

# Examining the Dynamics of Reading and Writing Ability including Assessment and an Analysis of their Correlation to Determine how Best to Approach these Skills in the ESL context.

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## Abstract

Reading and writing skills are crucial components in the language learning process. Understanding the nature of these skills and any relationship between them can help teachers formulate effective curricula and teaching methods in order for students (in particular English as Second Language (ESL) students) to understand and acquire these skills. Thus, this paper examines the nature of reading and writing skills and their relationship in order to determine how to effectively teach these two skills.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

### A. The Purpose of This Paper.

Understanding the various approaches and theories regarding reading and writing skills and their relationship can be an invaluable tool for language teachers. Many theorists regard reading and writing as two interrelated processes and this notion has been supported by empirical studies that have confirmed that students who read more also write better (Janopolis, 1986). If teachers are equipped with this information, they may be better suited to part important knowledge about these two skills onto their students by developing reading and writing teaching material in conjunction with each other.

Thus, the purpose of this paper is threefold: (a) to review various approaches and theories including assessment on reading, (b) to review various approaches and theories including assessment on writing, (c) to review the various theories on reading and writing relationships. In this paper, I first present a review of the literature on reading and writing ability including a section on assessment of the two skills followed by the literature review on the relationship between the two skills.

### B. Research Questions

The following research questions will be addressed in this paper.

1. What are some theoretical approaches to reading ability?
2. What are some theoretical approaches to writing ability?
3. What is the relationship between the reading and writing ability?

## 2. REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

### A. Second-Language Reading Ability

Researchers have made several attempts to isolate and define the process of reading or the components of reading ability. If a clear definition can be realized, educators can develop strategies that can improve the way their students approach a text (Alderson, 2000). However, reading is a complex process that involves much more than merely deciphering written characters and eye movement. It is also true that the reading process itself is not tangible because it occurs mainly in the mind. We can observe the outcome or product of that process through what the reader understands from the text, but understanding the process has yet to be uncovered. In this literature review, first the product and process of reading is contrasted including various research supporting each approach. Next, three widely accepted reading process models used to define second language reading are defined followed by other theories and approaches into this area. Finally, the assessment theories on reading are explained.

Alderson (2000) stated when conducting research into reading, it is important to "distinguish between the process of reading and the result of that process, the product" (p. 3). During the process, many things are going on in the reader's mind including: what the text means to him, how it relates to other things he has read, and all other background knowledge he brings to the reading. The product on the other hand, relates to what the reader comprehends from the text. We sometimes associate the product of reading

with the score on a reading test.

Much of the research into the product of reading was conducted during the earlier part of the 20th century (Alderson, 2000). Teachers find the product appealing because it is easily extracted (for example, through a score on a reading comprehension test) and if the test proves to be, among other things, reliable and internally consistent, teachers can make important assumptions about test takers' reading ability. This information can be vital for teachers who want to improve reading skills or expose certain aspects within the teaching curriculum that may require more focused instruction. Such knowledge can help teachers to develop effective teaching material that could properly address the needs of the students.

However, the product it is not without limitations. Alderson (2000) points out two salient limitations: the variation in the product and the method used to measure the product. Regarding the variation in the product, Alderson (2000) states that readers will have different understandings of a text. What the reader is able to take from a text and internalize in order to produce meaningful output or understanding will vary from reader to reader. This ability will differ based on a number of factors including understanding rhetorical genres, grammatical features and exposure to other readings. Alderson (2000) summarizes it this way: "a text does not 'contain' meaning which is waiting to be discovered by an able reader. Rather, meaning is created in the interaction between a reader and a text" (p. 6). Another important key factor in reading comprehension is background knowledge. Almost all researchers recognize the important role of background knowledge in reading comprehension (Grabe, 2004). Grabe (2004) stated that background knowledge was "essential for all manner of inferences and text model construction during comprehension" (p. 50).

