

**Teaching Writing through Reading to Improve Grade
Eleven Students' Writing Performance**

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Chapter One: Introduction

1.1 Introduction

In this chapter of the research, the overall research context is introduced to show the rationale behind undertaking the present investigation on the topic of teaching writing through reading to improve grade. The chapter discusses the background overview of the teaching writing through reading and the research problem necessitating the pertinent problem to be addressed in the Lebanon schools. The chapter also covers research questions, hypotheses and significance of the study.

1.2 Background Study

1.2.1 Reading – Overview

Reading is a complex process, which requires active participation from the reader. Educational researchers have recognised the effectiveness of reading on the development of diverse set of knowledge about a subject or issue. Reading is recognised as an important form of communicative languages among the earlier researchers. Reading offers a advanced knowledge about the printed text. Roy Harris (2000) defined reading as a thinking process, which helps the involved person in creating interaction between the participants through the printed text. The reading process in this way offers an opportunity to the reader to obtain specific answers to his questions continuously evolving in the mind. From this definition of Roy Harris (2000), complexity involved in the reading process becomes apparent from the application of multiple skills by the reader when he or she is gaining information from the text. Such skills include inferring, questioning, predicting and drawing conclusions. According to (Escribano, 1999), it is extremely important that the reading strategies selected by the reader are consistent with the task-based reading approach. In other words, reading strategies must be aligned to make the reader achieve task-mastery i.e. identification of genuine language patterns and other communicative interactions. Furthermore, besides process and strategies, objectives of the reading process are quite distinct and different from other learning processes such as writing and listening. Reading objectives may vary person to person but generally includes any of the ten (10) objectives, which are highlighted by (Escribano, 1999, p. 59). These include,

“Distinguish formal-scientific from informal registers. 2. Identify audience and medium. 3. Identify type of writing and its structure. 4. Locate main ideas: distinguish core statement from peripheral ones. 5. Locate facts; locate opinion. 6. Identify logical connectors. 7. Identify referential words and their antecedent. 8. Deduce meaning according to context 9. Summarise main facts & ideas. 10. Deduce implied information” (Escribano, 1999, p. 59)

From the analysis of mentioned reading skills, it can be analysed that each of the reading objective is covering some of the skills required subsequently in the writing process. Despite reading at present represent nothing but a lost art that needs revival as a good writer originates from the good reader.

1.2.2 Writing – Overview

Writing is recognised as a learned process and literacy skill that help the learner to get engage in a process to understand the detailed written communication skills. Like reading, writing process also involved thinking process to make the written text as readable for the others. The text written without proper structure and specifications could lead to the inadequate reading (Tuan, 2012). Tuan (2012) defines writing as a process not a product because it involves exploration of individual ideas and generation of meaning for such text. The literacy skills of the learners are polished through the writing tools. On the other side, Applebee (1984) and Emig (1977) cited in (Zainal, Z., Husin, M., & Hajar, S. 2011) have defined writing as the externalization and remaking of thinking. According to these authors, it is extremely necessary to consider writing as separate from the intentions and beliefs of the writer because writing does not only address composition as a reflective tool for making meaning. Writing can be an act of discovery, of communication, of joy which connects to work, to culture, to society and to knowledge.

However, in contrary to reading, writing involves more concentration of the learner with dual focus on the thoughts and grammatical accuracy. The definition offers idea describing writing as an encoding process where the messages are being out into words. The key objective behind different writing strategies employed by the instructors is to reinforce specific grammatical and lexical patterns among the students. It can also be analysed that most of the writing strategies are generally focused on improving accuracy as their priority while less concerned with the content and self-expression skills. The key reason behind this can be related with the objectives

of writing for different individuals. Some students learn to write while some students write to learn.

Both reading and writing skills become more complex for the EFL learners in a bilingual language environment. Most of the EFL students have to experience different learning environments in their schools and at their homes. Such students at their college levels have to face problems with their reading and writing skills for numerous causes. The major issues include insufficient first language and second language literacy backgrounds, lack of prior knowledge in various subjects, limited experience with active reading. Additionally, there are some individual students who have negative attitudes and behaviours associated with the value of academic reading and writing (Dahan, 2008). Due to the difficulties faced by the EFL learners at their college level, such students also face sever issues at the university level. Lack of prior knowledge or insufficient prior knowledge both can contribute heavily in deteriorating the condition of the ESL learners. Limited understanding about connectivity between the reading and writing skills make it extremely important to analyse the situation among the high school students in the current investigation.

1.3 Problem Statement

Within the high school or intermediate level of education system in Lebanon, writing skills are realised as the critical elements in teaching English as foreign language (EFL). The teachers in the eleventh and twelfth grades are much focused on writing as basic language skills that must be learned. They place every effort in increasing the writing excellences of their learners, despite are unable to reap fruitful results in terms of students' writing performances. Currently, NGO in Lebanon are placing strong impact on improving the EFL competencies of their intermediate students to make them prepare for the educationally and professionally competitive global environments. However, these NGOs are facing the problems from the students' side as most of the students are unable to realise the existence of the connection between reading and writing and the strong influence of both skills on each other. Currently, students are not aware of the fact that reading can actually help them in improving their writing performances. Considering the deficiencies in the EFL learners' skills, the current research has identified it extremely important to investigate the effects of reading on the students' writing performance. The research was helpful in finding out the ways of effective reading and the difficulties faced

by the students in writing without reading the text. After identifying the challenges, the research investigation has also aimed to show the EFL learners with different levels of proficiency that can be used for improving the students' writing performances in order to overcome all difficulties encountered in the process of developing writing abilities in an EFL learning environment.

