



# Writing-Reading Relationships: Effectiveness of Writing Activities as Pre-Reading Tasks to Enhance L2 Inferential Reading Comprehension

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## Abstract

The study examines the interaction between reading and writing processes in general and more specifically the impact of pre-reading tasks incorporating writing tasks (referred to as “prw tasks”) in helping the development of inferential reading comprehension. A sample of 70 first year ESL students of the University of Kelaniya were initially selected with one group (experimental group) engaging in “prw tasks” while the other group (control group) performing the tasks without a pre-reading component. The intervention was for 6 sessions (one hour in each session). At the end of each session, the performance of the two groups was measured and the test scores were analyzed using the data analysis package SPSS to determine the effectiveness of the intervention. The results indicated that the experimental group had significantly performed better than the control group which suggested the effectiveness of the prw tasks in improving reading comprehension.

**Keywords:** inferential comprehension, writing tasks, English as L2, control-experimental

## 1. Introduction

Reading is an essential skill in educational settings as students have to frequently engage in complex reading texts. In ESL contexts, the students are mostly frustrated in reading in English as they have to grapple with both the complexities of the reading skill and their own lack of proficiency in English language.

Research evidence suggests that it is more productive to teach reading skill (or any language skill for that matter), in combination with other language skills, or to develop eclectic approaches in language teaching. In this regard, researchers have been particularly interested in developing instructional programmes that incorporate reading and writing skills since both skills share “common cognitive proficiency” (Eisterhold, 1994, p. 94). Due to such interest in exploring reading-writing relations, research has focused on three fundamental approaches to understanding reading-writing relations: how reading leads to writing, how writing leads to reading, and how reading and writing are mutually beneficial. However, there is limited research, or a “gap” in research in relation to the way writing affects reading comprehension. More significantly, there is even lesser research evidence in relation to the phenomenon in L2 contexts. In fact, Hudson (2007) asserts that while there is less evidence in relation to how writing influences reading, there is “much less empirical work in the second language literature” (p.279) that examines the way L2 writing has an impact on L2 reading.

In this context, the proposed study is significant as it focuses on how writing tasks in English help reading comprehension in English in a context where English operates as a L2. In this manner, the study attempts to contribute to this important area of research on L2 writing and reading relations.

## 2. Background

Reading skill is one of the most important language skills required especially in academic contexts. At the same time, it is a skill that needs to be developed through extensive reading tasks and the learner is required to possess adequate vocabulary knowledge, sub-skills and strategies related to reading. Since it is a complex skill, reading in a second language (L2) is more demanding particularly for students with low proficiency in L2 as they have to deal with linguistic and syntactic structures that are probably unfamiliar to them. In relation to Sri Lankan context, and more specifically to the university setting, reading in L2 or in that regard, reading in English remains a challenge for the students and especially for those who study at the Faculty of Humanities with a majority of students possessing low proficiency in English (LEP).

While recent literature suggests that reading comprehension can be developed effectively by adopting eclectic approaches which combine writing and reading. In fact, researchers have identified them as complementary processes. However, as both writing tasks and reading comprehension are vast and complicated areas, this particular study is only

focused on two specific aspects of writing and reading comprehension, i.e. inferential reading comprehension and writing based pre-reading tasks (henceforth referred to as “**prw**” tasks)

### 3. Literature Review

The complexity of reading skill is attested by Grabe (2009) who claims that “no single statement is going to capture the complexity of reading” (p. 14). Irwin (1991) provides a useful definition of reading comprehension, emphasizing reading skill as an active process. According to her, reading comprehension is “the process of using one’s own experiences and the writer’s cues to construct a set of meanings that are useful to the individual reader reading in a specific context” (p. 9). At another level, Nunan (1991) refers to two fundamental approaches to reading comprehension as “bottom-up” approach which involves “decoding a series of written symbols into their aural equivalents” (p. 64) and “top-down” approach which “emphasizes the reconstruction of meaning rather than decoding of form” (p. 65). Irwin (1991) after reviewing research evidence, interprets reading comprehension as consisting of both “top-down” and “bottom-up” approaches and concludes that there are “at least five types of processes” (p. 2) involved in reading comprehension as microprocesses, integrative processes, macroprocesses, elaboration processes and metacognitive processes. Importantly, all these claims recognize reading skill and reading comprehension as active processes and signify a paradigm shift in conceptualizing reading in general as it was traditionally perceived as “passive” and “receptive” (Silberstein, 1994, p. 6).

