teaching reading and writing skills in advanced English as a Second Language/ Dialect in community and four-year colleges. The text aims at integrating reading and writing and composition skills with rich and interesting content material. The subject of human culture has proved relevant to both students and instructors and encouraged classroom discussion and college-level expository writing.

This textbook includes ten chapters discussing different topics about communication and culture. Based on the criteria set in the previous chapter, chapters one and two; five and six; nine and ten have been selected for evaluation. Nevertheless, all the chapters of this textbook have the following features in common:

Introduction: Each chapter begins with a visual stimulation to encourage discussion. To emphasize personal expression, fluency and concrete detail, there is a free-writing activity related to the theme of the reading selection. The students' free writing may later be used for their formal composition or be treated as a challenging personal exercise in the expression of feelings and ideas in English. For example, after discussing "Culture and Human Behavior", each student writes freely about a birthday or another event in a child's life that teaches a tradition or value of his/ her culture. This free writing can be a personal memory from student's own childhood.

Vocabulary in Context: The objective of this activity is to focus students' attention to a dozen key words. They are in bold type in the text, designed to help comprehension of the reading passage. In each activity students are instructed to complete an exercise that explains the meanings of these words. They can also use their dictionaries when necessary.

The Reading Passage: Each reading passage contains examples of writing and composing items known as "Writing Exercises" and "Composing Development". The reading passage also uses these vocabulary items in natural academic contexts to provide a model for the student's oral and written vocabulary development, Gregg, (1993).

Key Concepts: Key Concepts serve as a pre-reading activity in which students review the key terms or themes from the reading selection before they begin reading it, to make sure that they understand the literal meanings of the words employed. Before the reading is assigned, there could be a brief oral discussion of the key terms in which students can provide examples from their own life experiences. For example, in chapter ten, students have to discuss: ethnic diversity/ pluralism; colonialism; capitalism and communal ideas before they read "Pluralism in Action: The Caribbean".

Reading Comprehension: This section includes a variety of questions designed to focus students' attention on the main ideas, significant details, relevant illustrations, expression of coherence, and organizational patterns of paragraphs. Answers to these questions are based on the information included in the reading passage as well as inferring. The reading comprehension activities include (1) "true-false" questions which involve critical thinking as well as comprehension of information (2) "Reading Review" which contains thought questions requiring open-ended response (3) "Analyzing the Text" which focuses on function words, signal expressions, paragraph patterns, and similar types of material related to the organization rather than the content of the reading passage. The last activity in this section emphasizes a particular reading target such as summarizing, paraphrasing, skimming or scanning.

Vocabulary Study: This activity deals with the lexical items from the reading passage that may be unfamiliar to students and it also integrates word formation. It includes contextualized and non-contextualized vocabulary items to help students acquire new vocabulary beyond the limits of the reading section.

Writing Exercises: The purpose of these exercises is to revise the grammatical targets and to provide a coherent review of some of the points of syntax that students still have difficulty to apply. Like the sentences in the "Vocabulary Study", the sentences in these exercises are a mix of items related to the themes of the chapter as well as others related to everyday life. Students have to do all the written work in this section with more focus on items such as punctuation, capitalization, subject-verb agreement, word forms and spelling as well as the particular target structure. For example, the exercises of the first chapter focus on structures for generalizing: uncountable nouns; gerunds; individual representative of a class and pluralized countable nouns. To apply these structures, students have to review some of the reading material in their academic courses. They have to write ten to twenty definitions, explanations or general statements based on important topics in their college courses. To help students construct general statements, there is also emphasis on the simple present tense, present perfect tense and modals.

Small Group Assignment: To improve students' speaking skills and provide practice in analyzing and applying abstract ideas, each chapter in this textbook, except the last, contains one or more activities especially designed for small group collaboration. Each activity of "Small Group Assignment" treats one or more language aspects such as figures of speech, proverbs, interpreting charts, analyzing poems, active listening and etc. For example, in chapter five students have to form small groups and read a paragraph on "The Perspective of Time Among Japanese-Americans" as many times as they can without taking any notes. The instructor will then read the paragraph aloud twice. With their books closed, each group tries to reconstruct the paragraph as closely as possible to the original. To help students reconstruct, the instructor puts the first sentence and the following terms on the board: issei, nisei, kibe, sansei, yonsei, and gosei. These words are used to name the different generations of Japanese immigrants to America. For example, they call the first generation "issei" and they call the second generation "nisei". The reconstruction of the paragraph is followed by a discussion on specific questions about it.

