

Reading Children's Literature in an EFL Writing Class: Tales of Two College Students*

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By examining two low-proficiency EFL students' experiences of reading literature, and of writing about what they have read during a semester-long reading/writing course, we investigate literature's place in EFL writing classes. We also observe whether using literature in EFL writing classes lead to successful synergies among LW (learning-to-write), WLL (writing-to-learn language), and WLC (writing-to-learn content). We adopt a case study methodology. The participants, Mia and Sun, are first-year students who attend a private university in Seoul. Both students favor the inclusion of literature in the reading-writing classroom. Mia experiences the literature-reading-writing connection mainly as language knowledge, with the strong appreciation for WLL perspective. By comparison, Sun concerns for LW dimensions of writing, together with the WLL perspective. This study provides evidence that literature-reading-writing connection serves as a vehicle not only for a rich reading experience but also for the synergistic learning of writing, content, and language.

Key words: Children's Literature, L2/EFL writing, LW, WLL, WLC, case study

1. INTRODUCTION

Many studies suggest that literacy skills can transfer across modalities (from reading to writing or writing to reading). This transfer is most commonly discussed in terms of the impact of reading on writing (Grabe, 2003). In fact, most English as a foreign

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language (EFL) program integrates writing instruction with reading. Such a combination will allow teachers to get an advantage from the potential influence of second language (L2) reading on L2 writing (Scott, 1996). Thus, teachers constantly face curricular decisions about what types of reading materials should be used to teach writing most effectively. One such decision concerns whether to use literature in L2 writing classes.

The benefits of the use of literature in L2 writing classes have been highlighted by many writing professionals (see Vandrick, 2003). Clearly, literature is one text type that can facilitate reading-writing connections in L2 contexts and contribute to students' literacy development (Paesani, 2016). Reading literature allows students to study various language features and engage in a degree of textual interpretation that can inform their choices as they transform meaning through writing (Hedgcock & Ferris, 2009). Then, when a curricular decision is made to use literature in L2 writing classes, teachers have to think of which genres of literature as the reading material are appropriate.

Clearly, children's literature is a promising candidate to be used in EFL classes. Khodabakhshi and Lagos (1993), who investigated the use of literature, particularly the use of children's literature for adult students in college English as a second language (ESL) classes, argue that carefully selected children's literature stimulates ESL students' written expression. Tomlinson and McGraw (1997) also offers a cogent case for the use of literature, discussing in some detail the successful use of children's literature as learning material in adult EFL classes. Although adult learners might be against reading children's literature, many authors intend children's literature for all ages (Khodabakhshi & Lagos, 1993; Tomlinson & McGraw, 1997).

Recently, many researchers have explored L2 writing from the vantage point of whether writing is the end goal of learning or whether it is a means to support learning in other areas (Ortega, 2012). This position yields three alternative lenses that can be applied to L2 writing practice: learning to write (LW) and writing to learn content (WLC) or language (WLL). Up until now, these three perspectives have developed independently and have resulted in different pedagogical procedures. However, many researchers have recognized the theoretical and pedagogical relevance of jointly exploring the learning-to-write and writing-to-learn dimensions of writing for the development of a comprehensive and cogent theory of L2 writing (Manchón, 2011b).

In this respect, we are motivated by the belief that if we connect reading and writing through literature in the L2 writing classroom, three views of LW, WLC, and WLL would be useful to explore how reading literature and L2 writing productively interact. To start with, by examining two low-proficiency EFL students' experiences of reading literature, and of writing about what they have read during a semester-long reading/writing course, we examine literature's place in L2 writing classes. We further

observe whether using literature in EFL writing classes lead to successful synergies among LW, WLL and WLC. We adopt a case study methodology.

2. LITERATURE-READING-WRITING CONNECTION IN L2

In the L2 writing field, there has been spirited discussion of the use of literature over the years. Initial discussion of this topic was about the use of literature in L2 classes in general, rather than specifically about using literature in L2 writing classes. As long ago as 1984, Krashen claimed that "voluntary pleasure reading" (p. 4), usually involving light literary works, can be a powerful means of increasing overall language proficiency. In some ways, Krashen (2004) has seen literature as a valuable tool for second language acquisition. Again, however, the controversy about using literature in general language classes is still very much alive (For a more extensive, detailed arguments about using literature, see Edmondson, 1997).

