



Between Reading and Writing

Chapter 3



What do we know about reading & writing?

1. There are correlations between reading achievement and writing ability. Better writers tend to be better readers.
2. There are correlations between writing quality and reading experience as reported through questionnaires. Better writers read more than poorer writers.
3. There seem to be correlations between reading ability and measures of syntactic complexity in writing. Better readers tend to produce more syntactically mature writing than poorer readers.



The directional hypothesis

...“directional” refers to “reading and writing share structural components such that the structure of whatever is acquired in one modality can then be applied in the other” (Eisterhold, 1990, p. 89). (Reading affects writing.)

Smith (1983) claims that a person can become a good writer only if he reads like a writer. He argues 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” (p. 558).



More

What is more important to the beginner writer is to learn the knowledge of writing by reading, as a potential writer, through the existing texts of interest. By doing this, a writer can acquire (1) a vast number of conventions of writing used in a specific field, including spellings, punctuation, and other “rules” of grammar. (2) The sense of “cohesion” which links sentences to each other and to the non-language context (Halliday and Hasan, 1976).



Writing affects reading

I assume that the results of this study probably only prove one thing: a person who spends more time on the texts, the better he may perform in the achievement tests. (p. 43)



Non-directional

Shanahan (1984) suggested, “if reading and writing involve analogous cognitive structures and processes, it is possible that instruction in one would lead to increased ability in the other” (p. 467).



Both have similar prior knowledge

Squire (1983) pointed out three aspects of prior knowledge:

- a) Knowledge about rhetorical structures--the story gram-mars or patterns of expository prose discussed earlier in this paper.
- b) The accumulation of knowledge and experience prerequisite to understanding or writing about an important concept or idea.
- c) The strategies children must acquire to unlock the world knowledge that they have accumulated--to learn how to ask themselves those questions before writing or before reading that seem most likely to enhance composing and comprehending.



Reading & writing processes

Before Writing: **Securing ideas**
 Organizing ideas
 Determining point of view
 Considering audience

Before reading: **Preparing to comprehend**
 Relating to prior experience
 Establishing purpose
 Looking for the author's stance

During reading or Writing: **Composing or comprehending**
 Actively engaged emotionally and
 intellectually

After Writing: **Evaluating**
 Editing and revising
 Applying outside standards of
 correction

After Reading: **Evaluating**
 Studying parts in relation to
 whole
 Analyzing how effects are
 achieved
 Applying independent judgments
 (Preferences, ethics, aesthetics)



Bidirectional

Eisterhold (1990) viewed this bidirectional hypothesis as the most complex model, “which includes the claim that reading and writing are interactive, [and the] claim that they are interdependent as well” (p. 92). Shanahan (1984) saw the reading-writing relationship as developmental and suggested that “what is learned at one stage of development can be qualitatively different from what is learned at another stage of development” (p. 467).



Shifting impacts

Shanahan and Lomax (1986) found that in their data, the second graders showed more of the interactive relationship between reading and writing than the fifth graders. They believed that subjects generally received more reading than writing instruction in school, and the influence of writing on reading begins to wane in upper grades, so that, as children grow in literacy, the reading-to-writing influential direction becomes superior to the writing-to-reading influential direction.



To acquire writing?

Read (1981), “They are far less interested in the product than we are, and more involved in the process of writing something down. A child will show it to you. Then, however, his interest in it is ended; it is rare that he will make any effort to keep it and even rarer that he will read it” (p. 108).

Smith (1983) claims that children should learn writing as they acquire speech. Children in natural environments do not seem to have enough chance to acquire writing as they acquire speech. ...Smith (1983), noticing that children in general acquire speech without much effort, assumes that learning writing should also take the route of speech acquisition.



To acquire writing?

As children grow older (in elementary school) and become more aware of the communicative function of written language, “their writing ‘play’ becomes more focused and more purposeful” (Nessel, Jones, and Dixon, 1989).



To acquire writing?

Private writing may be the best way to build up beginner writers' confidence because the intuitive products will not be evaluated by any-one in anyway if the writer does not want to. But as life goes on, children cannot always write private writing. The time when they need to produce public writing will eventually come. At this moment, the best motivation that drives children to learn public writing, such as essays, stories, letters, scripts, poems, and instructions, may be the understanding the purposes and functions of these forms of writing. Since public writing has intended readers, the writing processes should always include the sense of acceptable writing conventions, readers' expectations, and the completeness of communicative purpose. Smith (1983) again points out that all these complexities of writing can not be learned from writing instruction. Children or adults can learn these only by "reading as a writer."



To acquire writing?

With respect to instruction, Smith (1983) suggests teachers doing two things: (a) Teachers must show the advantages of reading like a writer. And (b) teachers must ensure that children have access to reading materials that are relevant to the kinds of writer they are interested in....

In recent literature, the feedback is given in two types: (a) correcting or modifying children's writing and (b) providing alternatives or interactions during children's writing.



To acquire writing?

With respect to instruction, Smith (1983) suggests teachers doing two things: (a) Teachers must show the advantages of reading like a writer. And (b) teachers must ensure that children have access to reading materials that are relevant to the kinds of writer they are interested in....

In recent literature, the feedback is given in two types: (a) correcting or modifying children's writing and (b) providing alternatives or interactions during children's writing.

Goodman and Goodman (1983) found one second grader wrote the following statement:

I won't write no mor til yuo write me back (p.596)



What about EFL writers?

Discuss with your partner and see what kind of relationship you can find between reading and writing.