Composition Development: In this section, students focus their learning on how to develop, organize, and express their views on selected topics in a substantial and coherent manner. To have sufficient and self-contained models of academic writing, the reading passage and additional paragraphs in each chapter will provide students with examples of the particular

composing skills. This section also focuses on the different writing techniques and writing genres such as topic statements, developing paragraphs, unity and coherence, summarizing, academic writing, etc. Prewriting activities such as brainstorming and outlining are also one of the main features of this section and students are encouraged to apply them before each major writing session.

Composition Topics: At the end of each chapter, students will be assigned to one or two composition topics based (usually) on the ideas of the chapter's reading passage. Before one or both topics are assigned, students may engage in class discussion and outlining. After reading a passage on "Culture and Food Habits", students are asked to compose a well-developed essay with funnel-shaped paragraphs arguing for or against the idea that fast-food restaurants are very popular in the United States and that many people believe they offer convenience, quality food and reasonable prices. In the second composition topic, students are asked to relate the physical environment of their native or present residence to the food patterns of its people which also relates to the theme of the reading passage.

As far as the content of this textbook is concerned, it can be said, to a large extent, that the textbook maintains consistent features of reading and writing from the beginning to the end: each chapter contains a reading passage followed by a number of exercises aimed at developing both reading and writing. The exercises cover different types of questions in both skills. True-false questions, sentence construction, paragraph combining and writing, scanning, multiple choice questions, and summary/essay writing are common reading and writing features throughout the book.

Not only does the book include reading and writing activities, but it also covers other language aspects such as grammar (adjectives, adverbs, tenses) and vocabulary (word formation, synonyms, prefixes and roots). The book also aims at developing students' speaking skills. "Small Group Assignment" which is a prominent feature throughout the book encourages discussions, role-play and dialogues.

Common/Different Features of the Selected Textbooks

With an in-depth analysis to the contents of the units, parts or chapters of these four textbooks, it can be concluded that these books have certain basic features in common. The primary objective of these books is to teach reading and writing integratively. In other words, these texts aim at teaching students to become better readers and writers at the same time. To achieve this main objective, each textbook has maintained, to a large extent, a balanced practice in both reading and writing throughout its chapters or units. Though some activities are given different titles in some of these textbooks, the activities are designed with the central theme in mind (teaching reading and writing integratively). The titles and activities in the textbooks are summarized below:

1. Introduction: to introduce the reading passages, its objectives and its content.
2. Pre-reading activities
3. Vocabulary in context
4. Reading passage (s) and reading comprehension questions/ reading response journal/ reflection on reading and writing

5. Review, summary, paragraph and essay writing
6. Collaborative learning activity/ topics for discussion/ peer response/ small group assignment (discussion and dialogue).
7. Grammar and other language skills.

Nevertheless, these textbooks have some *different features*:

1. Word Demons "*Invitations to Reading and Writing*". At the end of each unit there is a treatment for words that may confuse or mix up students - words that are pronounced very much alike, however, they have different spelling and/or meanings.
2. Thinking it Over "*Reading and Writing with Confidence*". An activity that begins each chapter with three thought provoking questions to focus students' attention on the chapter's major concepts.
3. Thinking Critically: "*Reading and writing with Confidence*". It is a post-reading activity that checks students' comprehension of the reading selection and provides structures that help them to think critically about their reading.
4. Vocabulary Study: "*Communication and Culture: A Reading-Writing Text*". This activity deals with the lexical items from the reading passage that may be unfamiliar to the students and it also integrates word formation which focuses on root and affixes to aid students to build their vocabularies by semantic clusters.

Another distinctive feature of "*Communication and Culture*" is that it encourages students to relate the reading and writing activities to their college courses. Based on the structures they are learning, students have to review some of the reading material in their college courses.

Moreover, the analysis of these textbooks has shown that none of them provided any discussion or exercises on listening. In only one activity of the "Small Group Assignment" in "*Communication and Culture*", students have to listen to the group's speaker. However, the activity's objective is to encourage speaking rather than listening. This may raise the question whether listening could be integrated with the other language skills and whether listening is the least important language skill to be practiced or learnt. In addition to their central theme, which is developing students' reading and writing skills, these textbooks, included teaching other language aspects such as speaking and grammar.

INSIGHTS INTO DEVELOPING READING AND WRITING MATERIALS IN EFL CLASSROOMS

The strategies and techniques, maintained throughout the chapters or sections of the selected textbooks, to integrate reading and writing, seem very useful and effective in any ESL/EFL situation. Nevertheless, English language instructors in any of these situations should take into account the cultural and linguistic differences of their own students and of the students for whom these textbooks were written. The best situation is either using these strategies and techniques to produce their own materials, or adapting these published materials to suit their

students' needs and levels. As such, an analysis of existing practices would be useful for keying down some principles that could be used in material development. Below is a proposed framework for developing integrated reading and writing materials.