Using readings in L2 writing classes is another topic that has generated a great deal of debate among those searching for methodologies which promote writing development. At the very least, readings ultimately provide models for good writing (Grabe, 2001). On another level, as Kroll (2001) reminds us, many L2 students are not highly skilled readers, having had limited experiences to read extensively in English. It is highly unlikely that anyone who is an unskilled reader can develop into a highly good writer. For that reason alone, L2 writing teachers are well advised to make reading an integral part of their classes. There is no doubt that "students' performance as readers is bound to have an important effect on their performance as writers" (Hirvela, 2001, p. 109).

By extension, many in L2 writing argue that literature can be read for exposure to good writing and for provision of ideas and information that students can then write about and/or respond to. By responding in writing to literature, as Lazar (1996) notes, "learners become more personally invested in the process of language learning and can begin to own the language they learn more fully" (p. 773). Similarly, Spack (1985) makes a point about the positive effects of reading literature on students' writing in ESL college-level writing programs. She argues that ESL students have much to gain when literature is the reading materials of their writing course and the contents for their writings. In fact, Hirvela (1998) asserts that for first-year ESL undergraduates, acquiring a more general kind of academic literacy is necessary, and reading and writing about literature can help provide such literacy.

Here, one specific pedagogical issue that arises is which genres of literature are most appropriately and effectively used in L2 classes. Several researchers have investigated the use of children's literature with adults in the ESL/EFL setting. In general, researchers

have found that reading children's books was useful and productive, and enjoyable for students to learn English (Chen, 2006; Estridge, 2000; Goh, 1996; Ho, 2000; Khodabakhshi & Lagos, 1993; Wu, 2001). Other studies add further support for positive impacts of children's literature on students' linguistic abilities (Garcia, 2004, 2007; Ho, 2000). For example, García (2007) investigated students' experiences of children's literature in Spanish as a foreign language class at the college-level. Ho (2000) looked at the role of children's literature in teaching English as a foreign language at the intensive English course of twenty young adult students in China.

To this point, the available evidence suggests that children's literature is very beneficial in helping adult students to develop linguistic skills. Now coming more specifically to the benefits of the use of children's literature in L2 writing classes, we would argue that students are exposed to language patterns that help them see the many ways that sentences and paragraphs can be put together. First of all, children's literature is considered an adequate means for beginning level EFL adult students because of its simple language, universal themes, predictable patterns, and interesting illustrations (Smallwood, 1998). In addition, students gain familiarity with many features of written language which broaden and enrich their own writing skills (Collie & Slater, 1987).

The fields of L2 writing and second language acquisition (SLA) have, up until now, developed separately. Recently, there is an attempt to explore interfaces between the fields of second language acquisition and second language writing. Its ultimate aim is to advance our understanding of written language learning in L2 by exploring together two general dimensions of L2 writing: first, the manner in which L2 users learn to express themselves in writing (the learning-to-write dimension, LW), and second, the way in which the engagement with L2 writing tasks and activities can contribute to development in content knowledge (learning-to-write content, WLC), or language knowledge and skills (writing-to-learn language, WLL) (Manchón, 2011b).

These three perspectives (LW, WLC, WLL) have been informed by different theoretical frameworks and have resulted in different pedagogical procedures. The learning-to-write dimension (LW) belongs to the domain of mainstream L2 writing research, has been informed by L1 composition, English for Specific Purposes and English for Academic Purposes research, and is associated with writing classes especially in North America. At the level of pedagogy, it has become realized in process-oriented and genre approaches to the teaching of L2 writing (Manchón, 2011b). In this perspective, L2 writing instruction seeks to care for writing competence and, correspondingly, "the focus is on good writing and writer development" (Ortega, 2011, p. 238).

