

## **Integrating Reading into Writing Instruction in the EFL Programs at Saudi Universities.**

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### **Abstract**

Several studies have shown that integrating reading into writing instruction improves writing skills (e.g., Alqadi & Alqadi, 2013; Almansour & Alshorman, 2014; Elley & Mangubhai 1983; Hafiz & Tudor, 1989; Iwahori, 2008; Janopoulos, 1986, 2009; Saleem, 2010; Tsang, 1996). Some researchers suggested that reading is the basis for writing (Carson & Leki, 1993) and consider it as an important resource for writing instruction (Hirvela, 2004; Watson, 1982). Theoretically, the reading-writing connection can be viewed throughout three hypotheses, or models: (1) directional hypothesis, (2) non-directional hypothesis, and (3) bidirectional hypothesis. Since reading-writing relationship is mostly discussed in terms of the impact of reading on writing (directional model), this paper attempts to discuss the relationship from 'reading-to- write' perspective and addresses the issue of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) reading-writing connection at the college level in Saudi Arabia. It argues that reading and writing must be taught together and calls for integrating reading into writing instruction as a solution for the problem of the lack of emphasis on reading-writing connection. It also suggests that extensive reading and using models in a second language (L2) enhances L2 writing. Lastly, the paper discusses some pedagogical concerns associated with reading-writing connection and provides some recommendations for successful reading-writing instruction. (Note: in this paper, when I refer to EFL programs at the Saudi universities I mean the EFL programs that are designed for the EFL Saudi college students majoring in English).

**Keywords:** EFL, English Saudi Arabia, extensive reading, L2 writing, reading-writing connection.

## Introduction

One of the reasons for the weakness of writing in English among Saudi EFL learners at college level is the lack of emphasis on reading-writing connection in the language classroom (Fageeh, 2003). The division between teaching reading and writing in the EFL classroom, which entails a considerable lack of emphasis on the reading-writing connection, is a major cause of the weakness in the students' writing ability. Hao & Sivell (2002) argued that teaching writing in isolation of reading probably hinders the development of writing skills. They added that when reading is not integrated into writing instruction, "the knowledge and skills students have acquired in reading cannot be transferred to writing" (p. 1). Therefore, the division could lead the EFL students to experience much difficulty in both language and rhetoric when they start a writing assignment.

From a personal experience as a learner of English, integrating reading into writing instruction had a positive effects on my writing performance. I took an advanced reading/writing course in a mid-west American university. It was the first time to take an EFL course in this name. At the beginning, I was confused how such two skills were taught together. As time went by, I started realizing that teaching the two skills in a connected way had a beneficial influence on my writing skills. The extensive reading assignments improved my grammar accuracy, vocabulary use, ideas development and the ideal use of rhetorical patterns and complex structures. Moreover, using models as resources for writing helped me gain more knowledge on text structure, punctuation, transition words and phrases, cohesion and coherence.

From a teaching experience, reading-writing integration can be maintained in certain ways. For example, the two skills can be collectively taught, i.e. in an integrated lesson way, by one teacher in one class. However, there are alternative ways in which reading-writing integration can be further maintained. For example, the same teacher can teach the two skills separately, i.e. in two separate class sessions, but keeps in mind the reading-writing connection. That is, the reading materials used in the reading class should be related to writing tasks involved in the writing class sessions. In another example, where the two skills are taught by two teachers, the reading-writing integration can still be maintained if the two teachers coordinate their efforts. These two examples show that the integration between reading and writing takes place sometimes without combining the two skills in one class. Thus, the division between teaching reading and writing does not only happen when these two skills are taught separately by one teacher who does not maintain the reading-writing connection or by two teachers who do not coordinate their efforts. The division could also happen when the two skills are taught in the absence of the concept that 'integrating reading into writing instruction is important for achieving writing tasks'.

Although the reading-writing relationship includes the possibility that students write in order to read, this relationship is an area that has more typically focused on the writing side of the relationship (Grabe, 2003). That is, it is mostly discussed in terms of the impact of reading on writing. Additionally, Carson & Leki (1993) asserted that "reading can be the basis for writing" (p. 1). Thus, this paper attempts to discuss the relationship from 'reading-to- write' perspective.

