The Influence of Free Time Reading Habit on the Writing Quality: Quasi-Experimental Study on Libyan Students in the English Department, Sirte University

٭Mohammad O Ramadan　　**٭Dunia Mansour**　　**٭Rowida Mohammed**

Abstract: This study aimed to find out the extent to which the students' understudy reading for pleasure affect their overall writing quality. The design employed in this study was quasi-experimental. The data was collected through compositions in the pre and post-tests. The sample consisted of 14 students who were chosen randomly from the Department of English at Sirte University and they were equally ascribed to the Control Group and Experimental Group (CG & EG henceforth). The EG was exposed to treatment for two months whereas the CG students were not exposed to any treatment. The data were analyzed manually and using SPSS software (T-Test). The descriptive and statistical results revealed that the EG overall writing quality has been improved compared to the CG. The study concludes with some pedagogical recommendation and suggestions for further research.

Keywords: Reading for pleasure, writing quality, control and experimental group, intervention course.

1.1 Introduction

For college students, reading and writing are very essential skills for the success of their studies. Reading is an important gateway to personal development, and to social, economic and civic life Holden, (2004). Writing is the learned process of shaping experiences into text, allowing the writer to discover, develop, clarify and communicate thoughts and feelings. Hyland (2003) convincingly believes that writing is the most difficult language skill in acquiring a second language. On the other hand, writing is one of the skills that a student faces difficulty in learning and understanding to apply it properly. Reading is an important language skill and highly complicated act that everyone must learn it. Reading is not uniquely a single skill but a mixture of several skills and procedures in which the readers interact with printed words for content and pleasure. Writing, speaking, grammar, vocabulary items, spelling, and other language sub-skills can be taught through reading. Moreover, Jeremy (2004) also stated that reading is a model of language, reading texts provide opportunities to study language such as; vocabulary, grammar, punctuation and the way to construct sentence, paragraph and text. Therefore, it can be said that reading is an underlying means of supporting the success of learning process. Krashen (2016) mentions that we do not learn to write by writing, but rather by reading. This suggests that reading and writing are substantially related to each other. Harl (2013) asserted that reading is acquiring meaning from a text while writing is process when meaning is produced.

The current study, therefore, aims to find out whether or not the reading for pleasure can improve the writing quality of students in the English Department at the University of Sirte.

1.2 Aim of the Study:

٭ **Assistant Professor in Applied linguistics, Department of English, Sirte University, Libya:** Email: m.o.ramadan@su.edu.ly

٭ **Teaching Assistant, Department of English, Sirte University:** d.m.mansour@su.edu.ly

٭ **Teaching Assistant, Department of English, Sirte University:** r.m.milad@su.edu.ly

The current study aims to:

-Investigate the effectiveness of reading for pleasure on the students understudy's overall writing quality.

1.3 Hypothesis of the Study:

This study hypothesis that:

-Reading for pleasure is very affective on the students' under study overall writing quality.

1.4 Statement of the Problem:

Most of EFL learners at Sirte University Libya complain about their inability to write properly. Among other issues, they usually complain about their inability to organize their ideas logically. Moreover, they also complain about the lack of suitable information to cover the assigned topics, their poor vocabulary stock, their structure and spelling mistakes. This often results in students producing poor texts and therefore getting bad marks in writing assignment and tasks. This study believes that using reading for pleasure may have a significant role in improving students writing skill. To this end, this study investigates the effectiveness of reading for pleasure on the students' overall writing quality.

1.5 Significance of the study:

This study is thought to be significant as its outcome may help teachers and the students in the context of this study and elsewhere to:

- See in practical terms the importance of the relationship between reading and writing and how integrating the two skills could help to overcome some of the problems/challenges students encounter in their writing skills.

- Teachers may adopt or adapt the intervention program used in this study as a technique to help their students improve their writing quality.

- Encourage the decision makers in the English department in Sirte University and elsewhere to change/modify the reading and writing courses in a way which is more affective for students.

2. Literature Review:

2.1 Introduction

2.2 Definition of Reading for Pleasure

Bull (2017) defines reading for pleasure as a non-oriented relation with texts as a way to pass time and for enjoyment, he also describes it as the type of reading, which is voluntary and is performed out of the reader's choice that involves a text of interest to the reader. He further explains that pleasure for reading is not distinguished by the experience being pleasurable, but rather by the purpose of the reading. Reading for pleasure is increasingly recognized as a 'purposeful volitional act with a large measure of choice and free will' Powell, (2014). Whereas pleasure in reading refers to pleasure in the experience, regardless of whether the reader was able to exercise agency in the context. According to Wilhelm, (2016) there are types of pleasure, including:

a. Intellectual pleasure: e.g., finding out about issues of interest in the world and solving problems in narratives.

b. Social pleasure: e.g., belonging to a community of readers and connecting to others through reading as well as identifying as a reader.

c. The pleasure of functional work: e.g., using reading to learn, think, and act in different ways, and using reading to shape one's writing.

2.2 Definition of Writing skills:

Writing is considered as one of four skills in English language in addition to listening, speaking and reading. Moreover, writing is one of complex kind of communication, besides it is produced in written forms, the writing skill is one of the most difficult skills and the highest level of communication skill. In this case writing ability is defined as a specific skill which helps writers put their thoughts into word in a meaningful form to mentally interact with the message (Mahyar, 2012). Thus, it can be assumed that writing ability is the skill of putting together what they think or what they want to say using words, which is who read is able to know their thoughts, ideas, feeling and what they want to

convey with grammatical rules, punctuation, composition and methods.

