DEVELOPING UZBEK EFL STUDENTS' ACADEMIC WRITING COMPETENCE THROUGH INTEGRATED READING-TO-WRITE INSTRUCTION

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Abstract: Academic writing in English requires learners to coordinate linguistic knowledge, reading comprehension, source use, organization, argumentation, and the ability to synthesize information. For Uzbek learners of English as a foreign language (EFL), these demands can be particularly challenging because academic writing requires not only grammatical accuracy but also the transformation of information obtained from sources into coherent and independently constructed written discourse. This thesis examines the pedagogical potential of integrated reading-to-write instruction for developing Uzbek EFL students' academic writing competence. The study is grounded in research demonstrating the close relationship between reading and writing and the increasing importance of integrated literacy instruction in second-language education. Reading-to-write tasks require learners to comprehend source texts, identify relevant information, evaluate ideas, organize evidence, paraphrase, synthesize information, and construct a written response. Previous empirical research indicates that integrated reading and writing instruction can contribute to improvements in writing quality, productivity, planning, discourse knowledge, vocabulary, and related literacy skills. A reading-to-write instructional framework is therefore proposed for Uzbek EFL contexts, incorporating pre-reading activation, close reading, annotation, source analysis, guided synthesis, outlining, drafting, peer feedback, revision, and reflective assessment. The thesis argues that systematic integration of reading and writing can provide Uzbek EFL students with meaningful linguistic input and authentic models of academic discourse while simultaneously developing their ability to use evidence in writing. The approach also addresses the need for explicit instruction in source integration, paraphrasing, academic vocabulary, textual organization, and critical synthesis.

Keywords: academic writing, EFL, Uzbek students, reading-to-write, integrated instruction, academic literacy, source-based writing, writing competence, reading-writing integration, English language teaching

Introduction

Academic writing represents one of the most cognitively and linguistically demanding areas of second-language learning. University students writing in English are expected to formulate ideas, construct arguments, organize information logically, use appropriate academic vocabulary, maintain grammatical accuracy, and engage responsibly with information obtained from sources. These requirements make academic writing substantially different from short-answer exercises or general-purpose composition. In source-based academic contexts, students must also demonstrate the ability to understand and transform information from reading materials into their own written texts.

The relationship between reading and writing has increasingly attracted attention in literacy and second-language research. Rather than treating reading and writing as completely independent language

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skills, contemporary approaches recognize substantial interaction between them. Integrated writing tasks, for example, require learners to process textual input and subsequently use that information in written production [1]. Such tasks are particularly relevant to academic contexts because university students frequently write after reading articles, textbooks, reports, research studies, and other sources.

The reading-to-write construct is especially important for EFL learners because source texts provide linguistic and conceptual input that can support written production. Through reading, learners encounter vocabulary, grammatical structures, discourse patterns, organizational conventions, and methods of presenting evidence. Writing subsequently requires them to select, reorganize, interpret, and communicate information. Research on the reading-writing connection has found evidence that reading can contribute to improvements in several dimensions of writing, including content, organization, grammatical accuracy, mechanics, and overall quality [2].

Recent research has provided further empirical support for integrated reading-writing instruction. Kim et al., for example, investigated an instructional program integrating reading and writing and reported significant advantages for students receiving the integrated intervention in writing quality, writing productivity, planning, discourse knowledge, vocabulary, spelling, and sentence proficiency [3]. Although that research was conducted with younger learners rather than Uzbek university EFL students, its findings provide important evidence for the broader pedagogical principle that reading and writing can be developed through systematic integration.

For Uzbek EFL students, this approach is potentially valuable because academic writing instruction can benefit from authentic source texts and explicit attention to how academic discourse is constructed. Instead of asking students to produce essays without substantial textual preparation, reading-to-write instruction gives learners an opportunity to examine how academic texts present claims, organize arguments, introduce evidence, establish relationships between ideas, and use discipline-appropriate language.

The purpose of this thesis is therefore to examine the theoretical and pedagogical foundations of integrated reading-to-write instruction and to demonstrate its potential relevance to the development of Uzbek EFL students' academic writing competence.

Methodology

This thesis employs a qualitative, literature-based research methodology. The analysis is based on established scholarship concerning second-language writing, reading-writing relationships, integrated language skills, source-based writing, and academic literacy. Peer-reviewed research and scholarly books were examined to identify theoretically and empirically supported principles relevant to reading-to-write instruction.

The methodological framework does not claim to report original experimental data from Uzbek students. Consequently, no invented sample, test scores, statistical values, or experimental outcomes are presented. Instead, findings reported in the existing literature are analyzed and their pedagogical implications for Uzbek EFL contexts are discussed.

