



**UNIVERSITI PUTRA MALAYSIA**

**RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN READING AND WRITING IN ENGLISH  
AS A SECOND LANGUAGE IN THE CONTEXT OF PERFORMANCE,  
PERCEPTIONS AND STRATEGY USE**

**SALAHELDIN ADAM AHMED ELDOUMA.**

**FBMK 2005 8**



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By

**SALAHELDIN ADAM AHMED ELDOUMA**

**Thesis Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies, Universiti Putra Malaysia,  
in Fulfilment of the Requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy**

**September 2005**



## DEDICATION

To my affectionate mother Zahra', my wife Hanan and our loving sons  
Khattab and Ammar, I dedicate this work.



Abstract of thesis presented to the Senate of Universiti Putra Malaysia in fulfilment of the requirement for the degree of doctor of Philosophy

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**Chairman: Professor Chan Swee Heng, PhD**

**Faculty: Modern Languages and Communication**

This study investigated the relationship between reading and writing in terms of the performance, perception and strategy use of university ESL students. The subjects of the study were students of English language from the Faculty of Education at Sudan University of Science and Technology. The subjects attempted two reading tests and two writing tests to provide indicators of their performance that potentially reflected the reading and writing connection. They also responded to a structured questionnaire that investigated their perceptions about the connection between what they read and what they wrote to shed light on their affective responses towards the connection deemed important to foster language growth.

From the subjects, 12 students were chosen based on the good reader/writer and poor reader/writer criterion and were asked to recall in writing two reading texts. They were also interviewed to investigate ESL learner strategy use in making this connection.

The findings of the study showed that there was a relatively high degree of correlation between the students' reading and writing performance ( $r=0.741$ ;  $p = .000$ ). The findings also showed that the relationship between reading performance and writing performance differed according to the learners' levels of language proficiency which supports the bidirectional hypothesis.

On the whole, the participants also showed positive attitudes towards integrating reading and writing skills. In response to the questionnaire, the students reported making connection between what they read and what they wrote by making notes/summary of what they had read, developing topics of their reading into paragraphs and using the main ideas of their reading texts to help them in their writing activities. However, the findings also showed that the culture of 'always-practising' good strategies appears to be underdeveloped among Sudanese tertiary students. Therefore, it is argued that further effort is needed on the part of instruction to help students improve the use of good reading and writing strategies.

The analysis of the recall protocols also revealed that good writers recall better compared to good readers. Therefore, good writers are better readers in terms of recall compared to good readers. Accordingly, it is argued on the basis of the recall efforts that a good writer is more likely a better reader compared to a good reader being a better writer which further supports the results of the reading and writing performance tests as well as the analysis of the students' responses to the questionnaire.

Furthermore, the students' interviews showed that all the interviewees practised some common strategies when reading and writing. Good/poor readers and good/poor writers prepared themselves for reading by checking the title and pictures first. However, good readers, poor readers and poor writers seemed to have similar plans for reading, whereas good writers had a clearer plan to approach reading (skimming for main ideas, scanning for details or reading the introduction first, among possible often strategies). There were however also no clear techniques used by the interviewees to generate ideas for their writing.

The research shows a close connection between the constructs of reading and writing. It supports the contention that writing is generally the better indicator of reading ability. The findings point to work that can be done to nurture greater success in reading and writing abilities and to exploit the connections for the benefits of ESL language students.