2.3 The Relationship between Reading and Writing:

There exist a vast number of studies into the relationship between reading and writing, conducted from different perspectives. Most of these studies originate from an educational context and are concerned with efficiency and authenticity of teaching of the two abilities for reasons of curriculum design (Shanahan, 2009). Also in the context of integrated assessment of literacy, Chapelle, Enright, & Jamieson, (2011). Graham and Hebert, (2010) mention that our background knowledge helps us interpret what we are reading and also informs what we write. If students read about a topic before they write about it, this gives them information that they can then use when writing, when students write about a text they are reading, whether that be responding to questions, taking notes or summarizing the material, this also helps them to better understand and retain the material they are reading. Furthermore, reading and writing instruction do not need to be kept separate. When combined, there are positive effects both in interims of students learning to write and interims of students to learning to read (Graham and Hebert, 2010).

There have been some studies conducted dealing with reading habit and writing skill such as Li, (2015) in her case study revealed that reading and writing are connected to each other. The reading materials are proven to help the learners to generate ideas and information to their written work. Owushu-Achew, (2014) reported that reading affects students' academic performance.

2.4 The Importance of Integrating Teaching Language Skills:

Despite our history of treating the four skills in separate segments of a curriculum, there is a recent trend toward skill integration which clarifies the advantages of this approach in EFL classrooms Brown (2001). Reading and writing are regarded as the products of skills acquisition classrooms in which reading and writing are integrated are described as using "whole language" Newman (1985), or literature based DeFord (1986), approach. Such approaches stress immersion of students in a language-emphasize skills instruction and stress supportive environment in which students are encouraged through different opportunities to develop their skills. Reading is considered as input and writing as output. Besides, reading also supplies new information and provokes students in their writings. Furthermore, the necessity of selecting information in the writing process, it is reasonable to consider the effectiveness of integration reading and writing instruction. Goodman (1986), he argues that reading and writing develop together. Carson (1993), and Kucer (1985),claim that it is beneficial to integrate L2 reading and writing in the same classroom, and that these two skills depend on the same world of knowledge text.

According to Grabe (2001,p.22)," reading –to –write " is a notion which implies that writers go back to resources and read them in different ways as they search for specific information and apply reading strategies "to match task expectations for the writing " Additionally, Carson (1993, p.85) defined the reading –to write notion as follows: The phrase reading for writing can be understood as referring most specifically to the literacy event in which readers /writers use text (s) that they read, or have read as a basis for text (s) that they write. Reading for writing can also be understood as acknowledging that writing is often the resultant physical artifact of reading /writing encounters Grabe (2001, p.85). Hirvela (2004), claimed that ESL /EFL writing teachers need to understand their students as readers in order to make the reading –writing connection works better. Their understanding of their students as readers involves identifying " their notions of reading (especially good reading), how they taught to read their native language and /or the L2 their approaches to reading, their problems and fears as readers, and so forth "Hirvela (2004, p.44). Therefore, Hirvela (2004,p.55) argued that adopting the Reader –Response Approach ,which focuses on readers and how they read texts ,as basis for teaching writing classes can help us to understand " why (our students) read and write as they do " . The division between teaching reading and writing in the EFL classroom, which entails a considerable lack of emphasis on the reading –writing connections, is a major cause of the weakness in the students' writing ability Hao and Sivell, (2002, p.1) argued that teaching writing in isolation of reading probably hinders the development of writing skills. They added that when reading is not integrated into writing instruction, "the knowledge and skills students have acquired in reading cannot be transferred to writing ". Therefore, the division could lead the EFL students to experience much difficulty in both language and rhetoric when they start a writing assignment. Stotsky (1984, p.16), detected some consistent correlation, specifically that: "better writers tend to be better readers", and that "better writers tend to read more than poorer writers," and finally, yet more importantly that "better readers tend to produce more syntactically mature writing than poorer readers.

2.5 Previous Studies:

Many studies have been carried out on the effect of reading on students' writing ability.

A study done by Zainal and Husin, (2011) investigated the effects of reading on writing performance among Faculty of Civil Engineering students. A total of twenty students from the Faculty of Civil Engineering had been identified and selected for the purpose of this research. This group of students is taking an English language course that is UHB 2422 Advanced English for Academic Communication. There were two writing sessions. The first session required the students to write an essay according to the topic given without reading the materials on related topic. Then, they were required to answer the questionnaire regarding their personal views on writing without reading text. On the other hand, in the second session of writing, the students were given a text to read and later produced a mind map based on their understanding of the text. The text then was taken and they were asked to write an essay on the given topic. They were required to answer the questionnaire regarding their personal views on writing with reading text. Observation was also made during both writing sessions. The results showed that reading has positive effects on the students writing.

Another study done by Al-Mansour and Al-Shorman،(2014) aimed at investigating the effect on an extensive reading program on the writing performance of Saudi EFL university students. The sample of the study consisted of 48 students randomly chosen from King Saud University- College of languages and Translation- and assigned to EG and CG of 24 students each. Data of the study were collected within two months period via a pre-post-test design for equivalent groups. The CG was taught by the regular teacher with the direct administration of the researchers, however, the experiment group was taught by the researchers. The researchers

assessed the effect of the extensive reading program on the writing performance of the Saudi EFL university students. Results showed that the experiment group outperformed the CG on the measure. This indicated that the extensive reading program may have a significant positive effect on learners' writing performance.

Another study done by Habibi, Salleh and Sarjit,(2015) which examined the impact of incorporating reading in efforts to improve the writing skills of EFL students. In this study, five Iranian students, studying in an international school in Malaysia, were purposively selected. Two instruments were used: a compiled genre-specific corpus as the main tool to evaluate the participants' level of proficiency in writing and two semi-structured interviews as supplementary instruments to obtain EL participants' perspectives on the effect of reading on the development of writing skills. The method used to analyze the corpus was CACA, short for computer-assisted corpus analysis, where the written texts from the pre-test and the post-test were used and compiled into a corpus and then tagged and analyzed using suitable concordance software. After intervention was done, the participants were given some instruction on how to write effectively. The findings indicated that the participants writing skills had significantly improved by integrating reading in writing tasks.