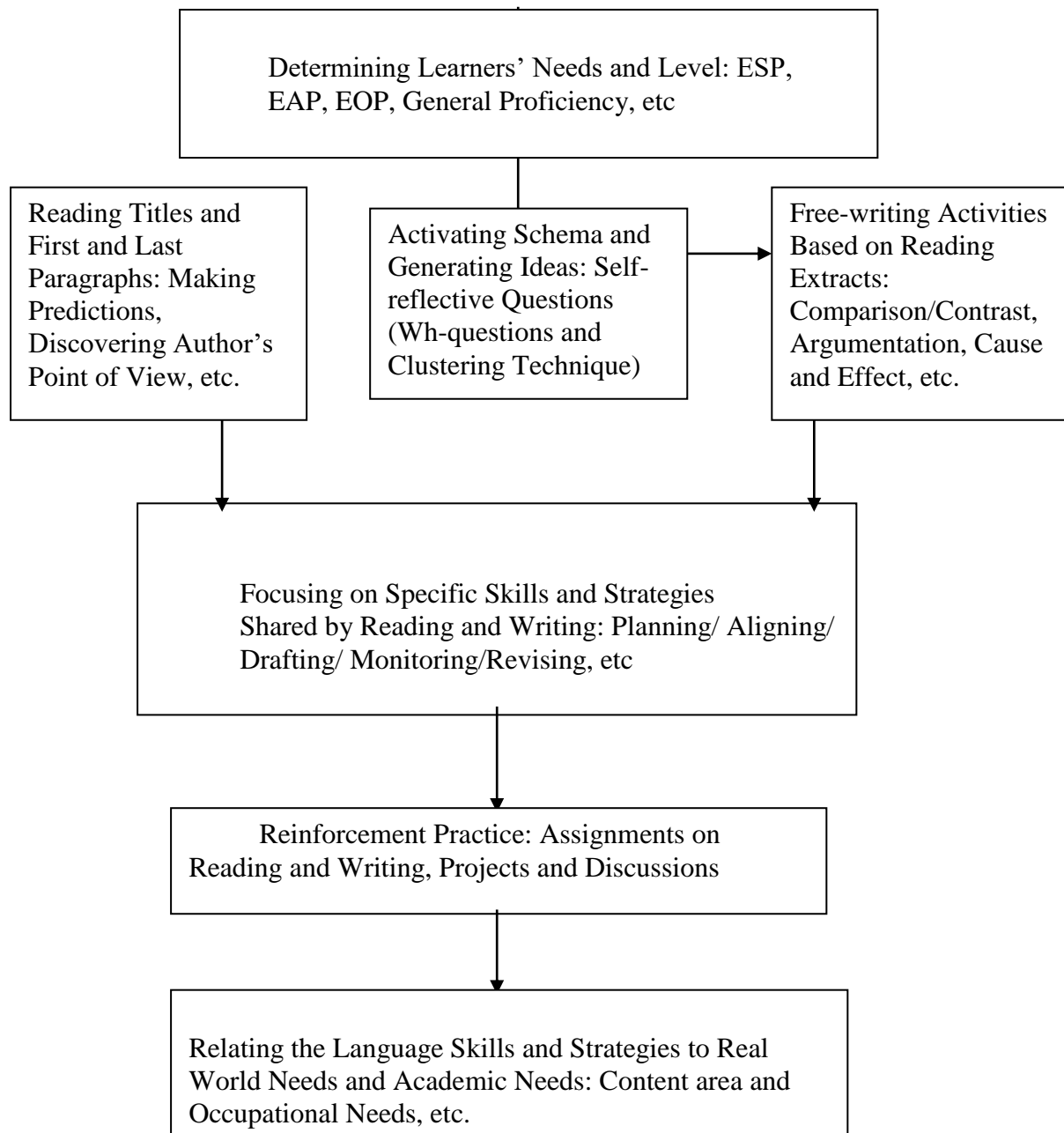


Figure: A Framework for Developing Integrated Reading and Writing Materials (Jordan, 1997)

In order to design and teach effective courses, we need to investigate the uses to which the language will be put. It is the language learners who are generally more aware of what they

want to use English for. Hence, it is the responsibility of those involved in planning or teaching courses for given groups of learners to find accurately what language learners' needs are.

Determining the learners' needs or needs analysis should be the starting point for devising syllabuses, courses, materials and the kind of teaching and learning that takes place. In broad terms needs analysis can be described as "the process of determining the needs for which a learner or group of learners requires a language and arranging the needs according to priorities...[it] makes use of both subjective and objective information" (Jordan, 1997: 20).