The writing-to-learn dimension (WLC or WLL) has been theorized and researched within SLA studies. The WLL perspective focuses on the potential of writing to support

and enhance language learning outcomes. This perspective reflects an interest that has increased in recent years in exploring L2 writing-SLA interfaces. The WLC perspective seeks to foster disciplinary subject-matter learning in the content areas through activities that involve writing (Hirvela, 2011). The WLC and WLL perspectives have been framed in cognitive and sociocultural theories of SLA, and they are associated with L2 classrooms and with pedagogical procedures informed by Content-based instruction (CBI) and Task-based Language Teaching (TBLT) (Manchón, 2011b).

In the end, as Ortega (2011) puts it, "the three views of LW, WLC, and WLL are closely related and form a triadic heuristic that, when applied together, can both support instruction and enhance research insights" (p. 244). Likewise, since the LW, WLC and WLL dimensions of writing are fundamentally inseparable (Byrnes, 2011), teaching L2 writing may involve the co-existence of aims related to writing itself (LW), to learning disciplinary subject-matter in the content areas (WLC), and to supporting for language learning (WLL).

In this spirit, we examined the dimensions (LW, WLC, and WLL) of EFL writing with a case study investigation of students' perceptions of the literature-reading-writing connection in a university EFL context. Our investigation then broadened to encompass EFL students' perceptions of the role of literature as well as how students' experiences of reading literature affect writing. We now move on to case study of two low-proficiency EFL college students, which is guided by the following research questions:

- 1) What are two EFL college students' experiences of reading children's picture books as well as of writing about what they have read in the reading-writing classroom?
- 2) To what extent student's goal for writing converges into the three dimensions of LW, WLC, and WLL?

3. THE STUDY

3.1. Participants and Research Setting

The participants are two first-year students who attend a private university in Seoul. In this university, all the first year students were required to take an EFL course. Based on language scores of the college's placement test developed by the university, students were divided into three proficiency groups: beginner (Level 1); intermediate (Level 2); and advanced (Level 3). Two students, Mia and Sun (both pseudonyms), were enrolled in a beginning-level course, which was taught by the co-author of this study in Fall 2016. They are female students, aged 20, from different majors. We chose them because,

despite their similar language proficiency, their goals in writing, their motivation to write, and the change in their perceptions towards EFL writing differed dramatically from each other.

TABLE 1
Two Students' Profile

Student	Age/ Year in College	Major	Generic Characteristics
Mia	20/ Freshman	Education	Two students were not habitual readers of literature in their native language, Korean.
Sun	20/ Freshman	Chemical & Biological Engineering	

According to *ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines* (American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages, 2012), Mia and Sun are intermediate-low students. They have acquired the basics of the language, yet unable to use these elements consistently and accurately. Their writings consist of a few simple sentences, often with repetitive structure. There are basic errors in grammar and word choice. They are influenced by their first language, particularly when there are misleading similarities between Korean and English. Both students were portrayed as 'producers of problematic prose' in terms of L2 writers' characteristics (Silva, 1993). Neither had experience in sustained writing beyond the sentence level prior to their enrollment in this course.

The textbook in this class includes reading selections that serve as a model for writing. The teacher is required to work within a syllabus of prescribed texts. However, as a group, students manifest obvious reading difficulties, and they certainly say that writing is the most problematic. At that point, the teacher is interested in establishing pedagogical connections between reading and writing through literature. Children's literature in the college EFL writing class is, to varying degrees, a viable alternative to textbooks readings, which students often find difficult and not interesting.

Literature provides the extension needed to class textbooks, which do not necessarily fit for individual classrooms. Further, literature could be easily linked to a variety of writing tasks within the traditional scope and sequence (Hadaway et al., 2002). The teacher made an attempt to connect reading and writing through children's picture books, yet the major emphasis of the course was on the structure of the analytic essay rather than on literature understanding. She decided to read children's literature from the works that have traditionally been considered the best, which is so-called "canon" (Vandrick, 2003, p. 274).

