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DEVELOPING SKILLS FOR TRANSFORMING INFORMATION FROM READING INTO WRITTEN FORM AMONG GRADE 10–11 EFL LEARNERS

Abstract. *The ability to transform information obtained from a written text into an independent written response is an important component of effective foreign language learning. However, upper-secondary EFL learners often experience difficulties when they are required to move beyond reading comprehension and use information from a source to construct their own written text. They may understand the general meaning of a passage but struggle to identify relevant information, distinguish essential ideas from supporting details, reorganise information and express it independently. This article examines a methodological approach to developing Grade 10–11 learners' ability to process information from reading and reproduce it in written form. The proposed approach combines information selection, interpretation, restructuring and written production rather than treating reading and writing as separate classroom activities. A sequence of source-based tasks is presented, including information extraction, selective note-taking, paraphrasing, information transfer, synthesis and independent writing. Particular attention is given to the gradual reduction of textual support, as learners move from reproducing selected information to reorganising and integrating it into an original written response. The article also discusses the role of lexical and grammatical resources, genre awareness and revision in this process. The approach can be incorporated into upper-secondary English lessons and adapted to different text types and curriculum topics.*

Keywords: *EFL, reading-to-writing, information processing, written production, upper-secondary learners, source-based writing, English language teaching.*

INTRODUCTION

Reading and writing are frequently taught as related but separate language skills (Grabe & Stoller, 2019). In many foreign language classrooms, learners first read a text to demonstrate comprehension and then complete a writing task that is only loosely

connected to what they have read. Such an organisation may provide practice in both skills, yet it does not necessarily teach learners how to use information obtained through reading as a basis for their own written communication.

In real academic and communicative situations, reading rarely ends with comprehension alone. Learners read an article before writing a response, examine information before preparing a report, study several sources before expressing an opinion, or extract relevant facts before completing a written task. Therefore, the ability to transform information from a source text into a meaningful written product deserves specific methodological attention (Hyland, 2019).

For Grade 10–11 learners, this ability becomes particularly important because written tasks gradually require greater independence, coherence and control of information. At this stage, learners are expected not merely to reproduce sentences from a textbook but to select relevant information, interpret ideas, reorganise content and express it using their own linguistic resources. The difficulty is therefore not limited to vocabulary or grammar. It also involves cognitive and discourse-level operations.

A learner may, for example, correctly answer comprehension questions about an article on environmental problems but fail to write a short report based on the same article. The learner may remember individual sentences but be unable to determine which ideas are important for the new writing task. Another learner may select appropriate information but reproduce the source too closely. These difficulties indicate that comprehension and written production do not automatically develop together (Williams, 2012).

The present article focuses on the methodological development of learners' ability to process information obtained from reading and transform it into written form. The central assumption is that this ability can be developed through a structured sequence of tasks in which learners progressively move from identifying information to selecting, restructuring, paraphrasing, integrating and independently using it.

MAIN PART

1. Reading as a source of information for writing

Reading provides learners with more than linguistic input. A written text contains ideas, facts, arguments, examples, explanations, relationships and organisational patterns that can subsequently be used in written communication (Grabe & Stoller,

2019). When reading is connected with writing, the text becomes a source from which learners obtain content as well as language.

However, simply asking learners to “read the text and write about it” does not provide sufficient methodological support. The learner has to perform several operations between reading and writing. First, the learner needs to understand what the text communicates. Second, relevant information has to be identified according to the purpose of the writing task. Third, selected information needs to be transformed rather than copied. Finally, the information must be organised into a coherent written text.

These operations can be represented as a gradual movement: reading → comprehension → information selection → information processing → restructuring → written production → revision.

Each stage contributes something different to the final product. Comprehension provides access to the source, while information selection determines what will be used. Processing involves understanding relationships between ideas and deciding how information can be expressed. Restructuring allows learners to move away from the original organisation of the source. Written production then requires the learner to construct a new text appropriate to the communicative purpose.

This sequence is particularly relevant to upper-secondary EFL learners because it connects receptive and productive language use (Williams, 2012). Instead of asking learners to produce content without sufficient linguistic or conceptual support, the teacher provides a meaningful source and teaches learners how to use it.

2. The nature of the information-transformation skill

Transforming information from reading into writing should not be understood as simple copying or summarising. It is a process of selecting and reconstructing meaning (Hyland, 2019).