1.4 Research Questions

The central guiding aim behind the current investigation is investigate the effectiveness of teaching writing through reading to Improve Grades. The study tends to accomplish this aim through the primary investigation of the writing performances of the eleven grade high school students in a private Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) school in Lebanon. Furthermore, with the help of the answers to the following stated research questions, main aim of the current investigation was achieved successfully.

1. Does reading affect and improve learners' writing skills?

The first research question has helped in analysing whether or not the reading skills have positively affected the learners writing skills in the eleven grade students in NGO school of Lebanon. These primary results were further cross-referenced with the second literature investigations for depicting appropriate outcomes of reading in improving writing performances of the ESL students.

2. What purposes do reading courses have which serve students in their writing?

The second research question has helped in identifying different benefits of the reading exercises and activities on the different components of the writing (Yazar, 2013). The key objectives behind the reading courses adopted to teach the writing skills are targeted under this section. The specific writing performance samples of the eleven grade students would help in achieving the desired objective of identifying the purpose of reading exercises adopted in the private NGO school of Lebanon. The findings have helped in spotting out the ways to empower the bilingual students in developing reading and writing efficiencies of the second language.

3. What are the difficulties that students face in their writing if not giving much attention to the importance of reading and its connection to writing?

The answer of the third research question was helpful in analysing the difficulties faced by the students at their high school or intermediate levels in writing when the teachers did not pay much attention to the reading and connection between the reading and writing skills. It can be depicted that there are several comprehension level, attention level, grammar level and accuracy level challenges and the deeper factors under each category need to be analysed effectively due to their limited understanding among the learners and teachers (Escribano, 1999; Dahan, 2008; Tuan, 2012; Yazar, 2013). The answer of this four research question has helped in increasing the students and teachers' understanding about these specific issues.

1.5 Research Hypotheses

Based on the research aim and research questions, the following alternative hypotheses are developed to be tested using primary data of the current investigation.

1. Reading improves learners' writing skills resulting in better performance.
2. Reading courses have many effective purposes that serve students in their writing skills.
3. Students may face many difficulties in their writing if they don't focus on the importance of reading and its connection to writing.

1.6 Significance of the Study

The findings of the current research are expected to help in modifying the perceptions and blames placed on the lower-level teachers for the bad writing performances of their students. It is generally assumed that teachers are unable to teach essential grammar and vocabulary skills to their learners. On the other side, people have misconceptions that students are not committed towards reading and are not devoting necessary time and efforts in practicing reading exercise. The findings of this investigation has helped in increasing the general awareness among these people that despite sufficient efforts are being put by both the teacher and student, the result is failure if learning processes (reading and writing) are not taught in integration to each other with mutual benefits. Through this research, specifically the teachers in Lebanon are able to learn about the strong connection between reading and writing performances. These findings are also expected to encourage reading among the high school students as their hobby in leisure

time. There can be a necessary change in the mindsets in ascertaining that a good piece of writing is not something that can only be learned explicitly but also through the reading habits.

The research has further shed light on the benefits of reading and its uses in improving the writing performances. The lecturers can also identify the skills possessed by the students and use these skills for improving the writing performances of their students. The primary results and extensive review of earlier investigation have also critically summarised the methods for devising an effective reading task for the students. These activities are expected to increase both the reading and associated writing efficiencies of the learners.

1.7 Definitions of the Key Terms

The section presents definitions of the key terms used throughout in the subsequent chapters for better understanding of the potential research audience.

1. **Isomorphic Knowledge:** knowledge of recognizing words of identical or similar form, shape, or structure
2. **Cognitive processes:** processes which occur inside the brain and nervous system as a person learns, like the internal mental processes which include inputting, organizing, storing, retrieving, and finding relationships between information thus emphasizing how information is processed.
3. **Schemata:** schemata have been described as cognitive constructs, which allow for the organization of information in the memory allowing us to relate incoming information to already known information, so new information is linked to old knowledge.
4. **Envisionments:** picturing and conceiving mentally and deeply about topics
5. **Metalinguistic Awareness:** refers to the ability to objectify language as a process as well as a thing and can explain the execution and transfer of linguistic knowledge across languages. Meta-linguistics can be classified as the ability to consciously reflect on the nature and the use of language.

1.8 Research Layout

The remaining dissertation is divided into following chapters. The second chapter is literature review, where the critical analysis of the theories and earlier investigation studies on the reading writing practices are discussed in context of the performance improvements in the high school

students. The third chapter is research methodology which discussed the methods and design chosen for the data collection and data analysis in the research. The fourth chapter has presented results and findings of the primary investigation from the eleven grade students' writing performances. By using the results of primary participants, the hypotheses were also tested in the chapter. The fifth chapter has presented discussion on the research questions by cross-relating the secondary literature findings with the primary investigation results. The last chapter has offered key conclusion and research recommendations.