Another study done by Salehi,(2015) carried out in order to investigate the impact of extensive reading on the writing performance of Iranian EFL pre-university students. To achieve the aim of the study, 48 students were randomly chosen from pre-university students, 24 of whom were ascribed to EG and the other half assigned to the CG. Data of the study were collected within a six- month period via a pre-test and post-test designed for comparable groups. The CG was treated by the regular teaching of an English teacher with the direct supervision of the researcher; however, the EG was treated by the researcher. An independent sample t-test was used as a statistical test. Findings of the study showed that the EG outstripped the CG, resulting in null hypothesis rejection.

Another study done by Atayeva,(2019) which was set out to investigate how students' reading skills affect students' academic writing. Fifty-two master students of English Language Education at UniversitasAhmad Dahlan in Yogyakarta, Indonesia were involved in this correlation study. Two questionnaires were used as instruments to obtain the data, i.e., the reading habit survey and the academic writing skill survey. The data were analyzed with descriptive statistics and single linear regression tests along with the prerequisite test of normality. The results revealed that the reading habit and writing skills of the students were at the medium level. Meanwhile, the other result showed that the reading habit had a profound effect on college students' academic writing skill.

Another study done by Linuwih &Winardi, (2020) investigated the reading habit quality of EFL learners at WidyaKartika University, Surabaya as well as to find out the influence of reading habit towards students' writing skill. Sixty two students of WidyaKartika University were selected as the subject of this study. The instruments used in this study were (1) a reading habit questionnaire, to measure the quality of students' reading habit and (2) a writing test, to examine the students' writing skill and how it is influenced by reading habit. The results showed that the students' reading habit quality was fair. Meanwhile, the analysis of Simple Linear Regression concluded that reading habit influences students' writing skill. Moreover, one of the writing components that was mostly influenced by the reading habit was the content.

Another study done by Taha, (2021) which explored the reading habits among students and their effects on their academic performance. The study was conducted in a school in a remote are in city, in the UAE. The study used the qualitative approach. Interviews with six students were used to collect the data. The findings showed that most of the interviewees

acknowledged the importance of reading. Only one student said that he read for the sake of passing examination. The study assured that the reading habit has a significant influence on academic performance. There is also a relationship between the reading habit and the academic performance of students. The study recommended that students should be encouraged by their teachers to use the library for reading and to assign extra reading for students.

2.6 The Literature Gap:

Despite the fact that there has been many studies, as shown above, on the effect of reading on the writing quality, one a single study has been conducted in the Arab context and no study, as far as the present students researchers are aware of, conducted in the Libyan context. Therefore, this study is the first of its kind on this topic in the Libyan EFL context. Moreover, on the methodological aspect, most previous studies, as presented above, used questionnaire and interviews to collect their data. This study is employing an experimental design with pre and post-tests to investigate the issue under study. Finally, most previous studies were conducted on primary and secondary pupils and master's degree students school students while the present study is conducted on university students.

3. Methodology:

3.1 Research Question

The study is designed to answer the following research question:

- To what extent does the student 'understudy reading for pleasure affect their overall writing quality?

3.2 Research Design:

As the aim of the current study is to find out the effectiveness of reading for pleasure on writing quality, the experimental design is believed to be the most appropriate way to measure the effectiveness of treatment. Experimental and quasi-experimental research designs examine whether there is a causal relationship between independent and dependent variables. Simply defined, the independent variable is the variable of influence and the dependent variable is the variable that is being influenced Loewen &Plonsky, (2016). Experimental design is the process of carrying out research in an objective and controlled fashion so that precision is maximized and specific conclusions can be drawn regarding hypothesis statement. Generally, the purpose is to establish the effect that a factor or independent variable has on a dependent variable Bell, (2009). The conceptual table of this research is as follows:

Table 3.1: Quasi-Experimental Design

Select CG	Pre-test	No treatment	Post-test
Select EG	Pre-test	Experimental Treatment (Reading for pleasure)	Post-test

3.3 Research Method:

The pre and post-test were in the form of a written composition. The participants of the CG and EG were asked to write about 300 word long essays. They were given variety of topics to choose from and they were of narrative and descriptive types. The time given for tests were 45 minutes. Moreover, the researchers did their best to ensure that both tests (i.e. pre and post-test) and for both groups (i.e. CG and EG) conducted in the same atmosphere to exclude any external effects on the experiment which could affect the outcome of the study.

3.4 Study Sample:

Fourteen students were chosen randomly from the Department of English at Sirte University to take part in the study. The sample was equally ascribed (7 participants each) to the EG and the CG.

Further information about the participants is shown in table (3. 2) below:

Table 3.2: Participants' Background Information

No	Nationality	L1	Age	Gender	Years of learning English
14	Libyans	Arabic	19-23	Female	1/2 years

3.5 Data Collection:

The collection of the data in the present study lasted for about two months. The following are steps and the procedure which was followed to gather the required data:

3.5.1 Pre &post test

3.5.1.1 Pre-test

Prior to the beginning of the study, the two groups were administered the pretest, we selected some different topics which include narrative and descriptive texts and then the students wrote the text based on the given topics.

These topics were as follow:

•Your best teacher and subject.

•Online shopping vs. traditional shopping.

•Corona virus is the 21st century epidemic, some people believe in it but some others don't...what do you think? Write about your views of corona virus and your experience with it. Within 45 minutes the students were wrote 300– 350 words.

3.5.1.2 Post-test

The two groups were administered the post-test. Moreover, the post-test topics were different from the pre-test, participants were given45 minutes to write a 300– 350 words long essays. These topics were as follow:

•Your dream job.

•Place you like to visit.

•Things you like to do in your free time and weekend.