There are basically two informal ways of gathering the necessary information about the learner: by a questionnaire to be completed by the learner or teacher, or by means of a structured interview. The starting point is to pose some fundamental questions, which can help us to see the appropriate type of analysis and data needed. The process also leads to determining the learner's level. English language courses are generally designed to teaching language skills (General Proficiency), English for Specific Purposes, English for Academic Purposes and English for Professional Purposes (Jordan, 1997).

As far as the above-proposed framework is concerned, reading and writing activities represent the course nucleus. Pre-reading/writing tasks are the starting point for these activities. Pre-reading and writing activities help learners discover how much they know about a topic before they decide to read it or write about it. Students sometimes worry that they know nothing about their topic, however, students know far more than they give themselves credit for (Troyka, 1999). Thus, adopting various techniques for eliciting or generating ideas and information about their topics is essential.

The stage of pre-reading/writing activities involves activating the learner's schema to generate ideas. Activating the learner's schema can be carried out by posing questions (self-reflecting questions) such as "wh-questions and clustering technique". In reading, students can start activating their schemata by first discussing what they already know about the topic. Creating an ongoing visual representation like a map or other organizational chart while reading may help readers remember their old ideas about the topic. Students can also look at the title, read the first and last paragraphs for topic sentences and make predictions of what the full text will reveal. When writing, students can first generate ideas about their topic by getting involved in free-writing activities. Free-writing, according to Troyka (1999), is writing nonstop. In free-writing, students write down whatever comes to their minds without stopping to worry about whether the ideas are good or the spelling, grammar or punctuation is correct. Free-writing helps students get used to the "feel" of the pen moving across paper or fingers in constant motion at a computer. Another way of generating ideas and information is brainstorming which means listing all the ideas that come to the mind associated with the topic. Brainstorming involves making a list, finding patterns in the list and ways to group the ideas into categories and asking questions to stimulate thinking (Troyka, 1999).

To make the connection between reading and writing activities, students can base their writing on their reading extracts. For example, student writers can use the ideas they learn in their reading when composing. Moreover, it is important to focus the reading and writing activities on specific skills and strategies shared by reading and writing (see page 3-4 of this article). When the connection is established, language teachers or instructors can reinforce these practices by asking their students to write essays or carry out projects based on the reading they have experienced in their classrooms. However, relating reading and writing

activities to the students' learning needs and content area is a key factor in improving and maintaining the learner's motivation and in the success of the course.

CONCLUSION

It is postulated that it is likely to reach a level of good reading ability much faster than a good level of writing ability. Once a good level of writing ability is achieved, it is well correlated with the ESL learner's reading ability. The analysis of the selected textbooks confirms this close between the two skills and reinforces their integration. The strategies and techniques maintained throughout these books were skillfully designed to teach reading and writing integratively and provide learners with skills necessary to become better readers and writers at the same time. In addition, these books covered other language aspects such as grammar and speaking. To develop the students' speaking skills and generate ideas for writing, small group discussions, role-play and dialogue were common features throughout these books.

Therefore, language material developers as well teachers/instructors are advised to use the outcomes of this investigation as a guide to plan and prepare connected reading and writing activities for their language classrooms. The best situation for any language context is either using these strategies and approaches to produce their own materials, adopting or adapting these published materials to suit their students' needs, taking into account the cultural and linguistic differences between their students and learners for whom these textbooks were written.

REFERENCES

- Bazerman, C. (1980). A relationship between Reading & Writing: The Conversational Model. *College English* 41: 656-661. : <http://www.jstor.org/stable/375913>.
- Gregg, J. (1993). *Communication and Culture: A Reading-Writing Text*. Boston, Massachusetts: Heinle and Heinle Publishers.
- Jordan, R. (1997). *English for Specific Purposes: A guide and Resource Book for*
- Kanar, C. (1998). *Reading and Writing with Confidence*. Boston, New York: Houghton Mifflin Company.
- Noyce, R. and Christie, J. (1989). *Integrating Reading and Writing Instruction in Grades K-8*. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.
- O'Keefe, J. (2000). *Invitations to Reading and writing*. New Jersey: Prentice Hall.
- Reid, J. (1993). Historical Perspectives on Writing and Reading in the ESL Classroom. In Carso, J. and Leki, I. (Eds.), *Reading in Composition Classroom: Second Language Perspectives*. (pp. 33 - 60). Boston: Heinle and Heinle Publishers.
- Sotiriou, P. (1994). *Composing Through Reading: An Integrated Approach to Writing* (2nd ed.). Belmont, California: Wadsworth Publishing Company.
- Teachers*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Tierney, R. and LaZansky, J. (1980). The Rights and Responsibilities of Readers and Writers: a Contractual Agreement. *Language Arts*, 57: 606-613-
<https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ233977>.
- Troyka, L. (1999). *Handbook for Writers*. New Jersey: Prentice Hall.