Chapter two: Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

Wide range of academic studies have discussed importance of reading and writing skills and the connectivity between these two literacy skills for the understanding of the EFL students. In this chapter the theoretical as well as contextual literature has been analysed to relate the topics of reading-writing research that are most pertinent to the questions addressed. The critical and comprehensive review of the past studies have provided a summary of the reading writing relation, and how this connection between them can help in more thinking and learning and in better performance in writing which are adopted and explained by numerous researchers. The chapter has focused on the past authors' views on examining the writing difficulties encountered by the high school ESL learners when they have no awareness about the connection in reading and writing skills because of lack of significance of reading for semantic knowledge, syntactic knowledge, fluency and broader knowledge of the world.

2.2 Reading for EFL Students

Historically, from the mid of 1960s, reading in a foreign or second language has been heavily debated in numerous literacy theories including behaviourism, psycholinguistic, cognitive and others. The main objective of these theories has been to investigate the essence of reading through the bottom-up and top-down processing activity where the former one complements passive information processing by decoding linguistic information at the word and sentence levels and later one defines active information processing by creating and confirming predictions. Thus, with the passage of time, second language reading has shaped itself as an interacting process where the reader kept on drawing several linguistic and semantic cues and related these with his native language as well as second language he is learning.

Besides being a linguistic process, reading is also defined as cognition based process. According to Block, (1986), history of the reading activity reflected fundamentally it as a cognitive activity. The activity was merely something taking place in the mind and between the ears. The process disregards the influence of socially oriented factors as an important part of the understanding and reaction of the readers towards content. It can be examined that

According to Yazar, (2013) students learning English as their foreign language like natives have to place significant emphasis on the basic reading strategies in order to become master of the subject and comprehension of the text adequately. EFL students need reading strategies at pre-reading, while reading, post reading distinctly and collectively. The increased need of teachers' attention in ESL can be explained from its complex and multivariate skills. Coertze, (2011) elucidates that English learners who are learning it as their second language or foreign language involve great interaction with the transactional process involved in the reading process. They have to interact with the text and context because they do not have much information about the meaning of the read text in English language. For this purpose, they need help in interpretation of the text through a transactional process i.e. background knowledge in native language converted into the foreign language meaning, which the text bring to the reading situation.

In connection to the interpretation process, Chen & Sabina Chia-Li, (2015) state that reading brings different interpretations for different readers due to the varying methods and strategies used throughout in the process of reading. Literature has shown the use of multiple reading methods and strategies by the individual learners such as underlining, notes making, and text highlighting. However, more crucially, Cogmen & Saracaloglu, (2009) believe that for an EFL learner, learning to read is an extremely essential part of the reading process before the learner starts reading to learn subjects and text. With the phrase 'learning to read' author shed light on the awareness of the basic principles and general rules of reading applied in the reading process. Poole, (2010) further emphasised that most of the foreign learners are unable and non-willing to learn the reading process and subsequently find it unpleasant to read a text in the target language, which is beyond their understanding.

In context of the reading for the high school students, Alvarez et al., (1993) have focused on the range of activities employed by the EFL teachers and instructors in the curriculum to develop the reading abilities among the learners. These include songs/poems, readers/novels, plays, comics, newspapers/magazines, specialist books, formal letters, reports, notes, personal letters, instructions and brochures. Academic and vocational reading practices are made an essential part of the EFL course and curriculum in order to increase contact and familiarity with the English Language. In a research Alvarez et al., (1993) have placed light on the tentative suggestions for the teachers of the EFL state schools students in order to make their students

efficient readers. Author has pointed out in the need of developing fluency and incidental vocabulary acquisition as highly significant for the individuals. These two targets are essential but cannot be regarded as stepping-stone. It is very important for the instructor of EFL students to realise his or her responsibility in developing perceptions of the readers. For this purpose, every student should be analysed as a distinct individual and reading should be ultimately analysed as personal activity. It can be critically extorted from the above discussion that literature find reading as a flexible activity and confining it within a set of formal rules can place severe effects on the understanding of the foreign learners.

The taxonomy of reading skills is categorised into three stages within the academic literature including the skills needed before reading, during reading and after reading. Peaty, (1995) described that an EFL student need to predict and explore the reading theme prior the start of the activity. Barnstorming is among the important techniques used for the free association of a keyword to help the students both their comprehension abilities and recalling activities. Such activities before reading are undertaken by the students in their native language. Secondly, literature also place light on the stages involved in the ‘during-reading’ process such as silent or loud text reading, meaning exploration, comprehension abilities and problem resolution. Lastly, the third stage of ‘after-reading’ is extremely significant due to the activities involved in the process such as summary of text read, comparisons of several texts and sequencing scrambled texts.

Subsequent to the review of studies describing the reading skills for ESL students, the next section highlights literature review to conceptualise writing skills for EFL students.

2.3 Writing for EFL Students

Pertinent literature of the literacy education has emphasised on writing as a secondary step or extension of the reading, speaking or listening skills. According to Cimcoz, (1999), unlike reading, writing is unpredictable. The writing skills do not require concentration and attention of the individual. Students need to focus on the development of ideas on the paper for the development of flow. High school education needs to develop understanding about how to write, how to find out the right words in order to avoid emotional disorders and turmoil.