Consider a short source text stating that urban transport contributes to air pollution, traffic congestion and noise, while public transport can reduce the number of private vehicles on the road. A learner who copies two sentences from the source has reproduced information but has not necessarily demonstrated information-processing ability. A learner who identifies the causes and consequences, reorganises them and writes a short paragraph explaining how public transport can address several urban problems demonstrates a higher level of processing.

The difference can be described through four major operations. The first is identifying information: learners determine what the text is about and locate information that answers a particular question; at this stage the teacher can use headings, keywords, guiding questions or simple graphic organisers. The second is selecting relevant information: not every piece of information in a text is necessary for a particular writing task, and learners need to distinguish central ideas from examples, explanations and minor details, with the writing purpose determining what is selected. The third is transforming information: selected information must be processed, and learners may paraphrase a statement, combine two related ideas, change the order of information, convert notes into sentences or express an idea from another perspective. The fourth is integrating information into a new text: the final stage involves using processed information to create a coherent written response, at which point learners must consider organisation, cohesion, grammar, vocabulary, genre and the intended reader.

The four operations are interconnected, but they should not be assumed to develop automatically. A learner may be able to locate information without knowing how to transform it. Another may paraphrase individual sentences but fail to organise them into a coherent paragraph. Consequently, classroom activities should provide practice at different levels of the process.

3. Methodological framework for developing the skill

A practical methodology for Grade 10–11 EFL learners can be organised into five consecutive stages: understanding the source; extracting relevant information; processing and restructuring information; producing a new written text; and revising the written product (Nunan, 2004; Richards & Rodgers, 2014). The stages should not be treated as rigid steps that must always occupy separate lessons. Depending on the complexity of the text and the learners' proficiency level, several stages may be combined within one lesson.

At the first stage, understanding the source, learners need to establish a sufficiently accurate understanding of the source text before they can use information in writing. The teacher should therefore avoid beginning with extensive writing immediately after reading. Instead, learners can answer focused questions such as:

- What is the central issue discussed in the text?
- What problem does the author identify?

- What causes are mentioned?
- What evidence or examples are provided?
- What solution or conclusion is suggested?

Such questions direct attention towards information that may later become useful for writing. The teacher can also ask learners to give the main idea in one sentence. This activity prevents them from concentrating exclusively on individual vocabulary items and encourages global comprehension.

At the second stage, extracting relevant information, learners select information according to the writing purpose. This stage is more productive when learners work with a specific communicative task. For example, after reading an article about healthy lifestyles, learners may be asked to prepare a short advice article for teenagers. They should therefore identify information concerning causes of unhealthy habits, possible consequences and practical solutions rather than attempting to remember every detail in the source. A simple extraction table can be used.

Information needed	Information from the text	Use in my writing
Main problem	...	Introduction
Cause	...	Body paragraph
Effect	...	Body paragraph
Suggested solution	...	Conclusion

Table 1. Extraction table for source-based writing

The table changes the purpose of reading. Learners are no longer reading only to answer comprehension questions; they are reading with a future writing task in mind.

The third stage, processing and restructuring information, represents the central part of the methodology, since learners need to move away from the wording and organisation of the source. One effective technique is selective note-taking. Instead of copying complete sentences, learners record keywords and short phrases. For example:

Source: “Regular physical activity can improve concentration because it increases blood flow to the brain and helps reduce stress.”

Notes: regular exercise – better concentration – increased blood flow – lower stress.

Reconstruction: “Regular exercise may help teenagers concentrate better because it improves blood circulation and reduces stress.”

The purpose is not to make the sentence grammatically identical to the source. The purpose is to preserve the meaning while changing the linguistic form. Another useful

activity is information combination. Learners receive several pieces of information from the source and combine them into one coherent statement. This encourages them to identify relationships between ideas rather than process each sentence independently. For example, from the ideas that online learning provides flexibility, that students can study from different locations and that technological problems may interrupt lessons, learners may produce: “Although online learning allows students to study from different locations, technical problems can sometimes interrupt the learning process.” Here, information has been reorganised and expressed through a new grammatical structure.

4. Task sequence for upper-secondary learners

The effectiveness of information transformation depends partly on the gradual progression of task difficulty (Nunan, 2004). Learners should not be expected to move directly from reading a text to writing an independent essay. A useful progression is presented below.

Task 1: Read and extract. Learners read a short text and identify specific information. The teacher provides categories such as problem, cause, effect, example and solution. The task develops selective reading and prevents learners from treating every sentence as equally important.