Five picture books were used over a total time of fourteen weeks. The picture books selected for reading were stories about young Amelia Bedelia, including *Amelia Bedelia's First Day at School*, *Amelia Bedelia Makes a Friend*, *Amelia Bedelia Sleeps*

Over, *Amelia Bedelia's First Field Trip*, and *Amelia Bedelia Hits the Trail*. In fact, these books include simple structure with a strong, meaningful theme, fresh and challenging vocabulary, and creative and vivid illustrations. They are children's books, yet great appeal for older readers. They also include "topics and experiences that are either universal or self-contained and self-explanatory within the text and illustrations" (Hadaway et al., 2002, p. 68). Thus, students use the stories as prompts for invariably constructing their own experiences relative to those described in those books.

The teacher asked students to read picture books in advance at home. In class, students write about their own experiences via connections made to the story they have read. The writings were similar to Kroll's (1991) "guided writing task" in which students write out their story based on the picture book they had read. The picture book, then, was often used as a stimulus to writing. Students were free to write as much as they liked for each story. Students were given 30 minutes for this in-class writing. The goal of such in-class writing exercises was individual student progress in writing proficiency.

3.2. Data Sources and Analysis

We collected data from two sources: written texts and interviews. Among them, the interviews received the most research attention. The students were interviewed in Korean after they had completed 16 weeks of semester, reflecting on their experience with children's picture books, including students' perceptions of the role of picture books in their writing. Each interview ranged in length from 50 minutes to one hour. These data were supplemented by students' written texts and additional interviews. Different data sources were treated together for cross-referencing purposes.

Data analysis involved initially identifying students' experiences of reading children's picture books as well as of writing about what they have read in the class. We then triangulated across data sources (e.g., written texts, additional interviews) to clarify if the students' statements could support learning in relation to L2 writing, and if so, which dimensions of L2 writing belong to students' learning outcome, and why. In fact, we looked at students' text to verify what they said they knew, and if they actually applied it into their text. Member checks, in which participants read and commented on the findings, were conducted with both students.

4. FINDINGS

We now report and interpret two students' viewpoints regarding their perceptions and affective responses to the use of children's literature in an EFL reading/writing class. We

likewise account for whether student's experience with writing through literature plays in supporting the synergistic learning of writing, language, and content.

4.1. Mia's Exclusive WLL Outlook on EFL Writing

Mia is a young female studying education. She shows little interest in literature *per se*. Yet, she perceives the role of picture books as reading simple texts to learn English. Because of her previous language learning experience, she is very much accustomed to the instruction in which she was presented with vocabulary lists, accompanied by translation equivalents, and grammar rules. With such an individualized package of educational experiences, she makes the point that reading picture books is a particularly valuable source of new vocabulary. Viewed from Mia's experiences, the role of children's picture books is affirmed as isolated elements of L2 language (e.g., vocabulary items). Mia says:

I think using children's stories is a very effective way to learn the language as opposed to the texts we had to read in high school. First of all, I'm reading picture books to improve my English. Umm . . . Amelia Bedelia books are good for new vocabulary! There are many unknown words I haven't come across before. I can figure out the meaning of new words along with illustrations. For example, chicken coop! Thanks to detailed illustrations, I still remember some words and expressions of the book I read.

At another point, Mia talks specifically about EFL writing. She definitely considers that linguistic competence is most important in good writing. She says that writing serves chiefly as a vehicle for language practice. Likewise, she overtly expressed beliefs that align with a writing-to-learn perspective (WLL), perhaps as a reflection of how she had been taught writing. Mia's exclusive focus on grammar and vocabulary – echoing the observations of Hedgcock and Lefkowitz (2011) – “reflect[s] an underlying presupposition that writing serves as a means to an end, rather than as a worthy literacy goal in itself” (p. 223).

Therefore, the language learning associated with writing was for Mia both a motivating factor and the goal she pursued in her writing (cf. Draper & Hicks, 2000). We may note that the L2 writing-L2 learning relationship was bi-directional in the sense that writing was perceived by Mia as promoting language learning, and this learning, in turn, was viewed as increasing her motivations to more writing. For Mia, then, in-class writing exercises were apparently of great value. It is worth noting that she experienced

to stretch her interlanguage resources while writing (Swain, 1985). Summing up her experiences, Mia tells us:

Substantial vocabulary growth through reading is important. . . I mean, for good writing. Grammar and vocabulary, I mean, grammatical accuracy and word choice is more important in writing. However, due to my limited English proficiency, writing is certainly challenging. . . If I know English grammar correctly, I would write better. Of course, Amelia Bedelia books are helpful for expanding my language. In-class writing, however, it isn't easy to try out new things. I still write poorly. . . However, while writing. . . I feel like stretching my English (laugh). Really meaningful! In order to improve my English, I need more writing practices.