Writing is a skill that has not been accorded the attention it deserves in high school education. Students have not been taught to make their ideas flow on paper. They do not know how to write, feel stupid when they cannot find the right words, fear criticism and want to avoid the emotional turmoil experienced when faced with a topic and a blank piece of paper (Cimcoz, 1999; Muslim, 2014; Tuan, 2012). Muslim (2014) believes that writing well is an issue for the EFL learners in many contexts. Students are unable to understand how to write meaningful and grammatical sentences, selecting a topic and developing it with supporting ones, logical arrangements of ideas coherent paragraphs, correct usage of punctuation and writing with no spelling and handwriting mistakes (Muslim, 2014). It can be depicted that

Kostadinovska, (2014) has stated that the cognitive aspects of writing are also important for the students like the reading activities. According to the researcher, following components of the affective writing are vital for the students such as abilities to write paragraphs, ideas, grammar and spelling, punctuation and handwriting. In order to achieve effectiveness in the writing process, students can employ several strategies, which are concerned with the different components and approaches such as focus, sentence, paragraph, grammar, syntax and the process approach. Despite a specific component, process-based approach, appear as extremely vital for the EFL students because in focusing on any component of writing, an individual is unable to understand the overall changes and specifications associated with the EFL learning.

In comparing the effectiveness of the different writing strategies adopted in the high school classes of the EFL learners in Osaka, Herder & King, (2011) have highlighted that two strategies are still prevalent in the norm of the ESL curriculum i.e. sentence-level translations and vocabulary training. Authors have heavily criticised the effectiveness of the one-sentence translation as an inefficient method for improving the writing abilities of the students. These two strategies are unable to target the fluency practice. The reason can be analysed from the rigidity in the coursework and curriculums of the high schools' writing programs. Critics have pointed out that currently almost all the high school authorities have placed their focus on the two well-established tenets of writing instructions. The first tenet elaborates that writing is a skill that must be learned and according to second tenet, lots of practice is required for the improvement of writing. Due to this inflexibility, ESL students do not get enough autonomy for implementing accumulated experiences extracted from the theory and practices. The high school students

therefore end up with the less accuracy, lesser flexibility and lesser preparation for dealing with the complexity of the issue.

After reviewing the literature related with the research aim in investigating both reading and writing for ESL students, the next section of the research focuses on the literature on integrated reading and writing practices.

2.4 Reading-Writing Practices for EFL Students

Like reading and writing skills individually, their integrated connectivity is not a new phenomenon for the EFL students. Until the period of 1970s to 1980s, reading and writing were taught separately in the large portion of schools considering both as separate endeavours despite the fact that relationship between these two aspects have been dating back to 1930s. Reading strategies and models were heavily discussed to depict the good models of writing. Reading strategies with the focus on the unconscious development of the vocabularies and syntactic knowledge has been helpful in the development of the structure and writing system of the foreign language. According to Fitzgerald & Shanahan, (2000, p. 42), "reading and writing rely on corresponding or correlated mental processes and isomorphic knowledge, though the nature of the relations between reading and writing is different at different age or grade levels". The point gives us an idea about the undisputed role of the writing and reading processes and practices on the cognitive and psychological processes of an individual student. It can be depicted that the underlying theme of the current investigation is also to find out whether any substantive connection exist between reading and writing activities for the students. Cimcoz, (1999) provides EFL students an opportunity to introduce new topics, encourage new discussions and allow the study linguistic components. Academic literature has also depicted reading as essential activity for the writing tasks and activities. The written assignments often need required reading materials to gather relevant information about the writing assignments. The large body of educational research has substantiated the connections between reading and writing activities. Bulk of books and volumes are devoted by the past authors on the given topic.

From the view of academic literature, it can be analysed that the reading-writing relationship is of utmost importance for the educational researchers for about a decade as they have reported combination of the reading and writing as effective in summarising the texts and contents in the

school curriculum. The mutual understanding of the academic literature has substantiated that integration of both the activities is needed to bring the processes, strategies and concepts behind literacy under one shared umbrella. Thus, with the integration of both the activities, it becomes easier for the learner to analyse organisational patterns, text complexity and topic of the text read or written. Studies have shown the connection between the reading and writing tasks as composing processes that needs interaction for identification, text structure, and text complexity and for emotional appeal by the topic of the source text (Vieira & Taglieber, 2003).

In discussing the relationship between English reading and writing skills in Japanese high school students, Ito, (2011) has pointed out towards a significant relationship between these two skills. Author collected the reading and writing test scores of students for the period of 2006 and reported that there is a unique association between the three kinds of relationships between first and second languages based reading and writing skills. According to the author, first kind of relationship exists between L1 and L2 reading skills, between L1 and L2 writing skills and between the proficiency and writing skills of the second language learners.

Langer & Flihan, (1997) have considered writing and reading relationship as significant portions of the overall pie of the English language art. All the slices of the pie are interlinked with each other in describing the interaction between the writing and reading processes, literature connected the similarities and differences of both the reading and writing processes with each other. According to author, both the reading and writing processes are encompassed with the same state of becoming a reader or writer. Both the processes require mind anticipation, glancing back and development of momentary impressions that modify and develop with the development of meaning (Langer & Flihan, 1997). It is important to find out that both the reading and writing processes involves same language, syntax and structure. Reading considers these components of language as texts-in-the-head while writing considers these components of language as texts-on-the-paper. Likewise, both reading and writing try to place learner in the place of others' shoe i.e. in the shoe of author while reading and in the shoe of audience while writing. Similarly, both of them have to think about the presentational styles in accordance with the need of the learners. Thus, the pertinent literature attempts to show how the integration of reading and writing processes help the learners in growing their environments through a meaning-building process (Langer & Flihan, 1997).