Abstrak tesis yang dikemukakan kepada Senat Universiti Putra Malaysia  
Sebagai memenuhi keperluan untuk ijazah Doktor Falsafah

**PERKAITAN ANTARA PEMBACAAN DAN PENULISAN DALAM  
BAHASA INGGERIS SEBAGAI BAHASA KEDUA DI DALAM KONTEKS  
PRESTASI, PERSEPSI DAN PENGGUNAAN STRATEGI**

Oleh

**SALAHELDIN ADAM AHMED ELDOUMA**

**September 2005**

**Pengerusi: Profesor Chan Swee Heng, PhD**

**Fakulti: Bahasa Modern dan Komunikasi**

Kajian ini mengkaji tentang hubungkait antara pembacaan dengan penulisan dari segi prestasi, persepsi dan strategi yang digunakan oleh pelajar bahasa Inggeris sebagai bahasa kedua pada peringkat universiti. Subjek kajian terdiri daripada pelajar-pelajar bahasa Inggeris Fakulti Pendidikan, Universiti Sains dan Teknologi, Sudan. Mereka mengambil dua ujian bacaan dan ujian penulisan dan skor ujian-ujian tersebut digunakan sebagai petunjuk prestasi mereka untuk menentukan hubungkait antara pembacaan dengan penulisan. Subjek juga dikehendaki menjawab soal-selidik berstruktur. Informasi yang didapati daripada kaedah soal-selidik ini dapat memberi gambaran tentang respon afektif subjek mengenai hubungkait antara pembacaan dengan penulisan yang dapat membantu pengembangan bahasa.

Dua belas orang pelajar telah dipilih sebagai subjek berdasarkan kriteria pembaca atau penulis yang baik dan pembaca atau penulis yang lemah. Mereka diminta mengingati semula (secara bertulis) isi penting dua teks bacaan. Subjek tersebut juga ditemuduga untuk mengenal pasti strategi yang digunakan mereka.

Dapatan kajian menunjukkan terdapat korelasi yang agak tinggi bagi prestasi pelajar untuk ujian bacaan dan penulisan ( $r= 0.741$ ;  $p= 0.000$ ). Dapatan kajian juga menunjukkan bahawa terdapat perbezaan antara prestasi pelajar dalam ujian bacaan dengan prestasi mereka dalam ujian penulisan. Perbezaan prestasi ini bergantung pada tahap kemahiran pelajar. Dapatan ini sokong hipotesis dua hala kajian.

Secara amnya, subjek juga memaparkan sikap yang positif terhadap penggabungan kemahiran membaca dan menulis. Analisis data soal-selidik menunjukkan yang para pelajar melaporkan bahawa dalam percubaan untuk mengaitkan apa yang telah dibaca dan ditulis, mereka mengambil nota dan membuat ringkasan tentang apa yang telah dibaca, membina perenggan untuk setiap isi penting yang dikenal pasti, dan menggunakan idea utama dalam teks bacaan untuk membantu aktiviti penulisan mereka. Walau bagaimanapun, dapatan kajian juga menunjukkan bahawa budaya 'sentiasa mengamalkan' strategi yang baik



kurang dipraktikkan di kalangan pelajar Sudan pada peringkat pengajian tinggi. Oleh itu, adalah disarankan agar aspek ini dapat ditekankan dalam pembelajaran supaya dapat membantu pelajar mempertingkatkan penggunaan strategi bacaan atau penulisan yang baik.

Analisis protokol mengingati semula juga menunjukkan bahawa penulis yang baik dapat mengingati semula isi teks dengan lebih berkesan atau baik daripada pembaca yang baik. Sehubungan ini, dapatlah dinyatakan bahawa penulis yang baik adalah juga pembaca yang lebih baik dari segi mengingati semula berbanding dengan pembaca yang baik. Dapatan ini menyokong keputusan yang diperolehi daripada prestasi pelajar dalam ujian bacaan dan penulisan serta keputusan yang diperolehi daripada analisis data soal-selidik.

Tambahan pula, dapatan daripada temuduga pelajar menunjukkan bahawa kesemua pelajar mengamalkan strategi yang umum apabila membaca dan menulis. Pembaca yang baik atau lemah dan penulis yang baik atau lemah menyediakan diri mereka untuk latihan dalam ujian bacaan dengan memeriksa tajuk dan gambar yang terdapat dalam teks bacaan. Walau bagaimanapun, pembaca yang baik serta pembaca dan penulis yang lemah mempunyai rancangan yang sama untuk ujian bacaan, manakala penulis yang baik mempunyai rancangan yang lebih

jelas (contohnya meluncur idea utama, mengimbas isi secara terperinci atau membaca dahulu perenggan pengenalan adalah sebahagian daripada strategi yang sering digunakan). Walau bagaimanapun, tidak terdapat teknik yang nyata yang digunakan oleh subjek untuk menjana idea dalam penulisan mereka.