Several studies have shown that extensive reading in L2 leads learners to improve their L2 writing (e.g., Alqadi & Alqadi, 2013; Almansour & Alshorman, 2014; Chuenchaichon, 2011; Elley & Mangubhai 1983; Hafiz & Tudor, 1989; Iwahori, 2008; Janopoulos, 1986, 2009; Saleem, 2010; Tsang, 1996). (some of these studies will be explained in details later on in the section: *The Impact of L2 Extensive Reading on L2 Writing*). Thus, when I refer to reading in the phrase 'reading-writing connection', I do not merely mean *reading* but also *extensive reading*

because the studies mentioned above have indicated that "extensive reading", not just "reading", has positive influence on L2 writing. Extensive reading refers to reading large amounts with the goal of "getting an overall understanding of the material" (Day & Bamford (1998) as cited by Al-Rajhi (2004) p. 4). Additionally, Alshamrani (2003) defines extensive reading as follows:

Extensive reading is individual and silent independent reading of self-selected materials according to both the interest and level of a language learner, in an environment which is neither threatening nor evaluative, where the focus is on obtaining pleasure and information and achieving a general understanding of content rather than concentrating on surface details, such as grammatical or lexical points, or specific facts. (p. 22-23)

Regarding using models in the language classroom, Watson (1982) stated that models are "indispensable resource" in ESL and EFL writing instruction. Chen (2002) believed that EFL writing teachers can use models that contain various rhetorical patterns in their EFL writing classes to cope with their learners' writing problems because they provide various types of input to the EFL writers. These types of input range from lexical, syntactic, rhetorical, to cultural ones. Moreover, Macbeth (2010) found that using models eases some of the apprehension associated with writing a new genre.

The distinction between extensive reading and reading models can be made as follows: extensive reading can be described as pleasant reading where the reader's goals might not be necessarily associated with writing improvement; for example, reading for fun or gathering information. In contrast, reading models are used, in most cases, as a source for improving writing abilities such as the reading models that help readers know how rhetorical patterns are used. Therefore, one case that reading models can fit extensive reading is when the reader reads a lot of models.

In what follows, the concept 'reading-writing connection' is discussed. Then, there will be a review of some studies which have shown that extensive reading enhances writing. This will be followed by a discussion about the advantages of using models, defined in this paper as the writing pieces of those who write well or those who are regarded as successful writers (Watson, 1982) in L2 writing. Finally, some pedagogical concerns and instructional recommendations for making the EFL reading-writing connection in Saudi universities are provided.

### **The Reading/Writing Connection: What Does It Mean?**

According to Grabe (2001), "reading-to-write" is a notion which implies that writers go back to resources and read them in different ways as they search for specific information and apply reading strategies "to match task expectations for the writing" (p. 22). Additionally, Carson (1993) defined the reading-to-write notion as follows:

The phrase *reading for writing* can be understood as referring most specifically to the literacy event in which readers/writers use text(s) that they read, or have read, as a basis for text(s) that they write. .... Reading for writing can also be understood as acknowledging that writing is often the resultant physical artifact of reading/writing encounters. (p. 85)

Theoretically, the reading-writing connection can be viewed throughout three hypotheses, or models: (1) directional hypothesis, (2) nondirectional hypothesis, and (3) bidirectional hypothesis (Eisterhold, 1990). The directional hypothesis supports a reading-to-write model, that is, reading enhances writing. Within this model, reading and writing share 'structural components'. This reading-to-write model assumes that the transfer of information proceeds in

one direction only. For example, readers, after getting to know patterns such as comparison in their reading, would be able to reproduce these patterns. According to Eisterhold (1990), the directional model is the most salient model from a teaching perspective.

The non-directional hypothesis assumes that reading and writing derive from a 'single underlying proficiency' (Eisterhold, 1990). Within this model, the transfer of information can occur in either direction: from reading to writing or from writing to reading. Based on this model, Eisterhold (1990) believed that "the cognitive process of constructing meaning" (p. 90) is what links reading to writing. According to him, explicit instruction is indispensable in order for the non-directional model to occur.