The other limitation is the method we decide to use to assess the product. How much a reader comprehends from a text will likely involve his ability to recall what the information was in the text without looking back at it. This calls into question whether we are testing understanding or ability to remember

(Alderson, 2000). Other questionable assessment techniques include cloze techniques or gap fill exercises that may cause readers to read the text in a certain way, paying close attention to the words before the gaps and not the rest of the text. As a result, although the product is easy to extract and is a useful measurement, it is not necessarily a good indicator of true reading ability and therefore we need to look at research into reading processes.

Like the product, much research has been conducted into the process of reading and likewise, no single comprehensive theory or model has been realized. One reason for this is, unlike the product, the process of reading is not tangible (comprehension is only tangible second hand) so it's difficult to extract or measure. Reading processes occur in the mind and it is this cognitive activity that is not fully understood. To illustrate this difficulty Grabe (1991) described the reading process as complex and one which takes considerable time and resources to develop. Similarly, Aebersold and Field (1997) described the act of reading as "not completely understood nor easily described" (p. 5). Although difficult to understand, Aebersold and Field (1997) described the reading process as the interaction between reader and text, where the reader is interacting with the text, looking at the print, deciphering what's on the page, deciding what the information in the text means and how this information relates to the overall text. Many theoretical models and approaches have been developed to assist in facilitating the understanding of the reading process.

One such development which has been practiced since the 1970s incorporates three approaches to help understand and simplify the reading process: the bottom-up approach, the top-down approach and the interactive approach (Grabe, 1991). In the bottom-up approach or data driven processing, readers are said to be "passive decoders of sequential graphic-phonemic-syntactic-semantic systems" (Alderson, 2000, p. 17). By this, Alderson means that readers begin by looking at letters which are then translated into words then these words are then decoded to produce meaning. Hinkel (2006) described bottom-up abilities to include various cognitive skills such as word recognition, spelling and phonological

processing, morpho-syntactic parsing and lexical recognition.

In the top-down model or knowledge driven processing, readers are said to be active in the reading process. Goodman (1982, in Alderson, 2000) described this model as a 'psycholinguistic guessing game' (p. 17), in which readers guess or predict the text's meaning on the basis of minimal textual information, and maximum use of existing, activated knowledge (in Alderson, 2000). In this approach, the existing knowledge that a reader brings to the text refers to "schema-theoretic models" (Alderson, 2000, p.17). Schema-theoretic models account for the acquisition of knowledge and the interpretation of text by activating a learner's schema or networks of information stored in the brain which act as filters for incoming information. Readers activate relevant existing schemata and map incoming information onto them in a similar way in which Aebersold and Field (1997) describes the model: "readers fit the text into knowledge (cultural, syntactic, linguistic, and historical) they already possess, then check back when new or unexpected information appears" (p.18). Alderson (2000) sums up the definition of reading in this way: "it is dynamic, variable, and different for the same reader on the same text at a different time or with a different purpose for reading" (p. 3). It should be noted that Alderson (2000) also points out some limitations to schema theory stating, psychologists and psycholinguists question schema theory because it neither accounts for "prior knowledge" which can be called up from memory nor does it indicate how it is then used in understanding a text (p. 17).

Since the 1970s, researchers have used the bottom-up and top-down models to explain reading processes, but researchers found that readers use both approaches in varying degree when reading. Indeed, neither approach can fully explain the reading process, so as a result, the interactive model which combines both bottom-up and top-down models was created. Aebersold and Field (1997) stated that bottom-up and top-down approaches can occur at the same time or alternatively when reading. Alderson (2000) also states that in the interactive model, the degree to which one approach is used over the other would depend largely on the reading text, the reader

and the purpose of the reading.

Grabe's (2002) model of reading ability is similar to the three models above. In his model of reading, Grabe divides reading into lower level processing and higher level processing. In lower level processing, emphasis is placed on word recognition, lexis, syntax and morphosyntactic forms. This model is similar to the bottom-up approach. In higher level processing, emphasis is placed on clause-level meaning including semantics, ability to apply prior reading knowledge to the present text, understanding the writer's point and reader's attitude. Again, we can draw parallels with this model and the top-down approach.

