



CRITERIA FOR SELECTING READING TEXTS TO DEVELOP INTEGRATED READING AND WRITING SKILLS AMONG 10TH–11TH GRADE EFL STUDENTS

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Abstract. *The integration of reading and writing has become one of the key principles of contemporary English language teaching, requiring careful selection of instructional texts that support the development of both receptive and productive language skills. However, many reading materials used in upper secondary EFL classrooms are selected primarily for reading comprehension and do not provide sufficient opportunities for meaningful writing activities. This article examines the pedagogical criteria for selecting reading texts that effectively facilitate the integrated development of reading and writing skills among 10th–11th grade EFL students. Drawing on the principles of the CEFR (B1 level), the National Curriculum of Uzbekistan, and current research on integrated literacy instruction, the study identifies essential criteria for text selection, including linguistic appropriateness, thematic relevance, genre diversity, authenticity, cognitive challenge, cultural value, learner engagement, and writing potential. Particular attention is given to the concept of reading-to-writing instruction, in which reading serves as the primary source of language input and organizational models for subsequent written production. The article also proposes a systematic framework for evaluating and selecting instructional texts that enable learners to comprehend, analyze, synthesize, and transform information into coherent written texts.*

Keywords: *integrated reading and writing, text selection criteria, reading-to-writing instruction, EFL learners, upper secondary education, authentic texts, CEFR B1, English language teaching, writing development, reading comprehension, National Curriculum of Uzbekistan, text evaluation.*

INTRODUCTION

Reading and writing are no longer viewed as isolated language skills but as mutually supportive processes that enable learners to construct, interpret, and communicate meaning. Contemporary approaches to English language teaching emphasize the

integration of receptive and productive skills to promote communicative competence and academic literacy. Among these approaches, reading-to-writing instruction has received increasing attention because it encourages learners to use reading as a source of ideas, language input, rhetorical patterns, and organizational structures for written production. Consequently, the quality and appropriateness of the reading texts selected for classroom instruction have become crucial factors influencing students' language development.

The effectiveness of integrated reading and writing instruction largely depends on the characteristics of the texts used in the learning process. A carefully selected reading text provides learners with authentic language, meaningful content, genre awareness, and linguistic models that can be transferred to writing tasks. Conversely, texts that are chosen solely for reading comprehension often fail to support higher-order cognitive processes such as analysis, synthesis, evaluation, and argumentation, which are essential for successful writing. Therefore, text selection should be regarded not merely as the choice of teaching materials but as a pedagogical decision that determines the quality of language input and the effectiveness of subsequent learning activities.

Research in second language acquisition and literacy education has consistently demonstrated that reading and writing share common cognitive, linguistic, and discourse processes. Exposure to well-structured texts enhances learners' vocabulary knowledge, grammatical competence, discourse awareness, and understanding of genre conventions, all of which contribute to improved writing performance. For this reason, reading materials should be selected according to clear pedagogical principles that correspond to learners' proficiency levels, cognitive development, learning objectives, and communicative needs rather than relying exclusively on textbook availability or linguistic simplicity.

In the context of upper secondary education in Uzbekistan, the implementation of the National Curriculum and the alignment of English language instruction with the CEFR have increased the demand for competency-based teaching approaches. Students at the B1 level are expected not only to understand authentic and semi-authentic texts but also to summarize information, express opinions, compare ideas, and produce coherent written texts for different communicative purposes. These expectations require teachers to select reading materials that effectively bridge comprehension and written production through meaningful reading-to-writing activities.