The third hypothesis, bidirectional, posits that reading and writing are both interactive and interdependent. Eisterhold (1990) stated that within this model, which is the most complex and comprehensive model, there are multiple processes and relations between reading and writing that might change as learners' language ability develops. Therefore, any change in reading would result in change in writing and vice versa.

The reading-writing connection concept, in this paper, will be viewed from the reading-to-writing directional model point of view since this model suggests the important role that reading must play as information source in the writing class and, moreover, is the model typical of many instructional programs (Eisterhold, 1990). Furthermore, research has shown that instruction in reading can be effective in improving writing (Eckhoff, 1983; Taylor and Beach, 1984). Having this model in mind, I support the notion that adopting extensive reading and using models in teaching EFL writing can help Saudi EFL college students to overcome many of the problems they face in writing and result in improved writing skills.

### **The Impact of L2 Extensive Reading on L2 Writing**

According to Krashen (1993), learners do not learn to write by writing; instead they develop writing style through reading. Krashen (1984) theorized that a person's "writing competence comes only from large amounts of self-motivated reading for interest and/or pleasure" and added that "it is reading that gives the writer the 'feel' for the look and texture of reader-based prose" (p. 20). Non-proficient readers, who are exposed to limited opportunities to read extensively in English, are unlikely to be proficient writers (Kroll, 2001).

Various studies have shown that extensive reading in L2 yields positive effects on L2 writing. Janopoulos' (1986) study demonstrated that graduate students in a US university who maintained more pleasure reading tended to be proficient writers. In another study, Hafiz and Todur (1989) studied the effects of extensive reading on the writing of 16 Pakistani-born ESL students aged 10-11. They found that the students who participated in a daily reading program held after school for one hour, five days a week, for twelve weeks showed quantitative syntactic and semantic improvement in their writing. The study indicated that reading the books offered in the program extensively and using them as models affected the students' writing positively.

Additionally, Carson, Carrell, Silberstein, Kroll & Kuhn (1990) investigated the L2 reading-writing relationship for Chinese ESL students in academic settings in the United States. In this study, the subjects were asked to write essays and then complete a cloze passage (reading task). An evaluation by native speakers of English for both L2 essays and cloze passage indicated that the advanced Chinese students wrote very good L2 essays and got high scores in the L2 reading task. These findings indicated that the advanced Chinese students in this study are better writers because they are better readers. Based on this finding, the researchers suggest that extensive reading in L2 is a significant source for developing L2 writing skills. Although this

quantitative study does not investigate the role of integrating reading into writing instruction, it suggests a pedagogical implication that calls for considering extensive reading as an effective factor for L2 writing development.

Within the EFL context, A few studies demonstrated that extensive reading in L2 had positive effects on L2 writing. Elley and Mangubhai's (1983) longitudinal study, though dated, provided provides a limited amount of evidence that L2 extensive reading promotes L2 writing development. The study showed that 380 Fijian children, aged 9-11, who participated in a 20-month EFL extensive reading program where they were assigned to read 250 high-interest story books, were reported to have developed much more language proficiency in different areas including writing. Tsang's (1996) study supported the claim that extensive reading contributes to better writing abilities. This EFL-context study showed that Hong Kong secondary school students who received regular instruction plus extensive reading wrote significantly better essays than their counterparts who received instruction without extensive reading. Additionally, Alqadi and Alqadi's (2013) study examined the development of paragraph-writing grammatical accuracy in 30 EFL university learners in Jordan through using a reading-into-writing method via exposure to extracurricular extensive reading. The learners were exposed to extensive reading in which assignments were read and then summarized. The results of this study showed that exposure to extensive reading had a positive effect on learners' paragraph-level writing development and grammar accuracy. According to the researchers, the positive effect was attributed to the chance the learners had to read and work with texts of various structures, word forms, and referential words.