Additionally, in examining the effectiveness of the reading-writing integration, authors Wagner & Stanovich (1996) as cited in Grabe (2004) refer that readers are better able to collect, organize, and connect information in their writing. For example, research has shown that extensive reading leads to better vocabulary knowledge, better verbal fluency, better syntactic knowledge, better semantic memory, better metalinguistic awareness and broader knowledge of the world where students through reading will be able to decide how much information should be taken from the text; which information should be taken, how the information taken will fit with task and writer goals and what formal mechanisms should be used for transforming or using the textual information.

Graves & Hansen, (1983) in their academic research have focused on the benefits of the reading-writing integration in the learning process considering early graders. According to them,

“Writers incorporate what they have learned about language, structure and style from the texts they have encountered as readers. They also reflect on their knowledge of texts they have read and experiences they have had as a way of generating and synthesizing ideas for writing. In becoming familiar with and gaining experience in writing and reading texts even first graders can "develop a sense of authorship that helps them in either composing process" (Graves & Hansen, 1983, p. 182).

The text informs the audience of the current research about the significance of the reading and writing practices integration as relatively important phenomenon for everyone learning English as second language irrespective of their educational grade. This is so because since the childhood, the learner connects strong relationships between reading and writing through the acquisition of isomorphic knowledge, cognitive awareness and schemata competencies that further assist the learner in developing environments and metalinguistic capabilities.

2.5 Difficulties in Writing in High School for EFL Students

According to Zainal, Z., Busin, M., & Hajar, S, (2011), those students who perform their writing task without reading texts encounter several problems. Authors have mainly concentrated on the four major problems and the sub-issues underlying these four problems. These include i. Attention Problem, a) Difficulty getting started on the writing, b) Poorly planned writing, ii.

Memory Problem, a) Poor vocabulary, b) Misspelled words, c) Frequent grammar errors, iii. Language Problem, a) Poor vocabulary, b) Difficulty with word spelling and meaning, iv. Higher-Order Cognition Problem, a) Problem in generating ideas or elaborating them b) Difficulty in developing and organizing ideas (Zainal, Z., Busin, M., & Hajar, S, 2011)

The analysis of the range of difficulties further has confirmed the multi-dimensional aspects of literacy process. The ESL learners are not only behaviourally weak in developing their attention towards a second language but are also cognitively and linguistically weak. Alkhaldeh (2010) identified school-level challenges faced by the ESL learner in gaining effective competencies and efficiencies in the reading comprehension process. The major challenges include,

“Lack of co-operative learning in reading instruction, overcrowded classroom size, L1/L2 interference, teacher-related mal-practices in the teaching of reading comprehension, lack of speed reading, lack of consideration of learner's reading challenges and methods, lack of connection between intensive and extensive reading activities, incongruence between learner's pre-knowledge and existing ideas in the passage” (Alkhaldeh, 2010, p. 1)

Similarly, (Dahan, 2008) has stressed on the effect of the limited level of knowledge on the student' performance at the college and university levels. Author state that limited prior knowledge restricts the students' ability to become a good reader or good writer at the high school levels. Literature has pointed out towards the influence of the cultural factors on the writing of paragraphs, texts, articles and news clippings within the classroom. On the other side, reading is not a celebrated activity in the high school curriculum of the ESL learners in numerous schools. Reading is given secondary important juts as a tool for quest of better writing opportunities. Critical reading is not regarded as important literacy component in the formal syllabus of the high school.

Additionally, Chen & Sabina Chia-Li, (2015) believe that relative to any other factor, students' deficiency in realising the advantages of the reading writing connection contribute vitally in shaping the difficulties for the ESL learners. Such lack of awareness is associated with the separation of reading and writing activities in the EFL classroom. Teachers demonstrate the

reading as decoding process in front of the students while represent writing as a task of constructing grammatically correct essays. Therefore, instructors must recognise it important to improve language proficiencies through the demonstration of the inseparable nature of these activities.

It appears that college instructors of the ESL students do not place focus on the design flaws of the curriculum. Mermelstein, (2015) has noted that although the second language learners are allowed reading as integrated activity with writing, they are not offered increased accessibility to the reading materials, more accountability and longer durations in increase the level of their efficiency and fluency. In this manner, individuals are unable to extinguish the pleasure of the reading process because the large emphasis is placed on the writing tasks, which is the core of the curriculum. In discussing, another major concern associated with the interaction between the reading and writing process, Mermelstein, (2015) identified that teachers do not place enough accountability on the reading process as compared to the writing process. More than 70-80 percent of the marks in the curriculum area assessed with the help of a writing task that further worsens the situation for the students.

A commonly observed challenge encountered by EFL students show that students' writing and reading integration phase is adversely influenced when the activities are deponent on a source. Working with sources poses challenges for the second language writers because the ideas presented in the source might be prior influenced by the native literacy background. The conflict between the literacy conventions of both the languages can place significant effects on the interaction of the reading and writing activities of the learners. In discussing about the inability of the students' aptitude to understand the reading and writing as a negotiation process Castellani (2001) stated that the relationship between reading and writing has long been recognized but the same relationship is based on the readers' and writers' goals, intentions and circumstances. In the conflicting mode, the reading-writing relationship cannot be understood as negotiation process. Castellani (2001) also emphasized on the essence of writing as an activity that is informed by reading, whereas it influences reading as learners become more proficient in their language use. Besides Grabe suggested that it "implies processing efficiency, language knowledge, strategic awareness, extensive practice in reading, cognitive resources in working memory to allow critical reflection, and appropriate purposes for reading" (Grabe, 2004, p. 19).