Accordingly, Mia perceives the benefits of “more writing” in terms of fluency and faster retrieval. Once again, Mia points out that in-class writing exercises “which are envisioned as links between texts and [her] experiences” (Flynn, 1983, p. 347) enhance her joint reading and writing experiences. As Mia puts it:

I want my ideas easily to flow onto the paper. To express my ideas fluently in English, I put into practice all I know. I mean, I've to make use of the language learned through reading. I wish I would write straight through using new vocabulary. By the way, picture books are more enjoyable than textbook readings. And, literature-based writing is very impressive, I mean. . . writing my own experiences relative to those described in Amelia Bedelia books .

Table 2 illustrates Mia's first writing (left) and the fourth writing (right). The changes in Mia's writing, in this case, the length of essay, increases from 258 words to 297 words. In fact, Mia's confidence in her written proficiency, especially in the amount written, improves a little. In short, for Mia, literature-based reading-writing experience may influence on her writing ability. At a product level, however, as shown in Table 2, she makes errors of verb tense that we might find in learner language.

Very seriously, in places where she would have used the simple past, she used the present. In the underlined sentence, despite good contextual support, the verb tense markers make hard to process meaning unambiguously. Her text shows inappropriate choices in terms of grammatical morphology and lexicon. Although Mia reports that there is vocabulary growth attributable to reading, the use of her everyday vocabulary appears to lag behind.

TABLE 2
Mia's First and Fourth Story

First Story	Fourth Story
<p>March 25, 2016 is the date when I had first M.T in my life. I'm member of student council so I had a lot of things to do before M.T. I had to make project to play with other friends, to buy something to eat, and to talk to other friend "Let's go M.T tighter!" These things made me to expect M.T. So, before the M.T I was so nervous and I can't sleep.</p> <p>M.T was so fun, also it make many friends know each other. We play volley ball. When I project volley ball play, many other friends said it's not that good to girls. But our major friends really like to play volley ball, and they play so excellent! Many friends holler, because it's too excited. And we write our worry in paper with no name. Then, many other friends, seniors talk about that worry and they give answer to them. It make me healing time. Because I don't know how I could do, but they told me some solution to solve that problem. These programs were so touched. However I was really tired, because student council members had to set up table, to share T-shirt, to share name card, to check other student sick, and to roast meats. Although many professors, seniors, and other friends saying make me pluck up my courage. They said to me and other student council "It's so good time, If I didn't come I will regret for it". And in night we talk to each other and eat something delicious!</p>	<p>When I finished my scholastic ability test, I went to Japan with my friends. <u>It's my first time that I go to travel just with friends.</u> When we went Japan, we were little bit scared, but we thought we have to encourage ourselves. First day, we followed a plan that some other people already made. It was too tight to us, because we could not drive in Japan. This bottleneck problem made us to change our plan. <u>In night, we make a new plan that was suitable to us.</u> After that day, we can have recess time, and we can enjoy more than first day.</p> <p>In Japan trip, Japans' weather was going to sprout. Then we can took picture with trees, and natures that looks green! In addition, it was good time to enjoy hot spring. Then, we went famous hot spring in Japan. I had never been experienced these services in Korea. In hot spring, I was really comfortable. We said this place was better than our accommodations, and we want to stay there longer. This hot spring change my view about Japan. Moreover, Japan has enormous food to eat. I ate ramen, sushi, seafood okonomiyaki, Gyukacheu, and so many delicious desert. These foods were really delicious, and looks so beautiful! It was my first time to experience sadness because of food. I was really upset about why I can't eat more food!</p> <p>Last day of my Japan trip, I went souvenir shop for my parents. In Japan there are many kinds of souvenir. Cookies, doll, figure, and some marvelous things. I bought some 'Tokyo Banana', and some figures for my parents and my younger sister. Also, I bought delicious cookies and dolls that about Ghibli for my friends. It was good travel with my friends.</p>

4. 2. Sun's Demand of LW and WLL Needs

Sun expresses enthusiasm about the high level of involvement with the texts. She naturally is drawn to stories of Amelia Bedelia. She has a strong interest in topics that relate to her own life and appreciates the literary text *per se*. She says that the simple yet beautiful language used in Amelia Bedelia books is one of the most obvious features.