Within the Saudi context, a recent study indicated that an extensive reading program had a beneficial influence on students' writing performance. Almansour and Alshorman (2014) conducted a study to investigate the effect of a two-month extensive reading program on the writing performance of 48 Saudi EFL college students. The students were divided into two groups: experimental and controlled. The researchers found that the program had a significant positive effect on writing performance of the students in the experimental group. In details, the researchers found that reading many different texts and doing many reading and writing activities helped the students in the experimental group develop healthy reading and writing habits. Also, they found that the program encouraged that students to use the skills they learned when writing essays. Moreover, the researchers noticed that the program motivated students to read a wide variety of texts, on different genres, and to write a great number of essays in different topics.

### ***Limits of Extensive Reading***

Although L2 research in extensive reading has shown that this type of reading affects writing positively, extensive reading may not enhance L2 writing development. That is, heavy L2 readers sometimes have modest L2 writing abilities. In academic settings, this might take place when reading/writing classes do not include instruction based on form and content analysis of reading materials. In this regard, Hao & Sivell (2002) commented that "some students, even with lots of reading experience, continue to have difficulty in writing; they need instruction based on form and content analysis of the reading passages, so as to approach writing more effectively" (p. 2).

Two studies conducted by Flahive and Bailey (1993) and Hedgcock and Atkinson (1993) demonstrated that pleasure reading, which was regarded as a type of extensive reading, also has no significant impact on writing. This might imply that connecting reading and writing in L2

writing instruction is necessary. Thus, when I say that L2 extensive reading is not enough for improving L2 writing abilities, I do not deny Krashen's (1984) hypothesis which stated that the only source of "writing competence" is the large quantities of pleasure and interest reading, yet I emphasize the role of integrating reading into writing instruction. In this regard, Smagorinsky (1992) suggested that reliance on reading models without instructing the linguistic and rhetorical patterns is insufficient to improve writing. Moreover, Morrow (1997) added that "the act of reading itself will not improve [the] student's writing abilities unless the connections between reading and writing are made explicit" (p. 455).

According to the previous studies that show the positive impact of reading on L2 writing development, and away from the limits of extensive reading, I believe that extensive reading, regardless of its limits, is an indispensable resource for L2 students to become better writers. By reviewing these studies, I would like to draw the EFL writing teachers' attention to the role played by extensive reading in improving L2 students' writing. However, EFL teachers and researchers should be aware that differences in contexts and L2 students' characteristics may yield different results (Grabe, 2001).

### **The Use of Models in EFL Writing**

I have shown earlier in this paper that using models can promote the writing proficiency of the Saudi EFL college students. Although Hirvela (2004) claimed that there is no definitive research that supports the belief that reading improves students' writing by exposure to target language writing, he assumed that L2 students can learn about writing through reading, and that reading empowers L2 students with knowledge of writing. Moreover, Hirvela claimed that the use of models plants in L2 students "a sense of the value of connecting reading and writing" (p. 128). In fact, models can facilitate L2 writing (Macbeth, 2010; Tardy, 2009). Hirvela (2004) explained that "models expose language learners to target language conventions and practices that they otherwise might have a difficult time understanding" (p. 128).

There are two major significant advantages of models for L2 students: (1) they provide L2 students with the information they need, and (2) they provide L2 students with effective written samples of proficient writers so that they can look at these samples and identify the good ways of writing. In this regard, Watson (1982) and Eschholz (1980) stated that one good way to learn how to write well is to follow the writing pieces of those who write well or those who are regarded successful writers. Smagorinsky (1992) added that using models in writing instruction show students how good writers organize, develop, and express their ideas. Moreover, models can help the EFL writing teachers to show their students how the good writers develop a sense of audience. This could be a great advantage of using models in teaching writing to Saudi EFL students since most of them fail to consider the audience in their writing.

In addition, using reading in writing instruction provides three stylistic choices (Kroll, 2001). Models can provide the L2 students' with knowledge about cohesion and coherence, methods of development, and grammatical features. Also, models can show L2 students how the vocabulary, sentence structure, rhetorical modes such as comparison, and discourse units such as essay introduction and conclusion are used (Cambell, 1998).

Although using models in L2 writing instruction has been found to be useful, some researchers, Watson (1982) & Hirvela (2004), expressed their worries that the use of models promotes the product-oriented approach to teaching writing rather than the process-oriented approach. According to Watson (1982), the product-oriented approach in teaching L2 writing can be avoided if the model is used as a resource and not as an ideal. Also, in order to avoid the

product-oriented approach, EFL writing teachers are encouraged to use multiple and various models. In this case, models can fit extensive reading as I mentioned earlier.