The discussion offers a unique view that in case any of the following elements specified by Grabe are absent among the learners, this can challenge the effective learning among the learners.

Thus, subsequent to the theoretical analysis of the reading and writing practices and difficulties involved in such integration for the EFL high school students, the next section presents findings of the earlier research investigations on the effects of reading exercises on writing performances. These findings will inform the readers about the global practices in the similar context.

2.6 Earlier Studies on the Effects of Reading Exercise on Writing Performance

International researchers have investigated the practical use of the different reading exercise in increasing writing performances of the EFL and ESL students in international countries. In the similar context, Kirin, (2010) has examined Thai EFL learners encouraged to read and assessed on the basis of their reading amounts and essay writing abilities measured every five weeks in a 15 weeks study throughout the entire engagement. Sample chosen by the author i.e. thirty-four (34) second year non-English major undergraduates was also well informing for the purpose of current investigation. The results showed no improvement in the low-ability learners' writing abilities. Author reported the major reason behind such insignificant result was low English proficiency that confined the students' efforts to integrate the cognitive strategies.

In contrary to the mentioned no-effects, Mansour & Al-Shorman, (2014) investigated the positive effects of an extensive reading program on the writing performance of Saudi EFL university students. Using a sample of 48 students chosen from King Saud University, the researcher assessed the effectiveness of the extensive teaching program. The reading program was helpful in increasing the readers' effectiveness in reading different genres such as narrative, argumentative, descriptive, scientific and expository texts. These texts were helpful for the students to extract their main idea from the text and use the same later in the writing. The reading strategy was effective in minimizing the level of boredom and in keeping them all active all the time. Literature commended the influence of extensive reading programs in increasing motivation levels of the students.

Similarly, Hany, (2007) has confirmed the feasibility of the reading tools to be used for writing approach in developing writing skills among the Egyptian EFL learners. The results of his small scale research showed a strong and significant link between the reading activities and writing skills not only in terms of improved performances but also in terms of the improved and positive attitudes of the students.

One of the significant studies by De Rycker & Ponnudurai, (2011) examined the comparative analysis of the two presentation modes i.e. online reading and print-based reading on the writing abilities of the Malaysian students. The research design selected by the authors was related with the assessment of the effects of different reading modes on the improved argumentative essays written by the students. The results of the study reported 61% of all essays as ‘good’, with 39% rated as ‘average’ to ‘poor’. Researchers found that the interactive online reading condition defers superior task performance. Such modes relative to the offline reading are capable of producing proportionately more essays with a ‘good’ thesis statement. Thus the statistically significant findings were consistent with the past studies.

In a quasi-experimental study, Yoshimura, (2009) investigated the effects of connectivity between the reading and writing through a guided checklist provided to the EFL learners. The authors compared two different groups of students, one with and another without a guiding checklist. The findings confirmed that students with checklist were positively and significantly able to consider genre of text effectively and applied the same knowledge in making effective integration of the reading and writing processes. The contents added to the checklist give better idea for the current investigation in assessing the reading strategies and instruction used in the chosen Lebanese school. The checklist contained following major guiding statements,

“1st reading: Read the text paragraph by paragraph in order to find the overall structure

2nd reading: Read the text carefully in order to understand the details.

3rd reading: Take your time and check the language forms. Consult a dictionary if necessary.

After reading: Identify the rhetorical context of the text and your own reading”
(Yoshimura, 2009, p. 1883)

In comparison to the recent investigations, historically the past researchers have also contributed effectively in comparing the significantly positive effects of the extensive reading on the writing performances of the students. In one of such study, Tsang, (1996) compared the effects of an enriched syllabus comprised of extensive reading and frequent writing assignments on English descriptive writing performance at different form levels in the group of Cantonese-speaking students at four form levels in Hong Kong. The sample has taken part in three English programs (A) regular plus unrelated (mathematics) enrichment program, (B) regular plus extensive reading and (C) regular plus frequent writing practice. The findings showed that the reading program was supportive in addressing the content and language use needs of the EFL learners.

Tierney & Leys, (1984) in the process of asking a research question i.e. how does the reading-writing relationships expands the writing experiences of an individual. The researchers answered their question by shedding light on the benefits of the reading such as in the overall achievement, attitude, genre, preferences or sense of the audience. The interconnections between the reading and writing tasks were also found to influence the revisions in the preparation of writing critical essays. According to Harste, Woodward, and Burke (1984, p.218) cited in the research of Tierney & Leys, (1984), “growing understanding of storiness, of wordness, of how one keeps ideas apart in writing, how the sounds of language are mapped onto written letters, of how one uses writing to mean and more”. It would not be wrong in stating that reading exercises are helpful for the readers to increase their creative writing experiences.

From the detailed analysis of the global investigations and educational experimental studies, it was found that generally reading practices have placed significant and positive effects on the writing performances of the ESL students worldwide. These findings show the path for the primary investigation in the current research. However before investigation from the primary study participants, it comes out as extremely necessary to offer an overview of the ESL reading and writing in Lebanon.