She further adds that the illustrations joyfully elaborate on Amelia Bedelia's story. This is evidenced in the words of Sun:

Picture books are motivating and emotionally engaging, it is authentic language, and it helps understand different cultures. I was deeply involved in the text. Amelia Bedelia tells a story that catches my attention with enriching illustrations. I appreciated as much for its illustrations as its narrative. When the text inspired personal associations, I often related the text to my own experiences. If you're in a book, it's like you're over there. I mean, I feel that I'm with Amelia Bedelia.

Sun also has a relaxed attitude to reading L2 picture books. Sun mentions, "When I was a high school student, I was expected to read line by line, which was very boring. Amelia Bedelia books are very interesting for me. I think I had a great, rich experience of reading this time." On this point, she acknowledges that children's picture book is short enough to encounter a reasonable number of new words at one time. While reading, she can learn topic-specific vocabulary in literature. From exposure to texts, Sun becomes skilled in guessing word meaning from contexts:

Another good point is. . . this book makes new vocabulary more easily learnable. I mean, I use context and illustrations to figure out the meaning of new words. Even with such enriching illustrations I become skilled in guessing. . . slumber party, sleepover (laugh).

So together, Sun talks about literature-based writing experiences. Sun attempts to reproduce individual vocabulary items used in Amelia Bedelia into her texts. However, Sun was not always able to search for appropriate vocabulary and syntactic structures to express her ideas. Sun laments that attending individual vocabulary items during reading did not have a major impact on her writing. Although in-class writing was challenging, Sun appreciated the challenge and was motivated to attend to gap between what she knows, and what she needs to know in order to express her ideas successfully. Sun comments:

While reading Amelia Bedelia stories, I appreciated the author's particular style, the choice of lexicon and structure. Well, then. . . My attention was drawn to individual vocabulary items during reading, yet they were not part of my learning. I mean, I can't use them accurately in my writing. . . (sigh) Although it is not easy, in-class writing is really helpful, because I found discrepancies between my knowledge and actual production of such knowledge in my writing.

As for writing, she came to believe that her confidence in writing in English could develop as a result of practice writing. What is more, Sun has viewed writing from a bottom-up approach by focusing on such features of written English as grammatical accuracy, lexical choice, and punctuation. Very importantly, Sun has concentrated on other issues, such as the content and rhetorical features of the written text. We recognize that Sun's needs include not only improving the fluency and grammatical accuracy of her writing, but also developing rhetorical skills. That is, Sun exhibits learning-to-write (LW) needs. Nevertheless, she painfully reports insecurity about her writing skills:

And I think about how I should write. To become a good writer, I need to develop larger repertoires of words. My use of vocabulary and ability to structure sentences was so much behind. . . Because I'm an unskilled writer, I need to attend to some grammatical patterns, and to emphasize on the content and organization of the text. To produce texts of more than sentence length, appropriate length of text. . . I need frequent opportunities to write. Writing is a good process for exploring content.

We have found that Sun's experience with reading picture books are particularly beneficial opening up her perspectives to new needs and purposes for EFL writing, thus being motivated to write often and to become a good writer. As a consequence, as Table 3 indicates, she produced more details and wrote longer in the fourth writing compared to the first writing. On first impact, the length of essay increases from 154 words to 205 words. Although she is able to write with some length in English, she often lacks high levels of linguistic accuracy that her years of schooling in the language might predict. Like young children, Sun with limited language may simply refer to events in the order in which they occurred or mention a time or place to show that the event occurred in the past.