### **Pedagogical Concerns**

Researchers (e.g., De Morgado 2009, Fenton-Smith, 2008; Grabe, 2001; Green, 2005; Hirvela, 2004; Phillips 2005) claimed that connecting reading and writing in second language writing instruction enhances not only the writing abilities but also L2 learning generally. In this section of the paper, I discuss the influence of integrating reading into writing instruction on reading development, critical literacy, and process-oriented approach to writing.

#### ***Reading Development***

Connecting reading and writing in second language instruction does not only improve L2 writing but also develops the L2 reading skills especially in the academic settings. Grabe (2001) commented that "writing about what is to be read or has been read is also a very good way to develop advanced academic reading abilities" (p. 19). For example, L2 students can improve their reading skills when they summarize an article, for instance, to support their ideas in the writing assignments. That is, when the L2 students are required to write about what they read, they develop their reading abilities.

Therefore, EFL teachers' focus in writing instruction should also be on enhancing reading skills. Kroll (1993) warned that "teaching writing without teaching reading is not teaching writing at all" (p. 75). Hirvela (2001) argued that students who have writing problems may experience reading problems. He added that difficulties in reading sources impact on writing about them. Grabe (2003) claimed that teaching reading strategies and preparing students to become good readers are essential procedures toward making L2 students better writers. Hirvela (2004) added that in order for L2 students to benefit from the readings, they should be taught how to read first. For example, the skill of synthesizing information is a reading skill that should be enhanced in order to help L2 students write better writing samples. However, when reading is integrated in writing instruction, L2 writing teachers should be aware not to concentrate too much on developing reading skills and leave the writing skills unemphasized (Morrow, 1997). They should also concentrate on teaching how the vocabulary, structures, and rhetorical patterns are used. Therefore, EFL writing teachers are encouraged to increase their students' awareness of the importance of reading for accomplishing writing tasks. They also should teach their students that better writing is preceded by good deal of reading and that reading is the basis for writing. More importantly, they should realize that one of the best ways to improve writing is to improve reading, and vice versa. Additionally, they should concentrate on developing the students' reading skills and critical literacy by, for example, adopting the reader-response approach (discussed later).

Hirvela (2004) claimed that ESL/EFL writing teachers need to understand their students as readers in order to make the reading-writing connection works better. Their understanding of their students as readers involves identifying "their notions of reading (especially 'good reading'), how they were taught to read their native language and/or the L2 their approaches to reading, their problems and fears as readers, and so forth" (Hirvela, 2004, p. 44). Therefore, Hirvela argued that adopting the *Reader-Response Approach*, which focuses on readers and how they read texts, as basis for teaching writing classes can help us to understand "why [our students] read and write as they do" (p. 55).

### ***Critical Literacy Development***

Critical literacy, which refers to the ability to understand "the connections between social conditions and the reading and writing practices" (Richards & Schmidt, 2002, p. 134), can be developed when integrating reading into writing tasks (Carson, 1993), EFL writing teachers are encouraged to promote it in the writing instruction. It has been argued that without promoting critical literacy in writing instruction, L2 students will not benefit from the models, but rather they will replicate them (Carson, 1993). Adopting the reader-response approach, which can lead the students to treat reading as an active skill rather than a passive skill, in the reading/writing classes also develop "critical literacy" because it focuses on the reader more than the text or the author. Therefore, adopting such an approach can help the EFL students to generate their ideas, analyze them, and then consider these ideas when they write. Moreover, familiarizing the EFL students with the approach would lead them to avoid copying and plagiarism.