It is worthwhile to understand L1 reading processes since most of the current views or models of second language reading are shaped by these processes (Grabe, 1991). If the goal in ESL reading classes is to have students read like L1 readers than it is imperative that students understand what fluent L1 readers do. Grabe (1991) argued that fluent reading, which is characteristic of L1 readers, is "rapid", "purposeful", "interactive", "comprehending", "flexible", and "develops gradually" (p.378). Grabe (2002) discusses several issues that concern L2 readers. One issue is that of exposure. L1 readers are exposed to the language long before reading instruction occurs, whereas L2 readers are exposed far less to the grammatical forms and vocabulary of the L2 when reading instruction starts. Furthermore, L2 readers have less experience with L2 reading tasks than L1 readers do with L1 tasks, so they must pay careful attention to the reading text structure and information organization.

Another issue is L1 transfer. Research has shown that readers who are efficient in L1 can successfully transfer skills into L2 knowledge. Cummins (1979, 1991, in Alderson, 2000) advanced the hypothesis of "linguistic interdependence" (p.23) which suggests that learners who achieve academic language proficiency in their native language can transfer this knowledge into second language knowledge. However, transfer of skills from L1 to L2 is not always positive. Grabe (1991) found transfer effects from language processing differences can cause difficulties for students. He states "word order variation, relative clause formation, complex noun

phrase structures, and other complex structural differences between languages can mislead the ESL reader, particularly at beginning stages" (p. 387). On a similar track, Clarke (in Alderson, 2000) posited the "short-circuit hypothesis" where inadequate knowledge of the second language short-circuits or prevents successful first-language readers from reading well in the second language (p. 38). Reading is a very complex process and takes time to develop, so L2 readers with little exposure to the rhetorical forms and structures may find it overwhelming at first.

#### **a. Assessment of Reading**

In measuring reading, one major area for language-testing research has been test methods: their validity, reliability and factors affecting their use. When measuring the difficulty of a test, one needs to look at two things: the passage difficulty and the item difficulty, where the item is a test question or task and the item difficulty is measured by the proportion of candidates getting the answer correct compared with those getting it wrong (Alderson, 2000). A reading score may be high or low because of item difficulty rather than text difficulty and vice versa.

On research into the assessment of reading, Alderson (2000) elaborates on several factors that affect the difficulty of reading test items of which I would like to explain a few, due to their relevance to this paper. The first one is on testing skills. A number of issues related to the testing of skills have been investigated, for example; how many underlying factors, or empirically separable skills, are there? Can judges distinguish which skills the items are testing? Which skills contribute most to performance on reading tests? Which skills are easiest to test? Which skills are most important to test? Even with a large pool of data on assessing reading, Alderson (2000) states "there has been considerable disagreement about how many factors can be identified, depending upon the nature of the statistical technique used to analyze the data, and the nature of the test items used in the various measures" (p. 94).

When summarizing "what can be measured" when assessing reading, Lennon (1962, in Alderson, 2000), after looking back over a half a century of published output on reading, including countless tests,

concluded that only "general reading ability" can be measured. He states the following four components within general reading ability can be measured: (a) a general verbal factor - in effect, word knowledge, (b) comprehension of explicitly stated material - what most tests measure, (c) comprehension of implicit or latent meaning, (d) and an element that he terms "appreciation" (p. 94).

Other researchers differed slightly with Lennon. Rost (1993, in Alderson, 2000), found that "general reading competence" (p.95) was measured when assessing his German first-language readers. Using a different statistical technique he found two factors the measured reading; "inferential reading comprehension" and "vocabulary". Carroll (1993, in Alderson, 2000) re-analyzed over 30 factor-analytic studies and identified four common factors in reading: (general) reading comprehension, special reading comprehension, reading decoding and reading speed. Weir (1994, in Alderson 2000) suggested that there were "three operations in reading" (p.96): (a) skimming; going through a text quickly, (b) reading carefully to understand main ideas and important detail, (c) using a knowledge of more specifically linguistic contributory skills; understanding grammatical notions (such as cause, result, purpose), syntactic structure, discourse markers, lexical and or grammatical cohesion.