The analysis focuses on several dimensions of academic writing competence: content development, organization, vocabulary, grammatical accuracy, source use, synthesis, paraphrasing, argumentation, and revision. These dimensions correspond to the multifaceted nature of second-language writing competence described in established writing research [4].

The proposed instructional model consists of interconnected stages. The first stage involves selecting an appropriate source text. The second involves guided comprehension and identification of the

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text's central claims. The third focuses on extraction and categorization of relevant evidence. The fourth requires students to paraphrase and synthesize selected information. The fifth involves planning an academic response. The sixth consists of drafting. The seventh incorporates peer or teacher feedback, and the final stage involves revision and reflection.

This sequence is consistent with the view that successful source-based writing requires more than reading comprehension alone. Students must transform information from a source into an independently structured written response. Research on integrated writing has emphasized the importance of understanding the interaction between source comprehension, language processing, and written production [5].

Results

The literature reviewed in this thesis indicates that reading-to-write instruction has several pedagogically significant advantages.

First, integrated reading-writing instruction can strengthen the relationship between linguistic input and written production. When students read academically appropriate texts before writing, they receive exposure to vocabulary, syntax, discourse organization, rhetorical patterns, and content knowledge. This provides a meaningful linguistic foundation for subsequent writing.

Second, reading can contribute to the development of writing quality. A systematic review of research on the reading-writing connection identified 13 experimental studies and concluded that independent reading enhanced several aspects of writing, including overall quality, output, mechanics, spelling accuracy, content, grammatical accuracy, and organization [2]. Although the review was not specifically focused on Uzbek EFL students, its findings support the general pedagogical value of connecting reading experiences with writing development.

Third, integrated instruction can improve students' ability to plan source-based writing. The randomized controlled study by Kim et al. included 248 students taught by 10 teachers and found that the integrated instructional condition produced stronger outcomes in writing quality, writing productivity, and planning for expository writing [3]. The reported effect sizes for the principal writing outcomes were .59 for writing quality, .57 for writing productivity, and .30 for planning [3]. These findings provide empirical evidence that explicit integration of reading and writing can influence multiple dimensions of written performance.

Fourth, integrated instruction can promote discourse knowledge. In source-based academic writing, learners need to understand how information is organized and how claims are supported. The SRSD Plus study found positive effects on discourse knowledge and planning from source texts, demonstrating the importance of teaching learners not merely to comprehend texts but also to use textual information as a foundation for writing [3].

Fifth, reading-to-write instruction can provide opportunities for vocabulary development. Academic vocabulary is acquired not only through isolated vocabulary exercises but also through meaningful exposure to words in academic contexts. Reading source texts allows learners to observe how lexical items function within arguments and disciplinary discourse.

Sixth, research involving EFL learners has demonstrated that reading-writing integration can also be used for assessment and synthesis. Research with Afghan university EFL learners found that reading-to-write synthesis tasks require learners to integrate information and that students may need substantial support in developing critical thinking and synthesizing information from multiple sources [6]. This

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finding is particularly relevant to academic writing because synthesis represents a central requirement of research-based writing.

Finally, research on integrated reading-writing instruction has identified potential challenges. Studies involving emergent bilingual students have reported that integrated instruction can create difficulties when writing becomes excessively dependent on reading comprehension or when students lack adequate support for evidence and elaboration [7]. Therefore, successful implementation requires explicit scaffolding rather than simply asking students to read a text and write about it.

Analysis and Discussion

The findings from the reviewed literature suggest that reading-to-write instruction should not be understood simply as assigning a reading passage followed by an essay. Effective integration requires deliberate pedagogical coordination between comprehension and composition.

For Uzbek EFL students, one important advantage of reading-to-write instruction is the provision of an academic language model. Students who have limited exposure to English-language academic discourse may find it difficult to produce appropriate academic prose without examples. Source texts can function as models through which students observe how academic writers introduce topics, establish claims, explain relationships, use evidence, and conclude arguments.

A particularly important component is explicit instruction in source use. Students need to understand the difference between copying information and transforming information through paraphrasing and synthesis. Reading-to-write activities can therefore require learners to identify an author's main claim, locate supporting evidence, restate an idea using different linguistic structures, and explain how that evidence relates to their own argument.

This process is closely connected to academic integrity. Source-based writing requires students to distinguish between their own ideas and information obtained from other authors. Consequently, reading-to-write instruction can provide a natural context for teaching citation, paraphrasing, summarizing, and responsible source use.