Reading as an “active skill” is supported by studies in schema theory. Schema or schemata (plural) is defined as “knowledge already stored in memory” and they “function in the process of interpreting new information and allowing it to enter and become a part of the knowledge base” (Anderson and Pearson, 1989, p. 37). Bartlett (1932) who first uses the term ‘schema’ in its modern sense, defines schema as “an active organization of past reactions, or past experiences” (as cited in Anderson and Pearson, 1989, p.39). Silberstein (1994) refers to two types of schemata as formal schemata which involve “knowledge of rhetorical structures and conventions” and content schemata which involve “knowledge of the world beyond texts” (p. 8). Schemata are considered a rich source of knowledge as they involve “considerable knowledge of contexts, interpersonal relations, the roles of readers and writers, and how all these influence texts” (Hyland, 2003, P. 25). Anderson (2000) specifically highlights the contribution of schemata in reading comprehension and claims that readers activate their “existing schemata and map incoming information onto them” (p. 17). In fact Goodman (1982) had already referred to reading as “a psycholinguistic guessing game” since the readers infer the meaning of text through a “minimal textual information” and “maximum use of existing, activated, knowledge” or schemata (Anderson, 2000, p. 17).

Interestingly, some of the proponents of schema theory claim that schemata can override the possible effects of linguistic and syntactic difficulties and facilitate reading comprehension. While Widdowson (1983) claims that “background knowledge exercises an executive function over the systematic level of language [phonological, morphological and syntactic elements]” (as cited in Nunan, 1991, p. 68), Clapham (1996) refers to two studies done by Floyd and Carell (1987) and Johnson (1981, 1982) which present evidence that schemata compensate for linguistic and syntactic difficulties faced by non-native speakers of English (p. 47). Further, Nunan (1991) in a study conducted with L2 learners to test the impact of schemata in the perceiving of textual relationships, finds out that background knowledge or schemata is in fact “a more significant factor” in “determining the subjects’ comprehension of the textual relationships in question” (p.70). Such views are consistent with the “interactive compensatory model” developed by Stanovich (1980) which postulates that “the degree of interaction among components [involved in reading] depends upon knowledge deficits in individual components, where interaction occurs to compensate for deficits. Thus, readers with poor word recognition skills may use top-down knowledge to compensate” (Anderson, 2000, p. 19).

In relation to reading-writing relations, literature has examined aspects of the relationship between the two skills and the effectiveness of instructional programmes which develop tasks that combine the two. In fact Hyland (2003), referring to studies conducted by Carson & Leki (1993) and Grabe (2001), justifies such approaches emphasizing the similarities of reading and writing processes, “both processes [reading and writing] involve the individual in constructing meaning through complex cognitive and linguistic abilities that draw on problem-solving skills and activation of existing knowledge of both structure and content” (p. 17). Grabe (2008) shares a similar view and maintains that “most researchers see reading-writing relations as mutually supportive for literacy development and content learning” (P. 250). He also refers to the limited research that focus on how writing tasks contribute to reading comprehension, “it is less common to assume that students, and most other people write in order to read” (p. 243). Hudson (2007) points out a shared characteristic of reading and writing which is of particular importance to the present study, “in both reading and writing, schemata are activated” (p. 266). Rose (2007) emphasizes writing before reading and claims that “reading will only emerge out of an activity that corresponds to what writing is, which could be characterized as a refined activity of shaping” (p. 13). Similarly, Eisterhold (1994) refers to research done by Stotsky as early as 1983 which suggest that “writing activities can be useful for improving reading comprehension and retention of information” (p.90). Interestingly, there is research evidence related to the effectiveness of such eclectic approaches involving writing and reading in relation to L2 settings. For example, Oded and Walters (2002) has conducted a study involving EFL students in Israel where one group of students had to complete a summary after a reading task which was followed by a reading comprehension test and the students who did the summarizing task scored better. The researchers attribute the findings to show that the “deeper processing called for in producing a summary led the readers to deeper comprehension” (as cited by Hudson, 2007, p. 282).