3.5.2 Rating &Raters

After collecting the pre and post compositions, they were all coded before they were given to the raters in order to ensure anonymity. The compositions were given to three teachers in the Department of English at Sirte University. The reason for choosing those teachers in particular was due to their long experience in teaching in general and writing courses in particular. Moreover, choosing three teachers was to ensure the reliability of the assessment. In most cases, the scores of the three raters were very close and, in this case, we took the average score of three raters. However, in cases where the scores were a bit far from each other, the student researchers took the average of the closest scores. Another way to ensure reliability and consistency of the scoring was that the raters were given a set of criterion

(Marking sheet) for marking the pre and post-tests compositions. (See appendix (A) for the list of criterion).

3.5.3 Intervention Course

i. Duration of the Course

The table below shows some information about the intervention course, in terms of its location, number of participants and ages. Also, the number and length of sessions in the course.

Table 3.3: Information about the Intervention Course

Location	Department	English Language faculty of arts
	University	University of Sirte
	City/Country	Sirte/Libya
Participants	No	7
	Gender	Female
	Ages	20-22
	English proficiency	Intermediate
Duration of the course	9 weeks	
Number and length of sessions	No of sessions	27 sessions
	Length of sessions	20-25 minutes
Facilitators	The researchers	

ii. Materials of the Course:

The materials of the course were simply a variety of readings texts. The texts were from different genres such as sports, fashion, economy, educational and others. Moreover, texts represented different texts types such as narrative, argumentative and descriptive. A special care was taken to select texts, which would suit the students proficiency level. This was done with the help of the some of the teachers who have a good experience in teaching reading and other language skills in the department. Students were also given a choice in many occasions during the course to choose texts that interest and suit them and read them at their convenience. For more details please refer to (appendix B).

3.6 Data Analysis Techniques

The data were analyzed manually and statistically. The manual analysis of the overall scores of the compositions was done by simply taking the average score given by the three raters as was explained in section (3.2.5). As for analyzing the categories of errors, the analysis was basically done based the raters assessment. The raters were asked to underline any errors found in the participants' essay who fall within the categories that were given to them (see appendix A). The student researcher counted the underlined errors by the three raters and took average score. So for example if one rater underlines 10 and the second underlines 11 and the third one underlines 12, then the score for that category would (11). This was done with all the analysis of errors in all categories included in the study. Finally, the statistical analysis was done using the t-test in the SPSS program. The average score of each participant's essay was input in the SPSS. The rest of the statistical operations such the mean, standard deviation

and the probability value were done with the help of a specialist in the SPSS program in the Faculty of Sciences in Sirte University.

4. Results & Discussion

4.1 Results

4.1.1 Descriptive Results

i. Pre &Post-test Results of the CG Participants Overall Scores

As presented in table (4.1) below, the participants overall scores in the pre and

post tests were almost identical except in one case where one participant scored 67 in the pre and 78 in the post-test. This result was not surprising due to the fact that the CG did not undergo any kind of treatment.

Table 4.1: Results of the CG pre and post-tests overall Scores

Students	Pre-test scores	Post-test scores
E	58	58
G	48	47
H	67	78
M1	77	76
M2	34	36
R1	70	66
R2	70	71

ii. Pre & Post-test Results of the EG Participants Overall Scores

As shown in the table (4.2) below, the scores of the post-test are higher than the pre-test for all the participants. This result is excepted and it tends to show that EG did benefit from the intervention course which was conducted as a treatment in this study. However, despite the seemingly improvement in the post-test, a further analysis within the categories of errors of the participants writing in the pre and post test was needed in order to see whether or not that improvement was actually reflected in the participants overall writing. The next section presents the results of the categories of errors in the participates writing in the pre and post test.

Table 4.2. Results of the EG pre & post-test overall Scores

Students	Pre-test scores	Post-test scores
A 1	75	87
A 2	36	61
D	39	65
H	50	66
M	39	69
N	47	57
R	50	70

iii. Pre &post-test Results of the categories of Errors of CG

The tables (4.3) below presents the total of classification of errors in the pre and post-test. As shown in the table, the total number errors in the pre-test was 139 whereas in the post t-test was168. Moreover, a further analysis within categories of errors also show that the frequency and the type of errors are very similar in the pre and post-test except in the spelling and

cohesion category where the numbers of errors, as the table (4.3) presents have increased (25 37, 3 13) in the pre and post-test respectively). There is no clear explanation for such increase of errors of these two categories but it could have been just by a chance or it could be that some participants found the topics of the post-test a bit harder than the pre-test.

Table 4.3. Results of CG pre & post-test in categories of Errors

| | Pre-test | | | | | | | | | | Post-test | | | | | | | | | |
| | Categories | | | | | | | | | TOTAL | Categories | | | | | | | | | TOTAL |
	Spelling	Punctuation	Vocabulary	Grammar	Organization	Cohesion	Coherence	Tense	Word Order		Spelling	Punctuation	Vocabulary	Grammar	Organization	Cohesion	Coherence	Tense	Word Order	
E	4	8	6	7	3	1	2	/	/		7	2	4	13	/	3	/	/	/	
G	12	5	2	17	/	/	/	/	/		13	12	2	12	/	1	/	2	/	
H	1	3	2	7	/	1	/	/	/		4	5	2	8	/	4	/	/	/	
M1	1	/	1	6	/	/	/	/	/		1	2	1	3	2	1	/	/	/	
M2	3	4	1	6	/	/	/	/	/		4	4	3	12	/	2	/	1	2	
R1	/	3	1	10	/	/	/	/	/		2	3	2	7	/	1	/	/	/	
R2	4	6	4	7	/	1	/	/	/		6	4	4	6	/	1	/	/	/	
Total	25	29	17	60	3	3	2	/	/	139	37	32	18	61	2	13	/	3	2	168

iv. Pre & Post-test Results of the categories of Errors of EG

The tables (4.4) below display the total of classification of errors in the pre and post-test of the EG. As shown in the table, For example in pre-test the total number of errors was (302), while in the post t-test was (252). This suggest that there is some improvement in the participants overall errors in the pre and the post-test. However, a further analysis within categories of errors suggests that the improvements was not across all the categories and in fact in some categories, for example in (the spelling and grammar categorizes) participants performed better in the pre-test. The most improved categories were punctuation, tense and organization with 76, 47, 11, 00 and 17, 5 in the pre and post test respectively. The improvement of some the categories could be attributed to the treatment program. However, the participants underperforming in some categories is hard to explain and we could only speculate this was due to that fact that intervention course was rather short or that the participants found the post-test topics harder or of a less interest than the pre-test ones

.