Task 2: Read and note. Learners convert selected sentences into keywords or short phrases; full sentences are discouraged. For example, the source sentence “Many young people spend several hours a day using social media, which can reduce the amount of time they devote to physical activity” becomes the notes: young people – several hours – social media – less time – physical activity. This task creates a necessary distance between the source and the future written text.

Task 3: Note and paraphrase. Learners use their notes to reconstruct the original idea. Several possible answers may be accepted as long as the meaning is accurately maintained. This task is particularly useful for developing lexical flexibility, since learners begin to recognise that the same idea can be communicated through different combinations of words and structures.

Task 4: Combine information. Learners receive information extracted from different parts of a text and combine it into a paragraph. For example, information about a problem, its cause and its consequence can be transformed into a three-sentence explanation. The teacher can initially provide linking expressions but gradually reduce this support.

Task 5: Change the genre. Learners use information from a source to produce a different type of text. An article can become a short report, a news text can become a summary, or an informational text can become an advice post. Changing genre requires learners to reconsider which information is relevant and how it should be organised.

Task 6: Source-based independent writing. At the final stage, learners receive a source text and a communicative writing task but are not given a detailed writing frame. For example: read the article about the effects of excessive screen time and write a short article for teenagers explaining two major effects and suggesting practical ways to reduce them. Learners must decide which information to use, how to organise it and how to express it. The source provides content support, while the writing task requires independent processing.

5. The role of paraphrasing

Paraphrasing is particularly important because it represents the transition from information reception to independent language production (Swain, 2005). Yet paraphrasing should not be reduced to replacing individual words with synonyms. Effective paraphrasing may involve changing sentence structure, combining ideas, changing grammatical forms, reducing unnecessary details or reorganising information. For example, the original sentence “Because public transport reduces the number of private cars on the roads, it can contribute to lower levels of urban air pollution” may be paraphrased as “Using buses and other forms of public transport may help cities reduce air pollution by limiting the number of cars in traffic.” The second sentence retains the central meaning but changes both vocabulary and structure.

Teachers should therefore encourage learners to ask three questions: what is the essential meaning; which information can be removed or combined; and how can the idea be expressed using the learner’s own sentence structure. This approach is more productive than simply asking learners to “use synonyms”.

6. Genre and organisation in information-based writing

Information transformation is influenced by the genre of the final text (Hyland, 2019). The same source information may be organised differently in a summary, report, article, email or argumentative response. For example, a report may prioritise factual information and clear organisation, whereas an opinion article may require the writer to select evidence that supports a position. Therefore, learners need to understand not

only what information they can take from a text but also why and how that information should be used.

Genre awareness can be developed through short comparative activities. Learners can receive the same source information and two writing tasks: Task A, to write a short report describing the problem; and Task B, to write an article suggesting solutions to the problem. The information comes from the same source, but the communicative purpose changes, and learners consequently have to make different decisions about selection, organisation and language. This activity demonstrates that information is not transferred mechanically from reading to writing: it is selected and reorganised according to purpose.

7. Supporting lexical and grammatical development

Learners sometimes understand the source but cannot reproduce its information because they lack the linguistic resources needed for independent writing (Nation, 2013). Methodological support should therefore include useful vocabulary and grammatical patterns without turning the task into controlled translation. One effective strategy is to provide a language bank containing functional expressions rather than complete sentences:

- The text highlights...
- One important factor is...
- The author points out that...
- This may lead to...
- Another consequence is...
- One possible solution is...
- The evidence suggests that...
- In contrast,...

Such expressions provide structural support while leaving learners responsible for the content. Grammar can also be linked directly to information-processing demands. Cause-and-effect information can be expressed through “because”, “therefore”, “as a result” and “may lead to”. Contrasting information can be organised with “although”, “whereas”, “however” and “in contrast”. Reporting information can involve reporting verbs such as “argue”, “explain”, “suggest”, “indicate” and “emphasise”. The aim is not to teach these structures in isolation: learners should use them while reconstructing information from a source.

8. Revision as part of information transformation

Revision is often treated as the final correction stage, but it should be considered an integral part of the information-transformation process. When learners reread their own writing, they can identify whether the information has been represented accurately and whether the new text communicates the intended message. A practical revision checklist may include the following questions:

- Have I selected information relevant to the task?
- Have I expressed the source information in my own words?
- Have I changed the organisation where necessary?
- Is the relationship between ideas clear?
- Have I included unnecessary details?
- Does each paragraph have a clear purpose?
- Are the vocabulary and grammar appropriate for the task?
- Have I checked important language errors?