#### 4. Writing based pre-reading tasks (A combination of writing, reading and schema)

The “prw” task or the writing based pre-reading task, which is an integral aspect of this study, involves the readers writing about a certain topic before they read a passage on the topic. Chastain (1988) states that the purpose of such pre-reading tasks is “to motivate the students to want to read the assignment [reading] and to prepare them to be able to read it” (as cited in Ajideh, 2003, p. 6). In this regard, genre studies are of much importance. In fact, Wallace (2001) correctly points out that as readers, when we encounter a text for the first time, one of the first questions we ask is “what kind of text is this?” He claims that while this could in fact be the first question, the second question we may ask is “what is the text about?” Wallace adds that a reader’s “schematic knowledge may be organized around topics such as ‘American football’ or ‘sociolinguistics.’”

Wallace (2001) says that in certain instances the reader would benefit if s/he has been given the general topic as that will activate a series of related schemata facilitating comprehension. In fact, Wallace (2001) refers to practical experience in stressing this point, and especially emphasizes the importance of topics; “we can see how useful the provision of a title or heading is in allowing the reader to access schematic knowledge” (p. 35). Cook (1989) expresses a similar view and states, “The mind stimulated by key words or phrases in the text or by the context activates a knowledge schema” (as cited in Ajideh, 2003, p. 5).

Flower and Hayes (1981) argue that “a single key word” may represent “a whole network of ideas” (p. 372). They also argue that key words have an important role to play in a text written by a writer. They in fact suggest that the writer’s task is to “translate a meaning, which may be embodied in key words...organized in a complex network of relationships, into a linear piece of written English” (p. 373).

Johnson (1982) refers to a similar beneficiary role played by schema or background knowledge in developing reading comprehension, “the provision of vicarious or real experiences would fill in or expand the readers’ existing culturally determined background knowledge of a topic and would prepare them to comprehend and retain material on that topic in the reading passage that followed” (p. 504). She draws attention to two studies done with ESL learners which examine the effects of providing prior cultural information with contrasting results. In one study done by Yousef (1968), the Middle Eastern students were unable to interpret texts from the American culture even after “an intensive cultural orientation” mainly because of their negative attitudes to American culture that had a negative impact on their motivation and efforts to learn. However, in contrast, Gatbonton and Tucker (1971) claim that though certain negative attitudes made Filipino ESL students to misunderstand American literature, when they were given appropriate and relevant cultural information, the students’ reading comprehension improved (p. 504). McKeown et al. (2009) review a series of research related to the use of background knowledge/schema in improving comprehension, illustrating how it has a positive effect on different groups of students. Interestingly, these students involve “primary grade children (Beck, Omanson, & McKeown, 1982; Pearson, Hansen, & Gordon, 1979), intermediate-grade students (McKeown, Beck, Sinatra, & Loxterman, 1992), middle school students (Graves, Cooke, & LaBerge, 1983), and high school students (Hood, 1981)” (p. 219). They conclude that upgrading of background knowledge through various means can enhance the comprehension of the students (p. 219). These research findings are important as they illustrate how background knowledge develops comprehension in students belonging to different age groups.

The importance of pre-reading tasks is well-documented in literature. In Chastain’s (1988) view, the purpose of pre-reading activities is to motivate the students to want to read the assignment and to prepare them to be able to read it (as cited in Ajideh, 2003, p. 6). Wallace (2001, p. 62) refers particularly to the benefits of orienting the teaching process to incorporate pre-reading tasks, “in the case of intermediate and advanced learners, whether reading in a text or second language, there are also pre-reading and post-reading procedures which can encourage the activation of linguistic and schematic knowledge” (p. 62). Ringler and Weber (1984) state that such pre-reading tasks help the reader in comprehending a text better as they, “provide a reader with necessary background to organize activity” (as cited in Ajideh, 2003, p. 6). However, as Ajideh (2003) claims correctly, most of the pre-reading tasks used by the teachers are devised to help the readers with language difficulties and they do not help the reader to create meaning (p. 6).

Since the proposed study deals with pre-reading tasks where the students are provided with topics prior to the reading passage, it is important to consider any similar research studies and theoretical approaches which support such a view. Bos and Anders (1990) argue that teachers should spend time “building students’ knowledge of the topics before reading” (as cited in Gersten et al., 2001, p. 285). They also emphasize that limited knowledge of topics has a “detrimental effect” on the comprehension of the students (as cited in Gersten et al., 2001, p. 285).