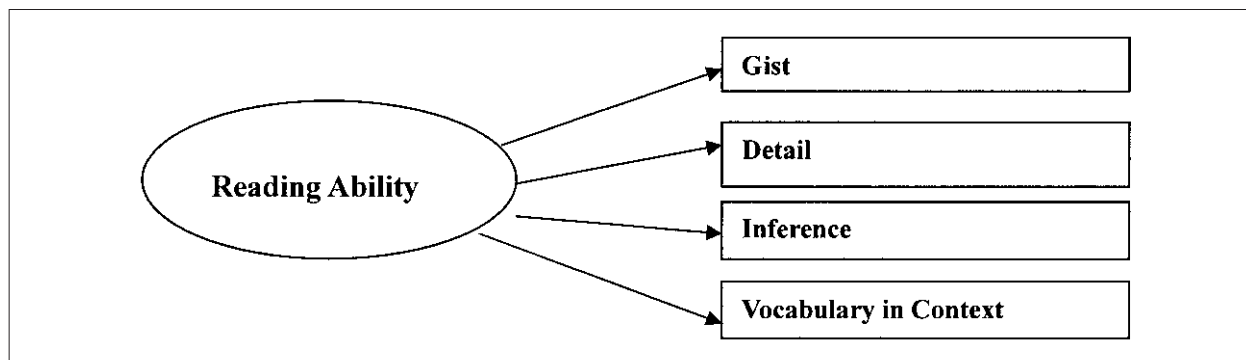
On the relationship between research into reading and the nature of reading assessment, Grabe (2000, in Alderson, 2000) believes that although our understanding of reading has advanced considerably over the past 15 years, this has not affected the assessment of reading. It is often asserted that reading assessment has been "dominated by concerns with reliability and psychometric validity" (p. 110). Grabe (1991) explains, "simple and straightforward measures of main idea and detail comprehension questions on passages, combined with sections on vocabulary, provide strong reliability and at least arguable validity for these testing approaches. The traditional approaches are also popular because they are: easy to administer, to score, to scale, and they are economical" (p. 121).

Finally, based on the research conducted into reading ability the following theoretical model has

been developed using the following four essential components: reading for gist, reading for details, inferencing, and understanding vocabulary in context are all critical aspects of assessing reading ability. Reading for gist measures the reader's ability to recognize the main idea of the passage. Reading for detail measures the reader's ability to recognize

specific information that will facilitate overall comprehension. Inferencing refers to the reader's ability to infer the writer's intentions which are not always explicit. Finally, understanding vocabulary in context refers to the ability of the reader to deduce unknown vocabulary or guess their meaning.

Figure 1 : Theoretical Model of Reading Ability



### B. Second Language Writing Ability.

For many years researchers have tried to define writing ability in L2 composition. Like in the literature for reading ability, researchers would like to use a single model or standard to define all that is considered writing ability in order to simplify teaching instruction which would hopefully result in ESL students writing better more effective compositions due to fewer models and instruction. Research into L2 writing can boast an impressive amount of data (Ferris & Hedgcock, 2005). However, "a single comprehensive theory of L2 writing is perhaps a long way off- if, in fact, a singular theory is even a suitable aim" (Ferris & Hedgcock, 2005, p. 3).

In this section, first an overview of the four theoretical approaches to teaching writing to L2 students as outlined by Raimes (1991) is explained. The theoretical approaches address the relationship between language knowledge and strategic competence in writing ability. The four main approaches are focus on form, focus on the writer, focus on content and focus on the reader. It is important to note that each of these approaches are derived from not only various instructional methodologies but also from different cognitive models.