Table 4.4. Results of EG pre & post-test in categories of Errors

	Pre-test											Post-test										
	Categories										TOTAL	Categories										TOTAL
	Spelling	Punctuation	Vocabulary	Grammar	Organization	Cohesion	Coherence	Tens	Word Order	Content		Spelling	Punctuation	Vocabulary	Grammar	Organization	Cohesion	Coherence	Tense	Word Order	Content	
A1	14	9	4	6	2	1	3	/	/	/		16	6	2	5	/	2	/	/	/	/	
A2	9	9	6	8	2	2	3	4	2	/		4	3	3	7	/	3	1	/	/	/	
D	18	16	2	9	4	4	4	/	/	/		27	12	5	8	4	3	/	/	/	/	
H	9	20	3	2	2	2	2	/	/	/		6	3	1	5	/	3	/	/	/	/	
M	10	7	7	15	4	3	3	2	1	/		7	5	6	13	/	3	1	/	/	/	
M	4	1	5	4	1	2	1	1	/	1		5	7	2	13	1	2	/	/	/	/	
R	10	14	3	9	2	2	4	4	/	1		21	11	5	18	/	1	2	/	/	/	
Total	74	76	30	53	17	16	20	11	3	2	302	86	47	24	69	5	17	4	/	/	/	252

4.1.2 Statistical Results

After having presented the descriptive results, this section presents the statistical results.

i. Pre &post-test Results of the CG

As table (4.5) below demonstrates that p.vaule of the pre-test and post-test is .596 which is higher than the threshold value of 0.05 which is commonly used in social sciences. Moreover, the mean scores were 60.5714in the pre-test, and 61.571 in the post-test. This suggests that there was no significant improvement in the CG writing quality in pre and post-test results.

Table 4.5. Results of Mean, Standard deviations & p.vaule in the CG

Test	Mean	SD	P.Vaule (Sig)
Pre-test	60.5714	15.05387	
Post-test	61.5714	15.90448	.596

ii. Pre & Post-test Result of the EG

The table (4.6) below shows that that p.vaule of the pre-test and post-test is .000 which is lower than the threshold value of 0.05 which is commonly used in social sciences. Moreover, the mean scores were 48.000in the pre-test, and 67.8571in the post-test. This suggests that there was a significant improvement in the EG writing quality in the post results. These results also demonstrate that the reading for pleasure had positive effect on the participants overall writing quality. Therefore, it can be claimed, based on these results, that the study hypotheses, which was stated in section 1.3, has been accepted and that reading for pleasure has a positive effect the participants overall writing quality.

Table 4.6: Results of Mean, Standard deviations &p.vaule in the EG

Test	Mean	SD	P.Vaue (Sig)
Pre-test	48.0000	13.19091	
Post-test	67.8571	9.56432	.000

4.2 Summary of the Results

To sum up this section, the descriptive results (i.e. the overall scoring and the categories of errors) have demonstrated that the overall writing quality of EG's participants have noticeably improved. The results of categories of errors have. However, shown that this improvement was not evident in all categories. The overall improvement of the EG was further clarified and confirmed by the statistical results. These results have answered the present study's research question which was stated in section (3.1) . Moreover, based on the results it can be safely claimed that the research hypothesis which was stated in section (3.1) that was accepted.

4.3 Discussion

After having presented the results in the previous section, this section intends to discuss these results in relation to the current study research question and the literature reviewed in section two .As was stated at the outset, the aim of this study has been to find out the extent to which the students' understudy reading for pleasure effected their overall writing quality.

The descriptive and statistical results have shown that the EG writing quality have noticeably improved between the pre and post-test. This improvement can be attributed to the treatment (i.e. intervention course) which was conducted as part of this study (3.5.3). In other words, the study demonstrated that reading for pleasure can be very effective in improving students overall writing quality. These findings are in line with some of the previous studies presented in section two such as (Zainal, &Husin, 2011; Atayeva, 2019; Linuwih&Winardi, 2020). These studies have also confirmed the positive effect of reading in general on the students writing.

Our findings and the similar ones in previous studies provide a further evidence of the strong and long-lasting relationship between reading and writing. This relationship, as was discussed in section (2.3), is inseparable. As (Zamble,1992) stated that the teaching of reading and writing cannot be torn apart nor can be arranged in linear order so that one necessarily precedes the other. Reading is very essential to writing and it helps to improve our writing by enhancing our general knowledge as well as our linguistics knowledge such as grammar, vocabulary and spelling etc. As (Krashen,1984) argues that reading is the appropriate input for acquisition of writing skills because it is generally assumed that reading passages will somehow function as primary models with which writing skills can be learned. In fact, one of the most improved category in the EG in the current study was the organization which improved noticeably from the pre-test. This means that the participants were able to produce more organized piece of writing than they were able to before the intervention. Organization is one of the commonly noted issues in Libyan students writing and the lack of it makes students writing harder to follow and understand (Ramadan, 2019). Therefore, the improvement of such a category in a rather short space of time is a good achievement of the intervention course.

Having said, it should, as was shown in the results, be noted that although the EG writing quality has improved due to the intervention, some categories, this improvement was not evident in all categories. That is to say that some categories in the participants writing showed very little or no improvement. It is not very clear why that was the case but it can be attributed to the short duration of the course (i.e. two months).