Peer review can complement self-revision. Learners exchange texts and identify one strong point and one area that needs improvement. The emphasis should remain on communication and organisation rather than on correcting every minor grammatical error.

9. Differentiation for Grade 10 and Grade 11 learners

Although Grade 10 and Grade 11 learners can be taught through the same general methodology, the degree of support can be adjusted. Grade 10 learners may benefit from shorter texts, clearly defined information categories, structured note-taking templates and partially guided writing tasks; teachers can initially provide paragraph frames or organisational models. Grade 11 learners can work with longer or more complex texts and less explicit support: they can compare information from two short sources, identify conflicting or complementary ideas and produce a more independent written response. The difference should therefore be reflected not only in text length but also in cognitive and communicative demands.

For example, Grade 10 learners read one text, identify three key ideas, make notes and write one structured paragraph, whereas Grade 11 learners read two related texts, select and compare relevant information, organise ideas independently and write a multi-paragraph response. Such progression allows learners to develop independence without removing necessary support too early.

10. Assessment of information-transformation skills

Assessment should reflect the different dimensions of the skill rather than focus exclusively on grammatical accuracy (Weigle, 2002). A learner may produce grammatically correct sentences while selecting irrelevant information or misrepresenting the source. Five criteria can be used.

Criterion	Description
Information selection	Relevant and essential information is identified
Accuracy of interpretation	Source ideas are represented correctly
Transformation	Information is paraphrased and reorganised rather than copied
Written organisation	Ideas are logically connected and appropriately structured
Language accuracy	Vocabulary and grammar support clear communication

Table 2. Assessment criteria for information-transformation skills

A simple four-level scale can be applied to each criterion, ranging from limited performance to independent and consistent performance. Such assessment provides more useful feedback than a single overall writing mark, because learners can see which part of the process requires further development. For classroom purposes, teachers may also assess intermediate products such as notes and paraphrases. This makes it possible to identify whether a problem originates during reading, information selection, transformation or final writing.

11. Discussion

The proposed methodology treats reading and writing as interconnected processes rather than isolated skills (Grabe & Stoller, 2019; Williams, 2012). Its central principle is that learners need explicit practice in the intermediate operations that connect comprehension with written production.

The main methodological implication is that the teacher should not assume that understanding a text automatically enables learners to use its information independently. A learner can comprehend a source without being able to select relevant information or reconstruct it in another form. Therefore, instruction needs to make these operations visible and practicable.

Another important implication concerns the amount of teacher support. Excessive support can encourage learners to reproduce predetermined structures, whereas insufficient support may result in copying from the source. A gradual reduction of scaffolding provides a more balanced solution. Learners first work with clearly structured

tasks and language support, then gradually assume responsibility for information selection, organisation and linguistic expression.

The methodology also addresses a common problem in source-based writing: dependence on the wording of the original text. Selective note-taking, paraphrasing, information combination and genre transformation create opportunities for learners to process meaning before producing language (Swain, 2005). As a result, the source functions as a content resource rather than a text to be reproduced.

The approach is particularly suitable for upper-secondary EFL education because it corresponds to the increasing communicative and cognitive demands placed on learners at this level. At the same time, the activities can be adapted to different proficiency levels, topics and text types.

CONCLUSION

Developing the ability to transform information from reading into written form requires more than combining reading and writing activities within the same lesson. Learners need explicit methodological support that guides them through the cognitive and linguistic operations connecting the two skills.

The proposed approach organises this development around five major stages: understanding the source, extracting relevant information, processing and restructuring it, producing a new written text, and revising the result. A progression from controlled information extraction to independent source-based writing allows learners to develop greater autonomy while maintaining appropriate support.

The most important methodological shift is to change the role of reading from an activity that ends with comprehension questions into a meaningful source for subsequent written communication. When learners learn to identify relevant information, take selective notes, paraphrase ideas, combine information, adapt it to a genre and use it in an independently organised text, reading becomes an active foundation for writing.

For Grade 10–11 EFL learners, such an approach can contribute to the development of more purposeful reading, more independent writing and more effective use of textual information. It also provides teachers with a practical framework for integrating receptive and productive language work without reducing either skill to a set of isolated exercises.

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