Another important dimension is organization. Academic writing requires more than individual grammatically correct sentences. Ideas must be arranged in a coherent sequence. Reading academic texts gives students opportunities to examine paragraph structures, topic sentences, supporting explanations, transitions, and conclusions. Teachers can make these features explicit by asking students to identify the organizational structure of a source text before producing their own writing.

The role of critical reading is equally important. Reading-to-write tasks should not encourage students simply to reproduce the source text. Instead, students should be asked to identify central claims, compare perspectives, distinguish evidence from interpretation, and evaluate the relevance of information. This transforms reading from passive information reception into an active stage of writing preparation.

The use of multiple sources can further strengthen this process. When students read two or more texts addressing the same topic, they can compare claims and evidence before constructing their own position. Such tasks develop synthesis, which is essential to academic writing. Rather than producing paragraphs based on one source at a time, students learn to establish relationships among sources.

However, the literature also demonstrates that integrated instruction must be carefully scaffolded. Teachers should not assume that students automatically know how to transform reading comprehension into academic writing. Instruction may therefore begin with highly structured tasks, such as identifying claims and evidence, before progressing toward independent synthesis.

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A possible instructional sequence for Uzbek EFL classrooms begins with a short academic source appropriate to students' proficiency levels. During the pre-reading stage, students activate relevant background knowledge and predict the text's content. During close reading, they identify the thesis, major arguments, supporting evidence, academic vocabulary, and organizational features. Students then annotate the text and categorize useful information.

The next stage involves guided paraphrasing. Students select short sections and reconstruct their meaning using different vocabulary and grammatical structures while preserving the original meaning. This can be followed by synthesis exercises in which students combine information from two sources into a coherent paragraph.

Students can subsequently create an outline for an independent response. The outline should identify the central claim, major supporting points, evidence, explanations, and conclusion. After drafting, students can use a structured feedback checklist addressing content, organization, cohesion, vocabulary, grammar, source integration, and citation.

Revision is particularly important because academic writing develops through recursive processes rather than one-time production. Students should compare their first and revised drafts and identify specific changes they made in response to feedback.

The role of teachers is also central. Research on teachers' perceptions of integrated reading-writing instruction has shown that educators recognize connections between the two skills but may require professional development to implement integrated approaches effectively [8]. Therefore, successful implementation in Uzbek higher education would require not only appropriate materials but also teacher preparation.

The evidence also suggests that integrated instruction should not eliminate independent writing. Instead, reading should function as a foundation for increasingly independent written production. Students should gradually move from heavily scaffolded source-based responses toward autonomous academic writing.

The approach can therefore be conceptualized as a progression:

reading → comprehension → analysis → extraction of evidence → paraphrasing → synthesis → planning → drafting → feedback → revision → independent academic writing.

This progression reflects the multidimensional nature of academic literacy. It also addresses an important limitation of traditional writing instruction in which students may be asked to produce essays without sufficient attention to how academic information is processed and incorporated into writing.

Conclusion

Integrated reading-to-write instruction offers a theoretically grounded and empirically supported approach to developing academic writing competence. The reviewed literature demonstrates that reading and writing are closely interconnected and that instruction integrating these skills can contribute to writing quality, productivity, planning, discourse knowledge, vocabulary, and related literacy outcomes [2], [3].

For Uzbek EFL students, reading-to-write instruction is particularly relevant because academic writing requires learners to work with English-language sources, interpret information, construct arguments, synthesize evidence, and communicate ideas according to academic conventions. A structured approach combining close reading, source analysis, paraphrasing, synthesis, planning, drafting, feedback, and revision can provide students with a systematic pathway from comprehension to independent academic writing.

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At the same time, integrated instruction should not be implemented mechanically. Students require explicit guidance in source use, evidence integration, paraphrasing, synthesis, organization, and revision. Teachers also require appropriate professional preparation and instructional materials.

The available evidence supports the pedagogical value of integrating reading and writing, but further empirical research specifically involving Uzbek university EFL students is necessary. Future studies should employ controlled or quasi-experimental designs, validated writing assessment instruments, sufficiently described participant samples, and transparent statistical procedures. Such research would make it possible to determine more precisely how reading-to-write instruction affects different components of academic writing competence in the Uzbek EFL context.

Overall, integrated reading-to-write instruction should be viewed not simply as a classroom technique but as a comprehensive approach to academic literacy development. By transforming reading into an active resource for writing, the approach can help EFL students move from consuming information in English toward analyzing, synthesizing, and communicating knowledge through academically appropriate written discourse.

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