However, despite some discouraging results, it is clear that the findings suggest that one way to improve our students writing is to encourage them to read more. Moreover, what these results indicate is that the teaching of writing should be integrated with reading in order for it to be more effective. In fact, there is a strong evidence in the literature (e.g. Weaver 1996; Hinkel 2002b) which suggests the need not only for the integration of reading and writing

skills but also all languages skills and grammar (See section 2.4 for discussion about integrating language skills).

Integrating the language skills with sub-skills provide learners with ample opportunities for input and output which will help improve their mastery of language. This is particularly important in situations where there is lack of exposure and opportunity to practice outside of the classroom. Relying on a few hours of formal classroom instructions cannot be sufficient for language learning. From our experience in the Libyan context, most Libyan EFL learners make hardly any effort outside the classroom to learn the language, such as by watching or listening to English television or radio programs or reading English newspapers. This lack of self-motivation could be compensated for by the integration of language skills.

In the Libyan context, it is not only writing that is still being taught separately, but also other language skills. It is high time to move towards the integration of the teaching of different language skills, which could be very effective in enhancing students' communicative abilities. As was done in this study, combining reading and writing, for example, could help improve our Libyan EFL learners' writing by making them aware of how writers develop and organize their ideas in English Reading classes should not only be about content, reading a text silently and aloud and answering a few comprehension questions, as is currently practiced in the Libyan EFL context, but should also, in our opinion, include a focus on form by raising the learners' awareness of the grammatical structures that they have already learned in their grammar classes and guiding them to look critically and analytically at the text in hand. Such practices could also assist our learners to avoid the influence of Arabic rhetorical styles which is often noticed in their writing.

Many EFL learners in general and Libyan students in particular encounter many problems in writing. Many techniques and approaches have been suggested in hope to improve learners writing quality. Some of these techniques have been effective in some parts of the world but they have not been so in others due to lack of facilities and resources. One of issues facing the application of some techniques and approaches are the lack of facilities, lack trained teachers and resources. The treatment that was employed in this study was very simple and almost requires no additional resources or facilities. It can be implemented easily by all teachers and with little or no facilities. All is needed in the current study intervention program is to choose texts which suit students level and interests. On the students' part, the implementation of this program requires nothing except devoting some of the time for reading. One obstacle which could encounter teachers in trying to implement such program is that our students in general do not tend to like reading. In fact one of the problems that we encountered in this study was that few students showed an interest in the program especially when they knew that they had to read texts. Moreover, even those who decided to take part in this study, some of them dropped out at various stages in the course. However, at some point and in order to prevent more drop outs of the course, we had to be creative and find some ways to encourage participants to stay in. One of the strategies that we did was to speak with some of the subject teachers in which the participants were enrolled and ask them if they could assign some of the participation marks in their course in return of attending the course. Teachers have, luckily, agreed to do so and this has helped us to keep students in the course. Another way was to design points gathering scheme and participants were told they would be given points for each session in the course as well as for the number of texts they read. Those who gather more points were awarded gifts and some other nice things. This has helped us to keep participants in the course and encourage them to read more texts. Teachers can also adopt these and similar techniques in order to encourage students to implement this technique until students get used to reading by themselves.

To sum up this discussion, the study findings have clearly shown that reading can help to improve students writing. Students should realize this and try to learn the habit of reading for pleasure, which could help them not only to improve their writing but other language skills. Teachers should also push and encourage their students to get used to reading outside the classroom not only for the sake of passing exams but in order to improve their factual, linguistic, social and cultural knowledge of the language. This can have positive effect on the students' overall performance in writing, as shown in this study, and hopefully in the other language skills.

5.Conclusion

5.1 Findings

The current study was set to investigate the effectiveness of reading for pleasure on the students overall writing quality. In doing so the study employed an experimental design with CG and EG. The data was collected through pre and post tests in a form of written compositions. The data was then analyzed manually and statically using the t-test in the SPSS program. The following is a summary of the main findings:

a- The participants overall scores in the pre and post-test have clearly shown a good improvement has been achieved by the EG as a results of the treatment and that reading for pleasure has been successful in improving the participants overall writing quality.
b- The findings regarding the categories of errors have shown that there was some improvement in some of the errors categories but this improvement was not evident across all categories.
c- The statistical results have shown and confirmed the significant improvement in the participants of the EG in their overall writing quality compared to the CG after undergoing the treatment designed as part of this study.

5.2 Pedagogical Implications

Based on the results and discussion above, the present study suggests the follow pedagogical recommendations:

-Teachers should implement reading for pleasure as one of alternative technique in teaching writing in order to improve students' writing quality.

-Teachers/lecturers in the English department should move towards integrating the teaching of reading and writing skills as well as the other language skills and grammar.

-Students should learn how to get used to reading for pleasure and use it as a technique to improve their language skills in general and writing in particular.

Decision-makers in the department work on an effective plan on integrating the teaching of language skills along with grammar. Teaching language skills and grammar separately is no longer an effective way in teaching language as this study and the existing literature on the topic widely suggest.

5.3 Limitations of the Study

The limitations of the current study can be summarized as follows:

- The study sample was very small.

- The sample was chosen from one English department

- The CG did not undergo any treatment

- The course duration was a relatively short.

- One research design was used in the study (quantitative)

5.4 Suggestions for Further Research

This study suggests that further research on the topic of the present study is needed in order to able to generalize the results. However, any further research should take into account the following points:

- Using larger sample.

- Conducting the study in more than one location.

- The duration of the course should be longer.

- The CG should undergo a treatment.