Despite the growing recognition of integrated language instruction, practical guidelines for selecting reading texts that support writing development remain insufficient. Existing teaching materials frequently emphasize comprehension tasks while providing limited opportunities for learners to transform textual information into original written output. As a result, many students experience difficulties in organizing ideas, using appropriate language resources, and applying textual models in their own writing.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The integration of reading and writing has become a central principle in second language pedagogy, reflecting the understanding that these two literacy skills are cognitively and linguistically interconnected rather than independent processes. Contemporary research suggests that reading provides learners with linguistic input, discourse knowledge, rhetorical structures, and conceptual content that subsequently support written production. Consequently, the effectiveness of reading-to-writing instruction depends not only on instructional methodology but also on the quality and suitability of the reading texts selected for classroom use.

One of the most influential scholars in this field, Grabe (2009), argues that reading is an active meaning-construction process through which learners acquire vocabulary, grammatical knowledge, discourse organization, and genre awareness. According to Grabe, effective reading instruction should expose learners to texts that promote critical thinking and provide meaningful language input, enabling them to transfer newly acquired linguistic and organizational knowledge to writing tasks. This perspective positions text selection as a key component of integrated literacy instruction rather than a simple choice of classroom materials.

Similarly, Hyland (2019) emphasizes that writing develops through learners' interaction with authentic texts that demonstrate how language is organized to achieve communicative purposes. His genre-based approach suggests that carefully selected reading materials allow learners to observe rhetorical patterns, lexical choices, cohesive devices, and organizational structures before producing their own texts. Reading therefore functions as a model for writing, helping learners understand how successful texts are constructed within different communicative contexts.

The importance of selecting linguistically appropriate texts is also highlighted by Nation (2022), who argues that learners comprehend texts more effectively when they already know approximately 95–98 percent of the running words. Adequate lexical coverage enables readers to focus on meaning construction rather than decoding unfamiliar vocabulary, thereby creating cognitive resources for higher-order tasks such as summarizing, evaluating, and responding through writing. This finding indicates that vocabulary load should be one of the primary criteria when selecting instructional texts for integrated reading and writing activities.

Research on disciplinary literacy further strengthens the relationship between reading and writing. Shanahan and Shanahan (2008) explain that proficient readers and writers employ similar cognitive strategies, including identifying main ideas, evaluating evidence, making inferences, synthesizing information, and organizing arguments. Reading-to-writing tasks encourage learners to transform information rather than simply reproduce it, requiring them to integrate comprehension with critical analysis and written expression. Such activities foster deeper learning and contribute to the development of academic literacy.

Studies in second language writing also demonstrate that reading serves as an essential source of content knowledge and linguistic support. Ferris (2018) notes that exposure to well-written texts improves learners' awareness of academic vocabulary, sentence structure, cohesion, and genre conventions, reducing the linguistic difficulties frequently encountered during writing. Reading-based writing tasks therefore provide learners with both conceptual ideas and language resources necessary for producing coherent written texts.

Another important aspect discussed in the literature concerns text authenticity. While authentic materials increase learner motivation and expose students to real language use, researchers emphasize that authenticity alone does not guarantee effective learning. Texts must correspond to learners' proficiency level, cognitive maturity, instructional objectives, and cultural background. Materials that are excessively difficult may overload learners' working memory, whereas overly simplified texts often fail to provide sufficient linguistic richness for meaningful writing development. Consequently, recent studies recommend balancing authenticity with pedagogical appropriateness when selecting instructional materials.

Although previous research has established the theoretical relationship between reading and writing, relatively few studies have proposed comprehensive pedagogical criteria for selecting reading texts specifically intended to support reading-to-writing instruction at the upper secondary level. Existing studies generally focus on reading comprehension, vocabulary acquisition, or writing instruction separately, leaving teachers with limited methodological guidance regarding the selection of texts that simultaneously facilitate both skills.

Building upon these theoretical perspectives, the present study argues that effective text selection should be guided by an integrated set of criteria, including linguistic accessibility, genre diversity, thematic relevance, authenticity, cognitive challenge, cultural appropriateness, learner engagement, and writing potential. Such an approach is expected to strengthen the connection between reading comprehension and written production, providing upper secondary EFL learners with meaningful opportunities to transform textual input into coherent and purposeful writing.