The focus on form approach had one major concern, form. In the mid-1960s, the audio lingual

method (focus on speaking) was the dominant model in teaching while writing was viewed as a method of reinforcing speaking ability by providing additional grammar practice (Raimes, 1983). As a result, instruction for ESL writing (L2 writing) had as its main function, to reinforce oral patterns of the language taking the form of sentence drills, fill-ins, substitutions, transformations, and completions (Raimes, 1991). Matsuda (2003) considered ESL writing at the time as an "orthographic representation of speech" (p. 16).

The focus on the writer approach emerged in the 1970s and emphasis was placed on the writer and the process that occurs when the writer puts pen to paper. Writers during this period were seen as innovative and creative and were encouraged to generate ideas and topics of their own to write about (as opposed to focus on form approaches where topics were provided by instructors). In place of accuracy and patterns (as in the focus on form approach) came process; creating meaning, inventing, generating ideas, the idea of multiple drafts, revisions and providing feedback (Raimes, 1991).

In the 1980s the focus switched to content. This approach focused on "the academic expectations of academic readers". This approach usually took the form of a theme-based curriculum. Compared to the previous process approach, attention shifted to

content as prescribed by the discourse community for what they deemed as more "appropriate" for the academic demands of readers at the time (Raimes, 1991, p.410). In the content based instruction, learners get help with "the language of the thinking process and the structure or shape of the content" (Mohan, 1985, p. 18, in Raimes, 1991). For example, focus on the fields of study encountered by ESL learners receive more attention than content specific English courses (language, culture, and literature) (Horowitz, 1986, in Raimes, 1991). In this model, teachers determine what kind of academic content is most appropriate and build the course or class around that determination

Finally, focus on the reader approach or the audience dominated approach emerges around the same time as the content based approach and is primarily concerned with the expectations of academic readers. In other words, the focus was not on the reader as a specific individual but as a representative of a discourse community from specific disciplines in academia (Raimes, 1991). In this approach, the writer first determined who the reader was, what his expectations were, and other relevant information before proceeding to the writing process. Once this information was established, writers could then focus on writing forms and structures that the reader will expect and thus apply the appropriate patterns accordingly. As a result, focus on the reader, to a certain degree, revisits focus on form in the first example, only this time it is rhetorical form not grammatical form.

These four approaches were instrumental in the development of L2 writing and much of their underlying theories and processes are still used today. Raimes (1991) stated that the four approaches were by no means discrete or sequential in manner and recommended a 'balanced' stance, "one that presents a governing philosophy but pays attention within that philosophy to all four elements involved in writing: form, writer, content, and reader" (p. 422).

In another theoretical approach on writing, Bachman & Palmer (1996) suggested that in order for L2 writers to compose a written product, they need to comprehend "language knowledge, which includes two broad categories: organizational knowledge and pragmatic knowledge" (Bachman & Palmer, 1996, p.

67). Organizational knowledge is involved in the formal structure of language for producing or comprehending grammatically acceptable utterances or sentences and for organizing these to form texts, both oral and written. It consists of grammatical knowledge or understanding formal and accurate sentences while at the same time possessing knowledge of vocabulary, syntax, phonology, and graphology and textual knowledge or producing and comprehending text. Under textual knowledge, knowledge of cohesion and knowledge of rhetorical organization exist. Knowledge of cohesion is involved with understanding the relationships among sentences in written text whereas knowledge of rhetorical organization is involved in producing or comprehending organizational development in written texts (Bachman & Palmer, 1996).