### ***Process-oriented Approach to Writing***

Integrating reading into writing instruction can enhance process-oriented approach to writing (Hao & Sivell, 2002). This teaching approach, which considers editing as a final stage in text creation, rather than an initial one as in a product-oriented approach, focuses on a process where a writer constructs meaning. The writer within the process-oriented approach goes through a series of steps or stages: prewriting, planning and drafting, rewriting and revising, feedback, incubation, and revision, editing and polishing, publishing (Ferris & Hedgcock, 2005). By adopting the process-oriented approach in the L2 writing instruction, I believe that integrating reading into writing is necessary especially in the stage of planning and drafting where writers are supplied with "content- and theme-based input in the way of readings, discussions, and so forth ..." (Ferris & Hedgcock, 2005, p. 94) to develop their ideas and plans. Moreover, applying this approach in a class where reading is integrated into writing helps EFL writing teachers to look deeply at the students' problems of writing.

### **EFL Reading and Writing Classes in the Saudi Universities**

Since it was mentioned earlier that the absence of reading-writing connection is one reason for the weakness of writing in English among Saudi EFL college students, it can be inferred that reading is currently not well-integrated into writing instruction in the EFL programs at Saudi universities. Two Saudi researchers (Almansour & Alshorman, 2014) have noticed that most Saudi English-major students are not aware of the role that reading plays in developing writing skills.

In Saudi universities, English-major students study language skills in the first two years of the English BA program. However, according to the plans of study of the English departments in Saudi universities, the four language skills are taught separately. In an analysis of the English department's plans of study at King Saud University, King Khalid University, and Imam University, one cannot find a course entitled 'reading/writing'. Unexpectedly, the focus on research or academic writing is minimal although the students in the BA English program in the last two terms of the program are required to write academic papers. This minimal focus on research and academic writing in the EFL writing classes might further indicate that reading-writing connection, or integrating reading into writing instruction, is not addressed. Therefore, I believe that the reading-writing integration in the EFL programs at the Saudi universities is an important issue that needs to be dealt with since such integration can enhance writing development.

### **Recommendations for Successful Reading/Writing Instruction**

In this section of the paper, I would like to provide recommendations that might be effective for improving writing development. Firstly, EFL writing teachers should consider the proficiency levels of their students when choosing reading materials. For example, beginning students should not be given advanced reading passages which contain complicated rhetorical patterns and language structures. In this regard, we can refer to the input hypothesis proposed by Krashen (1982) which stated that students understand language that is slightly beyond their current level of language proficiency.

Secondly, in relation to using models in L2 reading/writing classes, according to Hirvela (2004), reading a text rhetorically promotes the integration of reading and writing. He suggested "the Modeling Approach" – an approach to using reading for learning about writing - as a direct model of reading for writing. Regarding the texts that are used as models, Watson (1982) warned that authentic texts should be avoided because they are difficult to serve as intake. Although this view is against the view held today, that authentic texts are to be used in teaching languages, I believe that exposing EFL students to texts that are developed especially to serve as models in L2 writing instruction can help the EFL writing teachers who cannot find appropriate models.

Thirdly, one of the pedagogical implications that can integrate reading, writing, and technology is to use the internet in reading/writing classes. EFL students can be asked to surf the internet and read online texts to use them as resources for their writing assignments. Al-Rajhi (2004) found that a group of Saudi EFL learners developed their writing styles through extensive internet reading. Specifically, he noticed that extensive internet reading helped the learners to add more details and description to support their views while writing. From the teacher's side, EFL writing teachers should help their students in selecting on-line texts that are linguistically and rhetorically appropriate.

Fourthly, since EFL college students in the English departments of Saudi universities are required to write academic-oriented papers for academic courses during the last two semester of the bachelor's program, it is important to integrate reading into writing instruction in the first two years of the program where the focus is on the language development. Campbell (1998) asserted that integrating reading into writing instruction improves academic writing. Hirvela (2001) suggested that using various resources in the reading/writing courses is one effective pedagogical implication that promotes the reading-writing integration in academic writing instruction. He explained that "the best way to incorporate reading into EAP [English for Academic Purposes] writing courses is by using various kinds of texts as source texts that students can respond to in a variety of writing formats" (p. 346). Regarding this point, since most of the BA students work as EFL teachers when they graduate, I would recommend that EFL advanced writing teachers in Saudi Arabian English departments connect their EFL methodology courses to the EFL advanced writing courses by asking the students to write academic papers based on their readings in the EFL methodology courses.