One of the earliest studies which focuses on topic-based reading comprehension is the experience-text-relationship (ETR) method of Au (1979) which consists of students expressing their own experience of knowledge about the topic prior to reading (as cited in Ajideh, 2003, p. 6). The actual reading passage is introduced only after the students have shared their opinions, knowledge and experience of the topic. Langer’s (1981) pre-reading plan adopts a similar approach where the teacher introduces a key word, concept or picture to stimulate a discussion among the students prior to the reading passage (Ajideh, 2003, p. 6). In fact, Williams (1987) refers to a “three phase approach to reading” which have pre-reading, while-reading and post-reading segments in a reading activity. According to him, the initial stage of the approach consists of the teacher introducing the topic of the passage that the students are going to read, followed by group work where the students list out the words that come to mind (as cited in Ajideh, 2003, p. 9). This kind of “brainstorming” is suggested as a pre-reading task by Wallace (1992) whose approach is almost identical to the one suggested by Williams. The only difference being in his study, the students call out words/concepts related to the given word/concept instead of writing down a list (as cited by Ajideh, 2003, p. 10).

In fact, Hudson (1984) illustrates the effectiveness of the same strategy (brainstorming and writing about the content of the passage before the actual reading passage) focusing on bilingual students. According to him, this kind of strategy “establishes a connection, a set of expectations, and background knowledge that facilitates comprehension” (as cited in Zamel, 1992, p. 478). In fact, such an activity transforms the readers into active agents of the text, enabling them to view texts with “a writer’s view” and in fact, the students themselves become “authors of the text” (Zamel, 1992, p. 479).

Auerbach and Paxton (1997) suggest the following pre-reading strategies of which three are schema-theory-based pre-reading tasks/strategies.

- Accessing prior knowledge
- Writing your way into reading (writing about your experience related to the topic)
- Asking questions based on the title
- Semantic mapping
- Making predictions based on previewing
- Identifying the text structure
- Skimming for general idea
- Reading the introduction and conclusion
- Writing a summary of the article based on previewing (p.259)

Among the strategies, the second reading strategy suggested by Auerbach and Praxton, “Writing your way into reading (writing about your experience related to the topic)” is of particular importance to the present study as the study is based on the role played by writing tasks (focusing on the topic) prior to reading. Zamel (1992) reiterates the importance of such a writing activity before a reading comprehension task in the following manner:

Asking them [students] to write about an experience that figures in a text they are about to read not only helps to students to explain the matter to themselves but sets up a connection, a readiness that may not have been established otherwise (p. 478).

Spack (1985) adopts the strategy in her reading classes, and claims to have observed an improvement in the students’ comprehension of a passage after they completed the task and read the passage (p.711). She describes her strategy in the following manner, “...I often ask students to do an exercise called write-before-you-read...in this exercise, students write from their own experience about an idea or happening contained in the work they are about to read” (Spack, 1985, p. 711). She justifies her reading approach as follows:

The write-before-you-read technique may help make students better readers because ‘efficient comprehension the ability to relate the textual material to one’s own knowledge’ (Carrell and Eisterhold 1983:556-557). They learn, too, to trust the validity of their own ideas and experiences and to recognize that literary works deal with real, relevant issues that they themselves can and do write about (Spack, 1985, p. 714)

## **5. Inferential reading comprehension**

As mentioned previously, the study focuses only on the impact of prw tasks on inferential comprehension. The concept of a level of reading comprehension as inferential comprehension is related to the theoretical position that reading comprehension comprises of different levels. In this section of this essay, some of the theoretical findings related to levels of comprehension theory and inferential comprehension are discussed.

Alonzo et al. (2009) refer to observations made by Lapp & Flood, 1983; Leu & Kinzer, 1999, who argue in favour for the levels of comprehension theory in relation to reading comprehension. This theory hypothesizes three levels of reading comprehension as, literal, inferential and evaluative. Fielding and Pearson (1994) who refer to the complexity of reading comprehension, maintain that comprehension in general involves three critical phases as “inferential and evaluative thinking” as well as “literal reproduction of the author’s words” (p.1). Alonzo et al (2009) define inferential comprehension as follows:

Inferential comprehension, which requires readers to interact more with the text, is thought to be the next level of comprehension [after literal comprehension]. For inferential comprehension to occur, readers are required to do more than simply recognize what an author has written on the page by “reading between the lines” to infer what the intended meaning of the text is and to try to understand what the author is trying to say (Vacca et al., 1987). (p. 35)

There are research studies, which suggest of a close link between background knowledge and making inferences or inferential comprehension. For instance, Graves and Liang (2008) define the concept of inference linking the phenomenon with both the background knowledge and the reading text as follows, “inference is an educated guess and... they [readers] make an inference by combining their prior knowledge with information they gain from the text” (p. 41). After reviewing a series of research studies conducted in relation to reading strategies, Fielding and Pearson (1994) identify “using background knowledge to make inferences” (p. 4) as one of the important strategies in reading comprehension, which again validates the claim that there is a strong link between background knowledge and making inferences.