- A mixed research designs should be used to collect and analysis the data (quantitative & qualitative)

تأثير القراءة الحرة علي جودة الكتابة: دراسة تجريبية على الطلاب الليبيين في قسم اللغة الأنجليزية بجامعة سرت

د. محمد عمر رمضان

أستاذ مساعد في علم اللغة التطبيقي والتربوي بقسم اللغة الإنجليزية

كلية الاداب–جامعة سرت

Email: m.o.ramadan@su.edu.ly

دنيا منصور السيوي، معيدة بقسم اللغة الأنجليزية ،كلية الاداب،جامعة سرت

Email: d.m.mansour@su.edu.ly

رويدا مصطفي ميلاد، معيدة بقسم اللغة الأنجليزية ،كلية الاداب،جامعة سرت

Email: r.m.milad@su.edu.ly

المستخلص: هدفت هذه الدراسة إلى معرفة مدى تأثير القراءة الحرة لدى الطلاب على جودة الكتابة باللغة الانجليزية. ولتحقيق اهداف الدراسة فقد استخدمت الدراسة المنهج تجريبي لت. تم جمع البيانات من خلال اختبار قبلية وبعدية. تكونت العينة من 14 طالبًا تم اختيارهم عشوائيًا من قسم اللغة الإنجليزية بجامعة سرت، وقد نُسبوا بالتساوي إلى المجموعة الضابطة والمجموعة التجريبية. خضعت المجموعة التجريبية لكورس علاجي لمدة شهرين بينما لم يتعرض طلاب المجموعة الأخرى لأي علاج. تم تحليل البيانات يدويًا وباستخدام البرنامج الاحصائي SPSS. كشفت النتائج الوصفية والإحصائية بوجود تحسنت ملحوظ في كتابة طلاب المجوعة التجريبية مقارنةً بالمجموعة التي لم تتعرض للتجربة. واختتمت الدراسة ببعض التوصيات التعليمية ولدراسات مستقبلية.

الكلمات المفتاحية: القراءة الحرة، جودة الكتابة، المجموعة التجريبية، الكورس العلاجي

References:

Acheaw, M. & Larson, A. (2014). Reading habit among students and its effect on academic performance: A study of students of Koforidua Polytechnic.

Al- Mansour, N. & Al-Shorman, R. A. (2014). The Effect of an Extensive Reading Program on the Writing Performance of Saudi EFL University Students.

Atayeva, M. (2019). Impact of reading on students' writing ability.

Bell, S. (2009). In International Encyclopedia of Human Geography, page 672-675

Brown, H.D. (2001). Teaching by Principles: An Interactive Approach to Language. Pedagogy 2nd Ed., Newyork: Pearson Education.

Bruner, J. (1996). The culture of education. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Bull, L. (2017). Reading for Pleasure and Empathy: Making the Connection. YA Hotline, (105), 1-4.

Bus, A.G., van Ijzendorn, M.H. &Pellegrini, A.D. (1995). Joint book reading makes for success in learning to read: A meta-analysis on intergenerational transmission of literacy. Review of Educational Research, 65(1), 1-21.

Carson,J.G.(1993) . Reading for writing: Cognitive Perspectives .In J.G.Carson, &Leki (Eds) ,Reading in the composition classroom :Second language Perspectives (85-104).Boston ,MA :Heinle&Heinle Publishers.

Clark, C. &Rumbold, K. (2006). Reading for Pleasure a research overview. The National Literacy Trust.

Cunningham, A. E. &Stanovich, K. E. (1998). What reading does for the mind. American Educator, 22(1&2), 8-15.

De Ford, D.E. (1986).Classroom contexts for literacy learning .In T.E. Raphael (ed.) The contexts of school-based literacy .New York: Random House

Goodman,K.(1986). What's whole in whole language ?Portsmouth,NH:Heinemann.

Grabe,W.(2001). Reading -writing relations: Theoretical perspectives and instructional practices .In D.Belcher&A.Hirvela (Eds.),Linking literacies: Perspectives on L2reading /writing connections (15-47).Ann Arbor,MI: University of Michigan Press .

Graham, S. and Hebert, M.A.(2010). Writing to Read: Evidence for how writing can improve reading. A Carnegie Corporation Time to Act Report. Washington, DC: Alliance for Excellent Education.

Habibi,H.&Salleh ,A.andSarjit M.(2015). Impacts of The Extensive Reading Text on The Writing Performance of Iranian EFL Pre-university Students.

Hao,X.,&Sivell,J.(2002). Integrating reading and writing in EFL composition in China. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the Canadian association of applied linguistics, Humanities and Social Sciences, Congress, Toronto.

Harl, A. (2013). A historical and theoretical review of the literature: Reading and writing connections. In: A. Horning and E. Kraemer, ed., Reconnecting reading and writing. United Stated of America: Parlor Press LLC and The WAC Clearinghouse.

Hinkel,E., (2002b) . Grammar teaching in writing classes ;tense and cohesion . In E. Hinkel& S. Fotos, New perspectives on grammar teaching and learning .eds . Cambridge; Cambridge University Press.

Hirvela, A. (2004).Connecting reading and writing in second language writing instruction .Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press.

Holden, J. (2004). Creative Reading. London: Demos.

Hyland, K. (2003). Second Language Writing. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Jeremy,H. (2004). How to Teach Writing. London: Pearson Education Limited.

Krashen, S.D. (1984). Writing: Research, Theory, and Applications. Oxford: Pergamon.

Krashen, S. (2016). Compelling reading and problem-solving: The easy way (and the only way) to high levels of language, literacy, and life competence.

Kucer,S. (1985) .The making of meaning :Reading and writing as parallel processes. University of Southern California .Written Communication, 2, 317-336.

Li, Z. (2015). Connecting Reading and Writing: A Case Study. English Language Teaching.

Linuwih E.R. &Winardi Y.K, (2020). The influence of reading habits on students' writing skills. Anglo-Saxon: JurnalIlmiah Program StudiPendidikanBahasaInggris 11 (1), 37-47

Loewen, S. &Plonsky, L. (20l6). An A-L of applied linguistics research methods. London: Palgrave Macmillan.

