

Writing and Reading Relationship

When looking at their nature, writing and reading seem to be separate skills in that reading is a passive activity and writing is a productive one. Yet, these two language skills are complementary and can be closely developed. The apparent relationship between them is that reading helps students become better writers. Through reading, students come into contact with the rules of grammar, so they would develop a sense for the language structure and grammar and increase their vocabulary (Johnson, 2008). According to Eisterhold (1990):

Reading in the writing classroom is understood as the appropriate input for acquisition of writing skills because it is generally assumed that reading passages will somehow function as primary models from which writing skills can be learned, or at least inferred.

(Eisterhold, 1990: 88)

Greenberg and Rath (1985) see that the assumptions leading to a separation of reading and writing are mistaken maintaining that they are “interactive and fundamentally complementary communication skills....” (p. 11). Greenberg and Rath (1985) base their argument on the fact that the writing process makes writers realize how their products affect others. In the course of selecting, rejecting, arranging and rearranging ideas, writers do their best to communicate their message in the most understandable way. While doing this, they must consider how readers are going to understand their output and what reaction it would produce. Readers, on the other hand, play a key role in the communication process by interpreting another person’s message in terms of their own attitudes, experiences and perceptions. Therefore, “[w]riting and reading are interrelated and inseparable communication skills. Through them, students attempt to organize and communicate their perceptions of the world in a way that is both personally meaningful and understandable to others” (*ibid.* 13). Graham and

Hebert (2010) for their part emphasize that writing and reading are complementary and to be developed hand in hand in three ways:

1. Reading and writing are both functional activities that can be combined to accomplish specific goals, such as learning new ideas presented in a text.
2. Reading and writing are connected, as they draw upon common knowledge and cognitive processes.
3. Reading and writing are both communication activities. Writers should gain insight about reading by creating their own texts in order to gain better comprehension of texts produced by others (Graham & Hebert, 2010: 4).

Eisterhold, J. C. (1990). Reading-writing connections: Toward a description for second language learners. In B. Kroll (Ed.), *Second language writing: Research insights for the classroom* (pp. 88-101). Cambridge University Press: Cambridge.

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