In literature, several sub-skills are listed under inferential reading comprehension. These sub-skills are important as this particular study focuses on examining the impact of prw tasks in relation to each of the sub-skills of inferential comprehension. The sub-skills of inferential comprehension as envisaged by Keene and Zimmerman (1997) are as follows:

- Draw conclusions from text
- Make reasonable predictions as they [students] read, test and revise those students as they read further
- Create dynamic interpretations of text that are adapted as they continue to read
- Use the combination of background knowledge and explicitly stated information from the text to answer questions they have as they read
- Make connections between conclusions they draw and other beliefs or knowledge
- Make critical or analytical judgments about what they read

(Pannell, 2002, p. 2)

Pennell (2002) refers to a taxonomy developed by Barret (1974) who identifies eight subtasks (or sub-skills) which are related to inferential comprehension. Due to overlapping with the sub-skills of Keene and Zimmerman's model, only two subtasks (or sub-skills) developed by Barret (1974) are used in this study. They are, "inferring the main idea" and "inferring sequence" (p. 1).

### 6. Research problem, research question and hypothesis:-

The research studies as well as the theoretical concepts examined in the Literature review, helped to form the following research question and the hypothesis for this study.

The main research problem investigated in the study is....

How would writing tasks prior to a reading activity facilitate the development of inferential reading comprehension in English?

Based on this research problem, the primary research question of the study is:-

Do writing based pre-reading tasks (prw tasks) contribute to the development of sub-skills related to inferential reading comprehension of ESL learners?

The null hypothesis ( $H_0$ ) of the study is:

Writing based pre-reading tasks have no impact in developing the sub-skills related to inferential reading comprehension of ESL students

The alternative hypothesis ( $H_1$ ) the study is:

Writing based pre-readings tasks have an impact on developing the sub-skills related to inferential reading comprehension of ESL students

### 6. Research Design and Methodology:-

The study was a hypothesis driven study with an experimental-control group research design.

#### 6.1 Participants

The initial sample selected for the study involved 70 first year undergraduates belonging to lower intermediate level of proficiency in English from Faculty of Humanities, University of Kelaniya. However, due to learner mortality, the final sample available for the study was 50 students.

#### 6.2 Instruments

The instruments used for the study included 6 reading passages. Each reading passage was followed by a series of 10 MCQs targeting 7 sub-skills of inferential reading comprehension. Table 1 presented below shows the different sub-skills of inferential comprehension examined under each of the 10 MCQs. These sub-skills are based on the sub-skills of inferential comprehension presented by both Keene and Zimmerman (1997) and Barret (1974):

Table 1. Different sub-skills of inferential reading comprehension

Question No.	Related sub-skill of inferential comprehension
1	Draw conclusions from the text
2	Draw conclusions from the text
3	Draw conclusions from the text
4	Make reasonable predictions

5	Make connections between conclusions they draw and other beliefs or knowledge
6	Use the combination of background knowledge and explicitly stated information from the text to answer questions
7	Use the combination of background knowledge and explicitly stated information from the text to answer questions (sub-skill)
8	Identifying the main idea
9	Identifying sequence
10	Make critical or analytical judgments about what they read

### 6.3 Duration

The duration of the intervention was 6 sessions spread over one month with one hour each where the students had to read the passage and answer the MCQs. In relation to the experimental group, a prw task was given prior to the reading passage. In this regard, the prw task was the independent variable.

### 6.4 Data collection and analysis

Quantitative data was gathered from the reading comprehension task which followed each of the reading passages. SPSS version 21 was used to analyze the quantitative data.

## 7. Analysis of data

In answering this primary research question, “Do writing based pre-reading tasks (prw tasks) contribute to the development of sub-skills related to inferential reading comprehension of ESL learners?” several tests were conducted examining different aspects of the question. Initially, it was important to determine whether the experimental group who engaged in prw tasks performed better than the control group who did not engage in such tasks. To examine this phenomenon, the mean values of the total marks obtained by both groups were analyzed using an independent samples t-test. A bar chart illustrating the distribution of the mean scores of the two groups is provided below as Figure 1.