Generally both students favored the inclusion of literature in their EFL reading-writing class. All in all, picture books offer great appeal through illustrations. They found the picture books easier and more enjoyable to read than textbook readings. Perhaps, after all, they became less worried about reading literature and learned about the ways language can be used and can be effective. They sometimes entered into a dynamic interaction with the text, emotionally participating in it, and made personal connections with the readings. More often than not, two students became more deeply involved in the writing through literature-reading-writing connection.

Further, its potential can be realized when students write about their own stories via connections made to the story they have read. Such writing exercises provide them with chances to generate extended discourse. In all of these writings, literature serves "as a medium for integrated reading-writing instruction" (Hirvela, 2001, p. 109). According to the students'

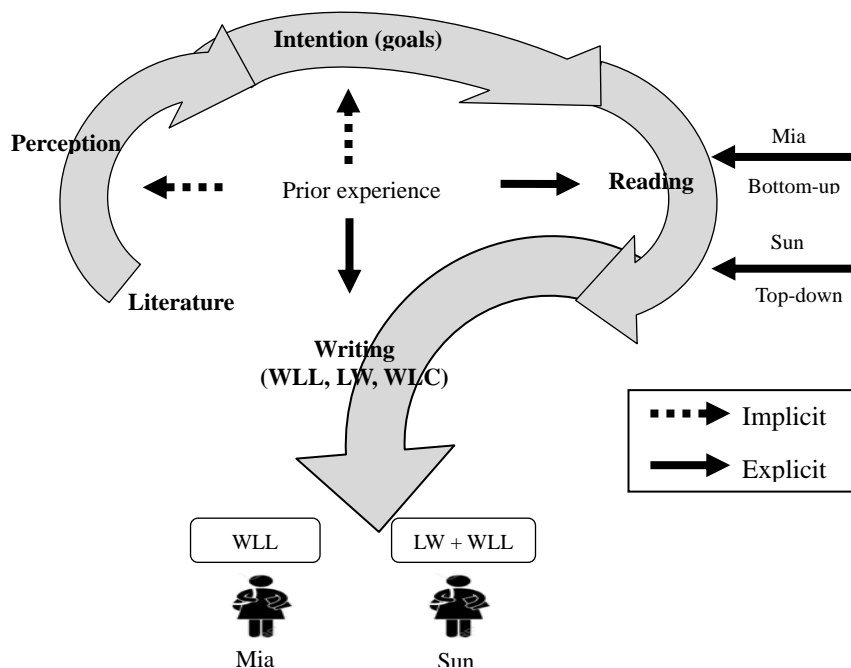
own retrospections, their writing competence did not improve much. Nevertheless, two students improve their writing fluency, particularly “length of text produced in timed writing” (Wolfe-Quintero et al., 1998). At any rate, the level of written accuracy in two students’ writing is certainly not an indication of whether using literature in L2 writing classes is beneficial.

Figure 1 illustrates the association between perception of literature, intention and goals to reading picture books, and emerging different views of L2 writing. In fact, students’ past literacy instruction differentially influenced their perceptions of and their attitudes toward EFL reading and writing, which, simultaneously, and implicitly, influenced their approach to picture books. We found that the students’ perceptions of the reading-writing connection through literature and their experience of reading literature are significant factors in their different views of writing.

TABLE 3
Sun’s First and Fourth Writing

First Writing	Fourth Writing
<p>I move to school to entered university. I’m really excited to go to new school. In the morning, I wake up very early more than usual days. My heart is beating fast, because it is a first day of my new school. First class is not major. So I enter some light mind. In class, I seat with four people in a group. And we are asking some questions about others. We know much more about others. It is the class in university what I want to dream so long. So I’m happy make friends and have fun in class. Next day, I have major class I’m so nervous because I don’t well my major. I heard my major carefully but it is so sleepy lesson. Many of my friends are dozing including me. it is first time, and it end early. today is some tired, but it is fantastic day to me :).</p>	<p>I’ll write about my first mini farm. When I was young my father plant some seed; tomatos, cherry tomatos, eggplants, peppers and lettuces. My father and I watered plants every day. I was really excited to meet my baby plants. More day later, there were small sprouts on the ground. I hollered to my father, and my father cracked me up “oh! It’s your sprouts!!” I was so happy because it was first time to raise plant and I success get good result. We struggled sprouts grow up well. In fact, I don’t like tomatos, eggplants and pepper, but I wanted to meet them quickly. Near summer they bloomed many flowers. I think ‘It will be change to many crops!!’ But it was summer, and rainy season started. I was worried my plants. When finished rainy season, my plant died. I was really sad. My father cheered up “we can challenge next day!” But it was my first farming my life, it was meaning experience in that time. So I wanted to success this experience. Next day I promised myself that I certainly success next year. And next year I can get many crops in my hand. It was very significant experience in my life.</p>