2.7 ESL Reading and Writing in High Schools of Lebanon

Past academic studies have also offered comprehensive view of the foreign language education in the educational institutions of the Lebanon. According to Bacha & Bahous, (2011), Lebanon as a small Middle Eastern country plays a vital role of a gold mine for language learners in the country. The internal influences are enough for the learners to address their multilingual concerns. Besides Arabic, both English and French are used as instructional languages for increasing the competencies of the students at school and university levels. The literature has emphasised on the increased use of literature by the Lebanon teachers to increase the students' performance in reading texts and get involved in the group activities. Read-response method is most common in the educational institutions of Lebanon where the learners are given a piece of literature to respond the subject matter and share their own opinions (Ghosn, 2007). Additionally, Shakra & Bahnous, (2015) in investigating the effectiveness of the second language learning process of Lebanese public schools, Shakra & Bahnous, (2015) reported that deteriorated teaching-learning process in the schools are adversely influencing the four language skills such as listening, speaking, reading and writing. The key reading and writing exercises highlighted within the pertinent literature included reading difficulty words, comprehension and curriculum-based activities. Nasr, (2001) further added in the discussion by emphasising the role of poetry in enhancing EFL literacy competencies in the high schools of Lebanon. Poetry is recognised as the key element of the TEFL lessons and curriculum. Boretz M. et al., (1992, p. 62) cited in the research of Nasr, (2001) states that *'Literary texts...[are] probably the richest source of verbal context. When students encounter a word in the literary work it is enriched in a complex of meaning-generating relationships'*. The patterns of the poetry literature have been used in past to help the learners get awareness about the vocabulary use and adoption and identification of the similar structures learned in the construction of related subject matter.

Soufi, et al.,9 2013) identified the use of blogs in the Lebanese colleges for enhancing the effectiveness of the learners in English writing and reading classrooms. Authors discussed the Intensive English Program (IEP) adopted by the Lebanon universities in order to develop critical thinking and macro-language skills such as reading, writing, listening and speaking among the individuals. The results showed that these strategies were helpful for the students of

target educational institution in increasing the user-friendly and formal learning environment. Blogging was helpful for the learners in motivating writing as an expression of the meaning beyond the general usage of formal language learning.

2.8 Conceptual Research Framework

The review of academic theoretical studies has helped in developing an effective conceptual research framework for the current research. The developed conceptual framework illustrates the process undergone to achieve the desired objectives of the research from the primary participants.

1. Affect of Reading on Improved writing skills of Lebanon eleventh grade students
2. Types and Purposes of the reading courses serving writing of Lebanon eleventh grade students
3. Difficulties faced in their writing by the Lebanon eleventh grade students if not giving much attention

All these three areas investigated through the primary data findings.

2.9 Conclusion

Thus, the chapter can be concluded with the range of findings and evidences of impacts of reading exercises on the writing performances of the global students. However, there is no such study investigating the reading-writing integration for the EFL learners in the Lebanon. Reading-writing comprehension has shown greater effects in terms of improving vocabulary, content and creative writing skills among the high school graders and university level students across the globe including Mediterranean, Asian and western countries. However, the review has revealed vital differences in terms of strategies used to integrate the reading and writing practices for the learners in the high school system of different countries. Thus, based on these findings, current investigation tend to look into the affects of reading on improved writing skills, types and purposes of reading and difficulties faced by the high-school students in this context. The next chapter of the study presents the research methodology.

Chapter Three: Research Methodology

3.1 Introduction

The chapter has offered a detailed description of the research methodology chosen for collecting and analysing the data from the primary research participants. Research methodology was selected after considering this study as one of its kind in investigating the reading-writing integration of EFL high school students in Lebanon. The overall research methodology was selected after analysing the connectivity among design, approach and strategies used to extract information from the participants of the study. The research methodology of the current study was informed by the academic studies reviewed in the second chapter of past literature.

3.2 Research Methodology

Positive research paradigm was selected for the primary investigation aligned with a quantitative analysis of data. Positive paradigm was helpful in assessing the writing performances of the ESL students objectively. The objective analysis of the writing performances of the two groups i.e. control group and the experimental group were helpful in excavating the real benefits of the reading strategies for EFL writing skills as well as difficulties encountered by the EFL students. With the help of positivism, the research was able to control the researcher's bias through the employment of quantitative assessment framework. There was no structured instrument used for extracting formation from the participants like survey or questionnaire rather textual analysis was used as feasible research strategy in order to extract desired level data from the students' samples.

3.3 Sampling and Participants

Sampling participants from the large population was the most complex process of the research methodology. Random sampling was used to give equal chance of selection to all eleven graders from the chosen school. Since the research aim was to investigate the high-school students' writing performances therefore eleven graders were chosen for the analysis. For this study, sample was intentionally drawn out from the population of the grade eleven students studying in a private school: ENGO school in Zehrieh- Tripoli / Lebanon. The total sample size consisted of 60 students, who were sub-divided into two sections, A and B. Each section was comprised of 30 students. The selection was made after considering the aim of the research on investigating both the reading and writing skills. The schools have included both reading and

writing skills within the English language courses and the current research has looked into the most important basic skills in this grade. Additionally, the sample participants included both males and females of about 15 to 16 years old to avoid gender bias from the findings of the present investigation.