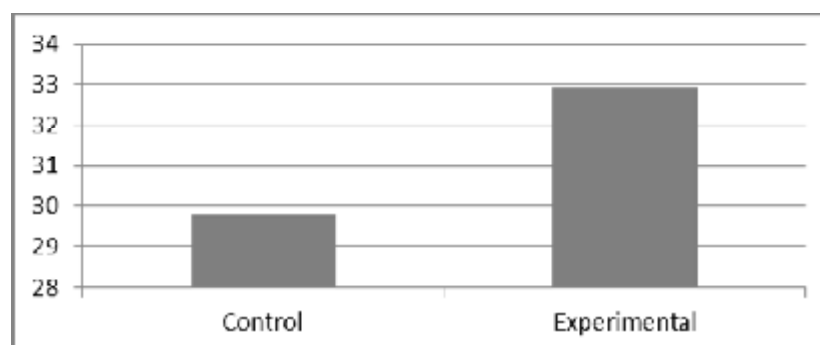


Figure 1. Distribution of mean values of total marks of control and experimental groups

As it is apparent from Figure 1 and the comparison of mean values given below as Table 2, the experimental group has performed significantly better than the control group. This was attested in the analysis of the independent samples t-test as well.

In considering the t-test statistics, unequal variances were assumed and only the lower test was considered (According to Levene's test for equality of variances, there is no significance .160, which is much higher than the significance value of .05). The analysis of the scores indicated a highly significant difference between the performance of the two groups. The students in the experimental group have performed significantly better, with a significance of .004, much lower than the significant value  $p < 0.05$ . Importantly their standard deviation itself was less in comparison to the control group, with the control group recording a deviation of 4.01840 and the experimental group recording a deviation of 3.16122. This indicates that while many of the students of the experimental group have obtained higher marks, they have been consistent in obtaining marks closer to the average mark.

Table 2. Comparison of mean values of total marks of control and experimental groups

Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Control	25	29.78	4.0184
Experimental	25	32.92	3.16122

As this was one of the most significant findings of the research, to verify the analysis a separate one way ANOVA test was carried out using the same set of data. The results of the test verified the findings of the Independent two samples t-

test further establishing the validity of the research finding. The results of the one-way ANOVA test are given below as Table 3.

Table 3. The difference of the students' mean values between the control group and the experimental group

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	123.245	1	123.245	9.429	.004
Within Groups	627.380	48	13.070		
Total	750.625	49			

Based on the findings of the independent samples t-test and the one-way ANOVA test, in considering the total marks of all the students, the students of the experimental group have performed significantly better than the students from the control group.

Since the above tests do not show the performance of the groups in terms of the sub-skills of inferential comprehension, another independent samples t-test was used to analyze the performance of the two groups in relation to each sub-skill. The bar chart (Figure 2) below indicates the results of this test.