Pragmatic knowledge allows us to create or interpret discourse by relating sentences and texts to their meanings. Pragmatic knowledge consists of functional knowledge and sociolinguistic knowledge where functional knowledge or what Bachman (1990, in Bachman & Palmer, 1996) calls "'illocutionary competence', enables writers to interpret relationships between sentences and texts and the intentions of language users" (p.69). Functional knowledge includes knowledge of four categories of language functions: ideational, manipulative, instrumental, and imaginative. Knowledge of ideational function allows us to express or interpret meaning in terms of real world experiences for example our ideas, knowledge, or feelings. Manipulative functions enable us to use language to impact the world around us. Instrumental knowledge can be performed to get other people to do things for us (examples include requests, suggestions, commands, and warnings). Imaginative knowledge allows us to use language to create an imaginary world or extend the world around us for humorous or esthetic purposes; examples include jokes and the use of figurative language and poetry. Finally sociolinguistic knowledge enables us to apply or understand language suitable to a particular situation for example, appropriate use of dialects or varieties, registers, natural or idiomatic expressions, cultural references, and figures of speech (Bachman & Palmer,

1996).

Finally, it is important to look at some of the ways in which L2 writing has been measured in order to develop a theoretical model for it. First, O'Malley and Pierce (1996) proposed that when writing, learners refer to at least four types of knowledge. They are "knowledge of the content, procedural knowledge to organize the content, knowledge on conventions of writing, and procedural knowledge to integrate these three types of knowledge" (p.136-137). Bachman and Palmer (1996) decided on the following constructs to measure academic writing ability in a high stakes placement test: knowledge of syntax, knowledge of rhetorical organization, knowledge of cohesion and knowledge of register. Firstly knowledge of syntax included the accurate use of a range of syntactic structures and the range and accuracy of general purpose and specialized vocabulary, including cultural references. Secondly, knowledge of rhetorical organization measured the ability to organize information efficiently. Thirdly, knowledge of cohesion included knowledge of features for explicitly marking cohesive textual relationships. Finally knowledge of register included the control of moderately formal registers in formulaic expressions and in substance discourse.

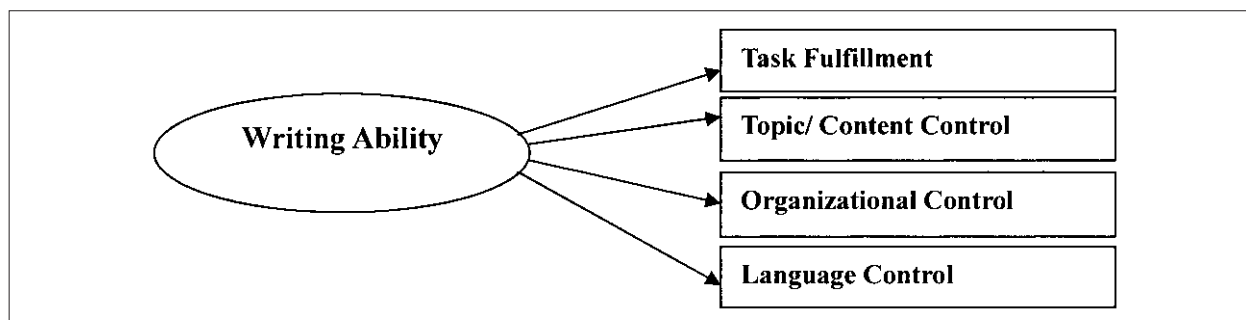
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knowledge to integrate these three types of knowledge" (p.136-137). Bachman and Palmer (1996) decided on a slightly different scale to measure academic writing in a high stakes placement test similar to the CEP placement test. These measurements included: knowledge of syntax, knowledge of rhetorical organization, knowledge of cohesion and knowledge of register. First, knowledge of syntax included the accurate use of a range of syntactic structures and the range and accuracy of general purpose and specialized vocabulary, including cultural references. Second, knowledge of rhetorical organization measured the ability to organize information efficiently. Third, knowledge of cohesion included knowledge of features for explicitly marking cohesive textual relationships. Finally, knowledge of register included the control of moderately formal registers in formulaic expressions.

Based on the literature review conducted into writing ability, task fulfillment, topic/ content control, organizational control, and language control has been suggested to define writing. Task fulfillment measures the overall impression of the essay. Topic/content control measures the extent to which the writer is able to fulfill the writing task as described in the prompt. Organizational control measures the extent to which the writer is able to organize sentences into paragraphs while maintaining cohesion in the correct written genre form. Language control measures the extent to which the writer is able to select appropriate vocabulary, sentence patterns and grammatical structure. Thus, Figure 2 illustrates the theoretical model.