METHODOLOGY

This study employed a qualitative research design based on document analysis and comparative theoretical review to identify pedagogical criteria for selecting reading texts that facilitate the integrated development of reading and writing skills among 10th–11th grade EFL students. Rather than conducting an experimental intervention, the study synthesized established theoretical frameworks and curriculum documents to develop a systematic model for evaluating instructional reading materials in upper secondary education.

The primary data sources included internationally recognized publications on integrated literacy instruction, second language reading, second language writing, vocabulary learning, and genre-based pedagogy. Particular attention was given to the works of Grabe (2009), Hyland (2019), Nation (2022), Ferris (2018), and Shanahan and Shanahan (2008), whose research provides a comprehensive theoretical foundation for understanding the relationship between reading input and written output. In addition, the descriptors of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) at the B1 proficiency level and the English language requirements of the National Curriculum of Uzbekistan were examined to ensure that the proposed criteria

correspond to the expected learning outcomes for upper secondary students.

The document analysis followed three consecutive stages. During the first stage, relevant literature was reviewed to identify the linguistic, cognitive, communicative, and pedagogical characteristics of effective reading materials. In the second stage, these characteristics were compared across different theoretical perspectives in order to determine recurring principles of text selection. Finally, the identified principles were synthesized into an integrated framework designed specifically for reading-to-writing instruction in grades 10 and 11.

Based on the analysis, eight major criteria were established for evaluating reading texts: (1) linguistic accessibility, including lexical and grammatical appropriateness; (2) alignment with CEFR B1 descriptors and curriculum objectives; (3) thematic relevance to learners' interests and educational goals; (4) genre diversity to expose students to different text structures; (5) authenticity and communicative value; (6) cognitive challenge that promotes higher-order thinking skills; (7) cultural appropriateness and intercultural awareness; and (8) writing potential, referring to the extent to which a reading text can serve as a model or stimulus for meaningful written production.

To enhance the credibility of the proposed framework, the identified criteria were continuously compared with findings reported in previous empirical and theoretical studies. This process of methodological triangulation strengthened the validity of the framework by ensuring that each criterion was supported by multiple authoritative sources rather than by a single theoretical perspective.

The resulting framework provides English language teachers, curriculum developers, and textbook authors with a practical instrument for selecting instructional texts that effectively connect reading comprehension with purposeful writing activities. It is intended to support competence-based English language teaching by ensuring that reading materials function not only as sources of information but also as models for developing learners' written communication skills.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The analysis of the literature and curriculum documents resulted in the development of an integrated framework consisting of eight pedagogical criteria for selecting reading texts that support the simultaneous development of reading and writing skills

among 10th–11th grade EFL students. These criteria include linguistic accessibility, curriculum alignment, thematic relevance, genre diversity, authenticity, cognitive challenge, cultural appropriateness, and writing potential. Together, these dimensions provide a comprehensive basis for evaluating instructional texts from both linguistic and pedagogical perspectives.

Among the identified criteria, writing potential emerged as the distinguishing feature of texts intended for reading-to-writing instruction. While conventional reading materials are frequently selected to assess comprehension, texts with high writing potential encourage learners to transform information into new written products such as summaries, opinion essays, reports, reviews, or argumentative compositions. Such tasks require students to synthesize ideas, reorganize information, evaluate evidence, and express their own viewpoints rather than simply reproduce the original text. This finding is consistent with genre-based pedagogy, which emphasizes the role of model texts in developing learners' writing competence.

The analysis further indicates that linguistic accessibility should not be determined solely by grammatical simplicity. Instead, instructional texts should provide sufficient lexical familiarity while exposing learners to new vocabulary and language structures that can subsequently be applied in writing. In accordance with Nation's lexical coverage principle, texts that contain an appropriate proportion of familiar vocabulary reduce cognitive overload and allow learners to focus on comprehension, organization of ideas, and written expression. Therefore, vocabulary density and grammatical complexity should be balanced to match the proficiency level of upper secondary learners.