Kajian ini menunjukkan hubungkait yang rapat antara konstruk bacaan dengan penulisan. Ia menyokong kenyataan yang mengutarakan bahawa penulisan, secara umum adalah petunjuk yang lebih baik bagi keupayaan membaca. Dapatan kajian mengutarakan cadangan agar usaha dapat dibuat untuk mempertingkatkan keupayaan membaca dan menulis serta mengeksploitasi hubungkait antara kemahiran membaca dengan menulis untuk manfaat pelajar bahasa Inggeris sebagai bahasa kedua.

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

<b>ESL</b>	English as a Second Language
<b>NES</b>	Native English Speaker
<b>TOEFL</b>	Teaching of English as a Foreign Language
<b>ELSU</b>	English Language Service Unit
<b>ETIC</b>	English Teaching Information Centre
<b>NCHE</b>	National Council for Higher Education



# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

This chapter aims mainly at introducing the study by providing information on the status of the English language in the Sudan, briefly discussing the reading and writing connection hypotheses, stating the problem of the study, framing research questions and defining the reading and writing constructs that are central to the study.

### 1. 1 English Language in the Sudan

In most countries of the Sub-Saharan region of Africa, each country is described as multilingual and multicultural in the sense that its people speak several languages according to their ethnic groups. Sudan is one of these countries where over 100 languages and dialects are spoken (Ayik, 1995).

English language was introduced to the Sudan by the British rulers who made it the official language of administration. The purpose of the English language during the Colonial period in northern Sudan (1889-1956) was to create a class of English speaking clerks and translators who could act as intermediaries for the British officials (Sandell, 1982). The use of English was limited to a small section of the educated elite. In offices all over the

Sudan, English was used, but it was generally restricted to the sphere of work. At home and in social contexts, Arabic was used if no English person was present. Unlike the North where both Arabic and English were used, the South began with an administration wholly run in Arabic which gradually changed to English. Beginning from the intermediate level<sup>1</sup>, all the school subjects were taught in English except for religious studies.

### **1. 2 The Role of the English Language in the Sudan During the Colonial Era**

As mentioned earlier, English was introduced to the Sudan via the British rulers who made it the official language of administration. The main subjects in the middle and secondary education were in English and it was the language of instruction at Gordon Memorial College (Mohammed, 1992). However, the main factors underlying the instrumental direction of English in the Sudan, according to Mohammed (1992), were:

1. English was looked upon as a unifying factor for the society that was coherently linked through well-established cultural, tribal, religious and historical ties.
2. As the majority of the ordinary people of the Sudan were not educated, they stayed out of reach of the English language influence. This was the reason behind the fact that the British

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<sup>1</sup> Until 1970 the school system provided four (4) years of primary, four (4) years of intermediate and four (4) years of secondary schooling.

government was keen in sending British administrators who could speak Arabic.

3. Though it was introduced as the official language, English was not strictly the sole language of administration. Arabic was used and the important government documents appeared in two versions: Arabic and English.
4. The primary aim of education during the colonial era was to produce junior staff to help the British administrators in running the country.
5. The medium of instruction at the elementary and middle schools was Arabic. English was the medium of instruction only in secondary and tertiary education.

The twenty years following independence witnessed considerable changes in the educational scene in Northern Sudan. Many of these happened in response to political attitudes and actions rather than to educational needs. Nevertheless, English remained the language of instruction at the secondary schools up to 1964 (Sandell, 1982). The main reasons were:

1. English was the official language of the Sudan after the Anglo-Egyptian conquest.