Figure 2 : Theoretical Model of Writing Ability.



**C. The Relationship between Reading and Writing.**

In this section, evidence is provided via research theories and approaches on reading and writing

relationships in order to support the hypothesis that reading and writing skills, to some degree, are correlated. Thus, this section will, (1) detail various theories that provide evidence to support this relationship, (2) provide support for my hypothesis about reading and writing correlations, (3) will bridge the literature section to the statistical analysis in the next section. The statistical analysis will provide evidence to show that, within the confines of this particular CEP placement test, reading and writing skills are correlated.

Much research has been done with regard to correlations between reading and writing processes. Researchers in the 1980s came to the conclusion that reading and writing form important relations with each other: as skills, as cognitive processes, and as ways of learning (Grabe, 1991). Bachman & Palmer (1996) identified many components that are required for or engaged by both reading and writing, such as grammatical knowledge (syntax and vocabulary); textual knowledge (cohesion); functional knowledge (ideational functions); and so on. Thus, it would seem logical to suggest that a reader who is sensitive to how writers compose a story would be more sensitive as a writer to conveying a message in a similar fashion.

For some time, L1 researchers have pointed out the high correlation between good writers and good readers and have viewed reading and writing as mutually reinforcing interactive processes (Flood & Lapp, 1987; Kucer, 1987). The strong correlation is not only evident in L1 learners but can also be strong in L2 learners as well. Eisterhold (1990, in Ferris & Hedgcock, 2005) noted that with regard to L2 learners, better writers were better readers; better writers read more and better readers wrote more syntactically mature prose and suggested that the reading experiences improved writing more than grammar instruction or further writing exercises. Research has found that apprentice ESL writers benefit from engaging in reading-based writing tasks that encourage them to read like writers and to write like readers (Bereiter & Scardamalia, 1984). Ferris & Hedgcock (2005) also stated that "we can reasonably postulate a serial relationship in which extensive reading practice develops effective reading skills and

effective reading skills eventually lead to the growth of proficient writing skills"(p.32).

According to Hayes (1996), reading is a central process in writing. Writing relies on one's ability to read and interpret source texts and tasks. Reading is also important to the revising process, in which effective writers read their own text to evaluate it and address problems. In describing the interaction between reading and writing, Hayes (1996) posits three roles that reading plays in the process of writing: (a) reading to evaluate, (b) reading source texts, and (c) reading to define tasks. Reading to evaluate is important because writers identify their own mistakes and revise them accordingly. Reading source texts is also important because sources provide writers with a wealth of information on which to write. Thus the writer must read all the resources available on a given topic. When the writer understands the sources well, writing that is valid and relevant can be produced. Finally, reading to define tasks is also critical because here the writer must be able to effectively manipulate the prompt in order to conform to the writing assessment criteria.

On a similar note, one empirical study showed a strong relationship between reading and writing. Just and Carpenter (1987) illustrate this relationship by examining the reading process and linking this with the writing process. They say a reader's state of knowledge is transformed when reading. This transformation is said to have five steps. In step one; the reader recognizes the information in the text. In step two, the reader measures the amount of time it takes to process the information. In step three, the kind of information used during the process is analyzed. In step four, the reader looks at the likely source of the mistakes (lack of vocabulary knowledge, grammatical structures, and so on). Then finally in step five, the reader reflects on what was learned during the whole process. The final component, "what the reader has learned when the process is finished", is widely believed to be the basis of how readers become writers because this acquired information contains "print-encoded messages as well as clues about how the message's grammatical, lexical, semantic, pragmatic, and rhetorical constituents combine to make the message meaningful" (in Ferris