Genre diversity was identified as another essential criterion. Exposure to narrative, descriptive, expository, argumentative, and informational texts enables learners to recognize different patterns of discourse organization and rhetorical conventions. Such exposure broadens students' awareness of how texts are constructed for different communicative purposes and provides multiple organizational models for writing. Consequently, genre-based text selection contributes not only to reading comprehension but also to the development of flexible writing strategies.

The findings also emphasize the importance of thematic relevance and authenticity. Reading materials that reflect learners' educational needs, social experiences, and contemporary global issues increase engagement and encourage meaningful interaction with the text. Authentic and semi-authentic materials expose learners to natural language

use, real communicative contexts, and culturally rich content, thereby strengthening both language acquisition and intercultural competence. Nevertheless, authenticity should be accompanied by pedagogical adaptation to ensure that texts remain accessible to learners at the B1 proficiency level.

Another important outcome of the study is the recognition of cognitive challenge as a necessary characteristic of effective reading texts. Materials that require learners to compare information, infer meaning, evaluate arguments, identify relationships between ideas, and solve problems stimulate higher-order thinking skills that are directly transferable to writing. Reading-to-writing instruction therefore becomes a process of knowledge construction rather than information reproduction, enabling learners to develop critical literacy alongside linguistic competence.

Based on these findings, the proposed framework can serve as a practical tool for English language teachers when selecting instructional materials. Instead of choosing texts primarily because they appear in textbooks or satisfy vocabulary requirements, teachers are encouraged to evaluate whether each text provides opportunities for meaningful written production. Likewise, curriculum developers and textbook authors may use the framework to design integrated reading and writing activities that progressively guide learners from comprehension to analysis, synthesis, and independent writing.

Overall, the results suggest that effective text selection extends beyond traditional considerations of readability and language level. Reading texts should be viewed as pedagogical resources that simultaneously develop language knowledge, critical thinking, genre awareness, and writing competence. The proposed criteria therefore contribute to strengthening the methodological foundations of reading-to-writing instruction and support the implementation of competence-based English language education in upper secondary schools.

CONCLUSION

The present study examined the pedagogical principles underlying the selection of reading texts for the integrated development of reading and writing skills among 10th–11th grade EFL students. Based on a review of the literature and an analysis of curriculum requirements, the study proposed a systematic framework comprising eight interrelated criteria: linguistic accessibility, alignment with curriculum objectives and

CEFR descriptors, thematic relevance, genre diversity, authenticity, cognitive challenge, cultural appropriateness, and writing potential. Together, these criteria provide a comprehensive basis for evaluating instructional texts that support reading-to-writing instruction in upper secondary education.

The findings suggest that reading text selection should be regarded as a strategic pedagogical process rather than a routine choice of teaching materials. Carefully selected texts not only facilitate reading comprehension but also provide learners with linguistic resources, rhetorical models, organizational patterns, and conceptual knowledge that can be transferred to meaningful writing tasks. Consequently, the quality of reading materials has a direct influence on learners' ability to summarize information, express opinions, construct arguments, and produce coherent written texts.

The proposed framework also contributes to competence-based English language teaching by offering practical guidance for teachers, curriculum developers, and textbook authors. Applying these criteria can help ensure that classroom materials promote higher-order thinking skills, learner engagement, and effective integration of receptive and productive language skills. In this way, reading becomes a meaningful source of language input that naturally supports written communication.

Although the study is theoretical in nature, it provides a foundation for future empirical research. Further studies may validate the proposed framework by applying it to the analysis of English language textbooks, evaluating authentic and adapted reading materials, or examining its impact on learners' reading and writing performance through classroom experiments. Such investigations would strengthen the empirical evidence for reading-to-writing pedagogy and contribute to the continued improvement of English language education in upper secondary schools.

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