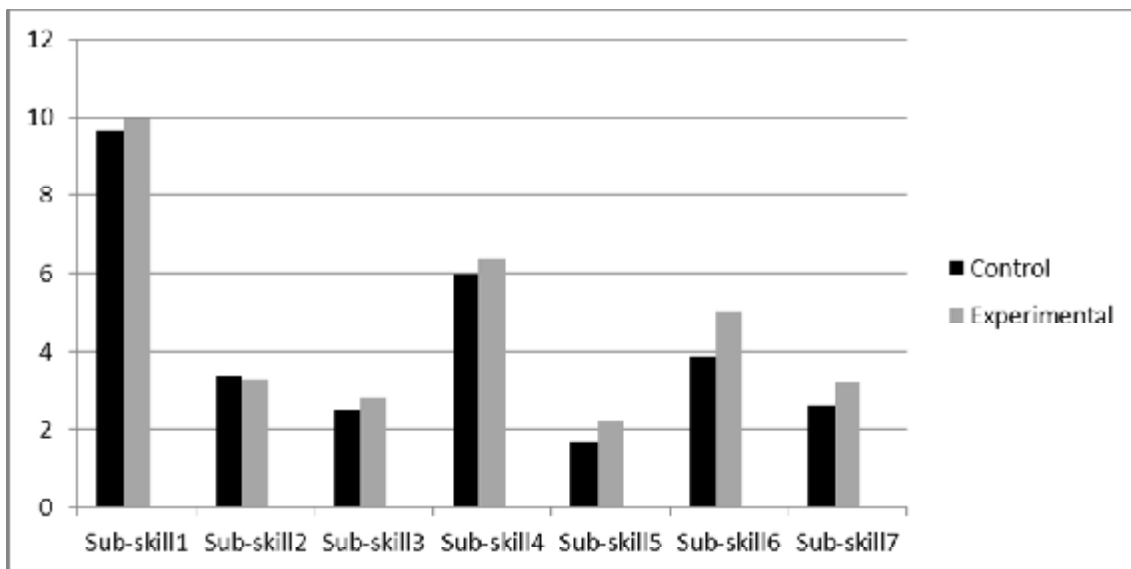


Figure 2. Performance in relation to each sub-skill of inferential comprehension

Sub-skill no.	Sub-skill
1	Draw conclusions from text
2	Make reasonable predictions
3	Make connections between conclusions they draw and other beliefs or knowledge
4	Use the combination of background knowledge and explicitly stated information from the context to answer questions
5	Identifying the main idea
6	Identifying sequence
7	Make critical or analytical judgements about what they read

Figure 2 above which shows the mean values of the scores obtained by the two groups in relation to each sub-skill, illustrates that the experimental group has performed better than the control group in terms of all the sub-skills, except the second sub-skill where the control group has performed slightly better than the control group (control 3.36 and experimental 3.28).

In the independent samples t-test however, the results were largely insignificant at the  $p > 0.05$  significant value. Yet, the experimental group indicated a highly significant performance in relation to sub-skill 6, recording 0.04 which is lower than the significance value  $p > 0.05$ .

Though the statistical analysis shows only significance in relation to one sub-skill, it is apparent from the mean values presented in Figure 2, that the experimental group has performed better than the control group in relation to many of the sub-skills considered in this study. This means that it is possible to reject the null hypothesis ( $H_0$ ), i.e. "Writing based pre-reading tasks have no impact in developing the sub-skills related to inferential reading comprehension of ESL students" and support the alternative hypothesis ( $H_1$ ), "Writing based pre-readings tasks have an impact on developing the sub-skills related to inferential reading comprehension of ESL students".

The findings confirm the observations made in pedagogy (Hudson 1984; Spack 1985; Zamel, 1992) regarding the importance of using a writing task before a reading activity. Moreover, in the absence of adequate empirical studies on the effectiveness of the "write before you read" approach as well as due to the scarcity of such research in ESL contexts, the findings of the present study become quite significant.

### 8. Limitations and ethical considerations:-

The study is not without limitations and two major limitations are acknowledged by the researcher.

The study is located in a specific setting with a specific group of students and generalizability of the findings is an issue.

The study focuses on developing one aspect of L2 reading comprehension using a particular L2 writing task

An important ethical consideration is the fact that the two groups of students were provided with different instruction with varying levels of effectiveness. The researcher expects to use the prw strategy with the control group as a remedial measure.

### 9. Conclusion

As evident from the encouraging findings made in the study, the prw tasks have the potential to be used as an effective teaching strategy in teaching reading comprehension. As a teaching strategy, it is cost-effective and does not require any special training or expensive technology. It can also be easily adopted in any classroom setting.

At another level, the prw task could motivate the students to engage in the reading task with more interest. During this particular study itself, the researcher observed the interest the task created in the students especially when they encountered the reading passage after performing the prw task. As a result of the prw task, the students could imagine the content in the passage prior to the reading activity and once the passage was given, they could discover on their own whether the ideas/issues discussed in the reading comprehension passage matched the ideas/opinions they generated in the writing task. In this regard, prw tasks lead to the development of a learning setting where the students become active participants in discovering meaning as they develop their text attack skills. They help the students to actively engage in reading and discover meaning on their own, which becomes vital as they progress to become efficient and autonomous readers in a second language.

The positive observations on prw tasks suggest that reading-writing researchers as well as the pedagogy in general should give more attention to develop eclectic approaches in language teaching. At the same time, it is important to conduct more research into the less explored area of how writing contributes to reading. In fact, the effectiveness of the prw tasks shows that writing can play a significant role in developing reading. So a thorough exploration of the area of "writing to read" approach will possibly lead to more exciting findings and help the teachers to develop effective methods of teaching both writing and reading.

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