Mahyar, U. S. (2012). The influence of reading habit on students' writing skill. Bachelor's skripsi, STIKIP Siliwangi, Bandung.

Meek, M. (1991). On Being Literate, London: Bodley Head.

Newman,J.(1985).Whole Language :Theory in use .Port mouth ,NH: Heinemann.

OECD, (2000): PISA Programme for International Student Assessment.

Powell, S. (2014). Building Communities of Engaged Readers: Reading for pleasure. Routledg.

Ramadan, M., (2019) . The Effectiveness of Teaching Grammar in Context: TeachingConjunctions as an Example .

Salehi, H., Asgari, M &Amini M.(2015). The impact of extensive reading on the writing performance of Iranian EFL pre-university students.

Stotsky,S .(1984)."Research on Reading /Writing Relationships: A Synthesis and Suggested Directions. "Composing and Comprehending .Ed.J.Jensen.Urbana,IL: ERIC Clearinghouse on Reading and Communication Skills and NCRE,7-22 .

Taha, A. (2021). Reading Habits among Students and Their Effect on their Academic Performance: A Study of Students of a Public School in Al Ain City in the UAE.

Twist, L., Schagan, and Hogson, C. (2007). Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS): Reader and Reading National Report for England 2006. NFER and DCS.

Weaver, C., (1996). Teaching grammar in context. Portsmouth. NH: Heinemann.

Wilhelm, J. (2016). 'Recognising the power of pleasure: What engaged adolescent readers get from their free-choice reading, and how teachers can leverage this for all' Australian Journal of Language and Literacy 39(1), 30-41.

Wulandari, R. (2016). The correlation between students' reading habit and students' reading comprehension ability in the first grade of SMP PGRI GunungPelindung. Bachelor's thesis, Lampung University, Bandar Lampung.

Zainal, Z. &Husin, S.H.B.M. (2011). A study on the impact of Reading on the Writing performance of Civil Engineering students.

Zambel, V. (1992). Writing ne'sway into reading. TESOL Quarterly, 26(3). 463-485.

Appendices
Appendix (A)
**Task (1) Rate the texts according to the criterion in the table below:**

| Aspect	Criterion	Total Mark	Awarded Mark
Content	extent, relevance, subject knowledge	15	
Organization	coherence, fluency, clarity, logical sequencing	15	
Grammar & Language use	syntax and word structures , accuracy (a usage of articles, word order, tenses, prepositions, sentence constructions)	20	
Cohesion	reference, substitution, ellipsis, and conjunction.	20	
Vocabulary	richness, appropriate register, word form mastery	15	
Spelling & Punctuation	spelling errors, correct punctuation adds clarity and precision to writing	15	
Total Mark		**100**	
Comment:			

Task (2)underline/circle and classify all the errors found in the text using the following codes:

Sp=spelling, Gr=Grammar, Ten=tense, Pun= Punctuation, Wo=word order, Voc=vocabulary Coh 1 = cohesion Coh 2 = coherence Con = content Org = Organization.

Appendix (B)

Samples of students' compositions
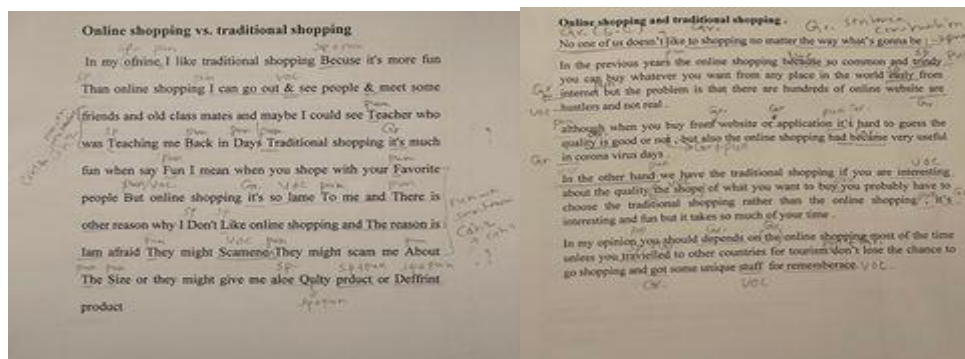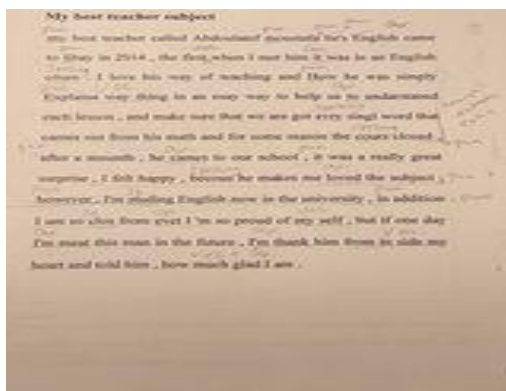
Appendix(C)

The t-test SPSS results of the CG

Paired Samples Statistics					
		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1	Pre test	60.5714	7	15.05387	5.68983
	Post test	61.5714	7	15.90448	6.01133

Paired Samples Correlations				
		N	Correlation	Sig.
Pair 1	Pre test &Post test	7	.955	.001

Paired Samples Test

		Paired Differences							
					95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	Lower	Upper	t	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Pair 1	Pre test Post test	-1.00000	4.72582	1.78619	-5.37065	3.37065	-.560	6	.596

Statistical results of the t-test of the EG

Paired Samples Statistics

		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1	Pretest	48.0000	7	13.19091	4.98569
	Posttest	67.8571	7	9.56432	3.61497

Paired Samples Correlations

		N	Correlation	Sig.
Pair 1	Pretest & Posttest	7	.827	.022

Paired Samples Test

		Paired Differences							
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference		t	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)
					Lower	Upper			
Pair 1	Pretest Posttest	-19.85714	7.53721	2.84880	-26.82790	-12.88639	-6.970	6	.000