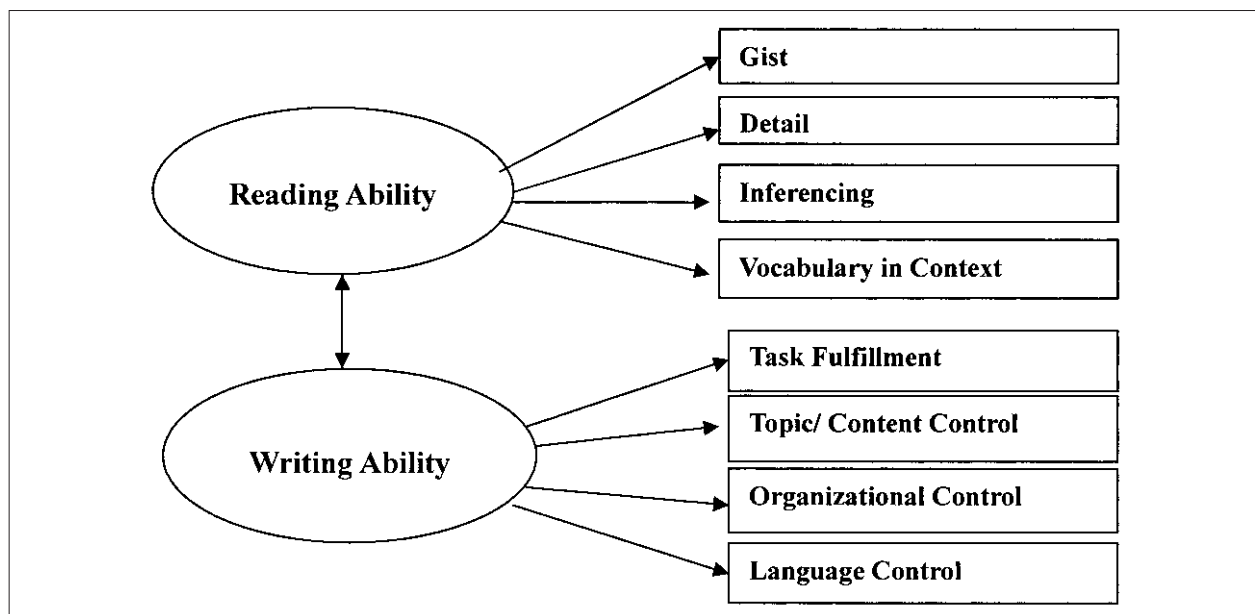


& Hedgcock, 2005, p. 31). As a result, in order to acquire proficient literacy skills, learners need to recognize the interconnections between reading and writing and apply this knowledge to improve both skills.

Based on the literature review conducted into the relationship between reading and writing skills, ample evidence supporting the existence of a relationship has been provided. This evidence suggests that reading and writing are interrelated

processes that draw on similar knowledge and resources. For example, grammatical knowledge (vocabulary, morphology and syntax); textual knowledge (rhetorical, cohesion); functional knowledge (ideational, heuristic); and sociolinguistic knowledge (register, dialect) are all important aspects that overlap in both processes (Bachman & Palmer, 1996 p. 256). The theoretical model of the relationship between reading and writing abilities is graphically represented in Figure 3.

Figure 3 : The Theoretical Model of the Relationship between Reading and Writing Ability.



### 3. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

The purpose of this paper was to first analyze the various theoretical approaches and models into reading and writing ability and second to determine if the two skills were correlated. If a correlation existed, this information would be useful for teachers especially teachers working in an ESL context. After extensive research into vetted models and approaches into the two skills, a correlation was found to exist.

I believe the findings and results of this paper provide teachers and researchers in the field with insightful information that can be useful in the design

of curriculums or teaching materials regarding reading and writing skills. The research has shown that teaching both skills in conjunction with each other, as opposed to independently will yield the greatest result and be most effective in the ESL classroom. Thus, ESL teachers should devise curricula that integrate the two skills.

Finally the results of this research may have failed to move the ESL pendulum by much but it is my sincere hope that others, including myself will further explore and expand this research into broader objectives and goals in order to advance literacy in English.

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