FIGURE 1
Two Students' Experiences of the Literature-reading-writing Connection



As might be expected, the different views of EFL writing which Mia and Sun diverge markedly into (see Figure 1). Often, as Hirvela (2001) argues, “students’ performance as readers is bound to have an important effect on their performance as writers (p. 109). Mia’s approach to reading literature is bottom-up and, thus, “her way of understanding the text remains as the surface level” (Caroli, 2008, p.74). She perceives the role of picture books as reading easy texts to learn vocabulary and grammar. This is further connected to the strong appreciation for WLL perspective. Mia thinks of writing development as language development. Therefore, the only goal she pursues in her writing is associated with what Manchón (2011a) has termed the language learning potential (LLP) of L2 writing.

By comparison, Sun is more likely to approach reading literature as an opportunity in experiencing language and culture in context. Sun is a top-down L2 reader, rather than a bottom-up L2 reader. Her approach to picture books, unlike Mia, is mostly focused on storyline rather than language. At the same time, Sun shows her engagement with writing and her motivation at experiencing its LW potential in ways that are inseparable from language learning. Sun expands the range of goals she pursues in her writing, which includes both language learning goal and, very importantly, writing goal. Here, we can see Sun’s concern for LW dimensions of writing, together with the WLL perspective.

5. CONCLUSION

This study provides greater insight into the questions surrounding the use of literature in L2 writing instruction. In this study, the two students experienced the benefit of literature in the pedagogical connections between reading and writing through literature. Literature-reading-writing connection serves as a vehicle not only for a novel reading experience in English but also for “the synergistic learning of writing, content, and language” (Ortega, 2011, p. 249). We believe that for Mia and Sun, literature-based reading and writing experiences may resonate more meaningfully in their associations with L2 literacy instruction. As Hirvela (2001) explains, “[i]n this way, reading and writing are connected at deeper levels than may otherwise be the case” (p. 119).

The two students brought to an EFL classroom prior literacy experiences to negotiate new needs for writing. The strong orientation towards WLL view which is reported by them emerges most likely from a pedagogical focus on the language learning potential of writing addressed as the purpose for EFL writing. In the study, we have found that literature-based reading and writing pedagogy is particularly helpful in opening up EFL college students' expectation to new needs and purposes for writing, thus improving their motivation to write often and to become better writers. Consequentially, it turns out to lead to Sun's appreciation of LW and, to a lesser extent, WLC.

While we advocate that picture books are adaptable to various proficiency levels, there are some affective dimensions to think about when using children's literature with adult EFL students. As mentioned earlier, older students may believe they have outgrown picture books, but many picture books address relevant and mature contents (García, 2004, 2007). We may argue, sensibly, that *Amelia Bedelia* books illustrate such contents. Again, for the pedagogical realizations, particularly the reading-writing connection through literature in EFL settings, teachers should be prepared with deeper understanding of “symbiotic relationship among LW, WLC, and WLL” (Ortega, 2011, p. 249). This is because, as Ortega (2011) succinctly puts it, “writing, content, and language are all three present by necessity in all of L2 writing” (p. 245).

As expected, this study has a few limitations, including the small number of students. Nevertheless, we were encouraged to focus on two students' emic perspective about how they act upon themselves based on “the writerly selves that L2 students bring to writing in the target language” (Hirvela, 2011, p. 54) in literature-based reading and writing experiences. Yet another limitation is, though the benefits of literature for learning EFL writing may be powerful, that because of “elusive nature of literary experience itself, [two students'] experience does not lend itself to easy description or quantification” (Belcher & Hirvela, 2000, p. 34).

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Applicable levels: Tertiary

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