3.4 Research Design

The design selected for the primary investigation was extremely important for the examination of the effectiveness of reading in improving the writing performance of grade eleven students in a private school. Quantitative research design was chosen for this purpose where the focus was placed in the numbers and statistics in order to assess the writing performances of the students in a quantitative manner. One of the primary objective of the current investigation was to search whether the reading practices can place significant effects on the writing performances of Lebanese ESL students. Therefore, quantitative design was helpful in providing data which is easy to analyze statistically and fairly reliable. The design relative to qualitative design allows numerically enriched results from the research participants. In order to demonstrate the effective implementation of the quantitative research design in this study, the section offers a thorough view on the subjects, instruments and procedures. The participants were sampled into two groups, control and experimental groups. Section A is the control group which was investigated for ten successive weeks. In each week, students were assessed for 2 hours writing sessions. In the other experimental group, section B were assessed for a three-hour-sessions per week. In each week, two-hour sessions per week were examined for writing and for reading. The main instruments used for data collection in this study were two forms of tests given to the experimental group in the pretest and posttest periods.

3.5 Research Procedure

The detailed data collection procedure was based on the suitability for the subjects for the participants of this study. Criteria considered in assessing the text-suitability included level of difficulty, the length of the text, its genre and its topics appropriate for grade eleven.

Control Group:

Writing Procedure adopted for the control group was based on ten weeks of application. In each week 2 hours of writing sessions were allocated to the group. The first hour was used for

writing instructions and explanations about essay writing, and the other hour was used for the writing test such as short essay about a given topic without reading any related text about the topic given. Below is the list of the week-wise schedule used with the control group participants.

1st week: 1st hour, giving instructions' about essay writing, then on the 2nd hour giving a writing test that requires the students to write a short essay about "teenagers' problems"
2nd week: 1st hour, giving writing instructions, about a different type of essays, then on the 2 nd hour giving a test telling the students to write about the importance of friendship
3rd week: 1st hour for instructing, and one for writing essay about "maintaining a good health"
4th week: 1st hour for instruction, and one for writing essay about "working women"
5th week: 1 st hour for instruction, and one for writing essay about "technology"
6th week: 1st hour for instructing, and one for writing essay about "pollution"
7th week: 1st hour for instruction, and one for writing essay about "civil marriage"
8th week: 1 st hour for instruction, and one for writing essay about "travel"
9th week: 1st hour for instructing and one for writing essay about "war of property"
10 th week: 1 st hour for instruction, and one for writing essay about "arts"

Subsequently, the scores of each test for knowing the difficulties faced by the students while writing the text were recorded and evaluated. The evaluation process was sub-divided into four categories.

1. how much information they have about the given topic/content,
2. how much vocabulary they have related to the topic,
3. how much information they have about organization and elaboration of ideas,
4. how much they know about grammatical structures

Experimental Group

On the other hand, two tests were given to the experimental group including pre and posttests. These tests were offered to the students for ten weeks.

Pre test was given to the students each week for two hours in which they were given one hour for understanding the writing instructions and the second hour for writing a short essay about a given topic without reading materials related to the topic. Similar patterns, topics and structures were also followed for the experimental group as were followed for the control group (refer to above table).

Post test was also allocated ten weeks duration with 3 hours a week. In this period, two hours were used for giving students texts to read. After the students have read the material assigned, in the third hour, they were asked to write an essay related to the topic of the text read earlier. They were asked to employ their individual understanding of the subject or issue in writing the subsequent essay. The topics of the test were similar to that of the control group.

After ten ' weeks of both the pretest and post test exercises, the essays written without reading and essays written after reading the given material were scored and evaluated using the similar pattern as adopted earlier for the evaluation of the control group's tests. The subjects' results were analyzed for their understanding related to the given topic of information, spelling, vocabulary related, organization and elaboration of ideas, and grammar/syntactic forms. Subsequently, these evaluated results were used to compare the difficulties faced by the students while writing and how the reading of texts affect their performance and achievement. All the analyzed data were subsequently discussed in line with the literature review in order to test the research hypothesis and to demonstrate the answers to the research questions.

4.1 Ethical Considerations

Due to the involvement of the primary research participants, i.e. eleven grade students in the study process, several ethical considerations were taken into account. These included informed consent, voluntary participation, truth and integrity, originality, and honesty. In working with the human participants, research ethics require the researcher to look into the measures necessary for protecting the participants from any emotional or physical harm. Therefore, participants were given details of the tests and research process prior starting of the control and experimental group studies. The purpose behind this to ensure that participants have complete information about the research process and they are participating in the study after gaining complete awareness of the overall risks and process involved. It also ensured that pressure or

coercion was not exercised to force participation. They were asked to signed the consent form to preserve as ethical evidences. Additionally, in assessing the writing performances of the students, complete consideration was placed on the true and fair objective analysis, which was free of bias. The results were analysed honestly while maintaining the originality of the content. Similarly, the same criteria were used to assess the results of the control group participants and the experimental group participants to ensure credibility of the research findings. Moreover, reliability and validity of the secondary data sources were assessed in using the sources to develop second chapter of this study.

4.2 Conclusion

Thus, based on the research methods used for data collection and data analysis of the study, it was ensured that the findings of this educational investigation are complete and according to the parameters of the professional research. The next chapter of the study presents the findings of the primary investigation.

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