Fifthly, regarding the textbooks that should be used in EFL reading/writing classes, I think that EFL writing teachers should adopt EFL textbooks that are designed to integrate reading and writing. For example, EFL textbooks that provide step-by-step instruction for EFL learners with reading portions that illustrate specific rhetorical structures are highly recommended. In contrast, EFL writing teachers should avoid using traditional EFL textbooks that treat reading and writing as separate skills.

Sixthly, it is very important that EFL writing teachers take into consideration that reading-writing connection does not lead the EFL learners to plagiarism. The over-emphasis on reading-writing connection may very well lead weak EFL learners to complete their writing tasks by copying some portions of the reading materials they read into their writing. Therefore, L2 writing teachers should know what their students read when reading is integrated into writing instruction. In this case, the students will be enforced to avoid plagiarism.

Seventhly, among the pedagogical implications that addressed the issue of integrating reading into writing instruction is one discussed by Hirvela (2004): the direct and indirect models of reading for writing. These implications can be adopted to solve the problem of the lack of emphasis on reading-writing connection in the EFL programs at Saudi universities. In chapter four of his text "Connecting Reading and Writing in Second Language Writing Instruction", Hirvela discussed two questions: "what kind of input should teachers provide students, and in what form should that input appear and be treated?" (p. 113). To answer these two questions, Hirvela proposed two models of reading for writing: the direct model of reading for writing and the indirect model of reading for writing. In terms of the direct model, he proposed two ways; *mining*, where learners use reading to gain knowledge about writing, and *writerly reading*, where learners act as writerly readers who are "constantly making predictions about what comes next in a text" (p. 118). Hirvela believed that integrating reading into writing instruction strengthens the direct model. Regarding the indirect model, Hirvela also proposed two ways; *extensive reading*, where learners ideally read large quantities of books on a variety of topics and of different genres, and *free/voluntary reading*, where learners choose their own reading materials according to their own interests.

Finally, when L2 students read before they write, their anxiety levels may decrease. In this case, and according to Krashen's affective filter hypothesis (1982), the "affective filter" is low which enhances the learning process. In this regard, Alqadi and Alqadi (2013) state that "exposing EFL learners to a quantity of reading texts of different structures may contribute in reducing the anxiety of confronting the task of writing, which is considered as the most difficult experience in producing L2" (p. 110).

## Conclusion

According to Grabe (2001; 2003), there is a need for further research in L2 reading-writing connection. The studies conducted in this specific area are limited and few researchers have conducted studies in the EFL context. In the Saudi context, Almansour and Alshorman's (2014) study (mentioned earlier) is the only study conducted to address reading/writing connection at college-EFL context in Saudi Arabia. Accordingly, it is recommended that researchers conduct more research on the effects of integrating reading into EFL college writing instruction for Saudi EFL university students.

Pedagogically speaking, EFL writing teachers in the EFL programs at Saudi universities should be aware that reading and writing should be taught together. In this regard, Grabe (2001) explained that "one of the most consistent implications of two decades of research on reading and writing relations is that they should be taught together and the combination of both literacy skills enhances learning in all areas" (p. 25). Therefore, EFL teachers should direct their students' attention to the importance of reading for accomplishing writing tasks. More broadly, the educational authorities in Saudi Arabia are extremely urged to instill the importance of reading for developing writing skills into Saudi students of all educational stages.

By considering what Fageeh (2003) mentioned that the lack of emphasis on reading-writing connection in the language classroom in EFL college writing classes in the Saudi universities is one reason for the weakness in the students' writing abilities, and by looking at the plans of study in the BA English programs in these universities, it seems clear that the reading-writing connection as a pedagogical phenomenon should be given more attention by Saudi EFL teachers, educators and researchers. This paper clearly stated that integrating reading into L2 instruction is necessary. Extensive reading and using models, which are two models of reading for writing (Hirvela, 2004), can be combined as input in L2 writing courses. Extensive reading can serve as an indirect model of reading for writing, while models can serve as direct model of reading for writing. Finally, my advice to EFL writing teachers is that reading is not secondary to writing; these two literacy skills work parallel toward one end: literacy development.

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