CHAPTER III
THE PROJECT
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3.0. OVERVIEW

This chapter proposes to examine whether the obvious pedagogical slant of the current traditional model renders it more suitable to teaching writing or the post-structural model which presumes not only a desire to write but the wherewithal to do so. This investigator has undertaken a project work to examine the validity of the propositions raised above. The scripts of the sampling population belonging to two different classes are taken for critical examination. While the traditional model was experimented with in one ESL class-room, the post-structuralist model was tried out in another ESL class-room.

The first chapter provides some relevant insights into the historiography of Indian ELT scene in the pre-colonial and post-colonial contexts. The second chapter presents the influence of the theoretical developments in the area of Linguistics and Language Teaching on Indian ESL curriculum and also problematizes the notions of grammar and composition teaching from the post-structuralist perspective.

The first section of this chapter presents details of the pilot project. While the second provides a qualitative analysis of the ‘texts’ produced by the ‘control group’, the third section critically examines the ‘texts’ produced by the ‘experimental group’. The fourth section is a metaanalysis —an analysis of the analyses made in the previous sections. The last section presents a perspective for this analysis.
3.1. THE PILOT PROJECT
3.1.1. DETAILS OF THE FIELD WORK

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<th>Period</th>
<th>90 days (one Semester) at 4 hours per week per class</th>
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<td>Research population</td>
<td>Two groups</td>
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<td>Group A</td>
<td>Students of I BSc Nutrition and Dietetics</td>
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<td>'Control group'</td>
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<td>40 Students</td>
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<td>Group B</td>
<td>Students of I BSc Mathematics</td>
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<td>'Experimental group'</td>
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<td>50 Students</td>
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3.1.2. A NOTE ON THE TEXTBOOK

The textbook prescribed for detailed-study at the I B.A., B.Sc., B.Com. and B.B.M. level of Bharathiar University during the period of this Research Project was *Current English for Language Skills* by M.L. Tickoo and A.E. Subramanian (1975).

In addition to that, they had to do two Supplementary Readers for extensive reading. The authors declare thus: "Instead of attempting a speeded-up, comprehensive grammar course (which is likely to be unsatisfactory because of limited time), we have picked out for treatment the particular areas of difficulty that error analyses have revealed".

The language scheme of the book includes the following:

1. TENSES
2. THE PASSIVE VOICE
3. SUBORDINATE CLAUSES
4. QUESTION FORMS
5. REPORTED SPEECH
6. STRUCTURES WITH INTRODUCTORY 'IT'
7. PARTICIPLES
8. GERUNDS
9. INFINITIVES

Each lesson deals with specified areas of usage. The grammar exercises combine explanatory notes with examples from the lesson. Each lesson has a composition exercise too, the theme of which is either related to the lesson or is “suggested by some interesting situation in the reading passage”.

The authors consider ‘efficient reading’ “the most essential skill the student will need”. Consequently the focus is on reading. According to the authors, it is ‘unfamiliar vocabulary’ rather than ‘difficult syntax’ that poses problems for the undergraduate learners. It is thus a left-handed treatment of the syntactic level of grammar that is implied in the preface.

The syllabus, however, mentions the following grammar and composition topics: (a) grammar based on the models given in the book; (b) composition on paragraph writing, dialogue writing and letter writing (both formal and informal).

3.1.3. A NOTE ON THE QUESTION PAPER PATTERN

The question paper has two major components: (a) memory-based component; (b) creativity-based component (vid(App. I). There is a lop-sided distribution of weightage between the two with memory-based questions taking away 60% of marks, that is if one can include 20% given to grammar under the rubric of creativity-based questions. In other words, the weightage given to composition is just 20%. In the name of objective type questions, what is being done is asking for bits and pieces of information on the given lessons, the How-many-children-did-Lady-Macbeth-have type of questions.

A curriculum that does not specify its aims and objectives in explicit terms, a
syllabus that is neither sharp nor graded, a textbook that gives a left-handed support to
the syntactic level of grammar and an examination pattern that defies whatever objective
that the book manages to project -- these are the odds against which the project was
conceived, nurtured, conducted for the purpose of writing this thesis. But as the
project progressed, the sense of involvement with which the students partook in it,
and the resultant database (vide App. IV to IX) proved positively some of the basic
theoretical notions which are at the core of this thesis.

3.1.4. WRITING - IS IT AN EXERCISE IN REPRODUCTION?

Whatever is proposed by the ELT theoreticians or the psycholinguists, the
concept of writing is understood in the reductive sense of reproduction from memory;
especially so in the ESL curriculum under discussion. This discussion mentions
reproduction from memory in many places. It is possible to question whether the role
of memory be totally written off or whether creative writing is in total opposition to
memory. There are various kinds of memory like ‘short-term memory’ and ‘long-term
memory’ (Wright 1968). The ‘linguistic creativity’ that Chomsky proposes is related
to ‘long-term memory’. The memory that our students apply in their examination is
‘short-term memory’ which does not help them either in language learning or in
composing. Hence it could be said that the application of ‘short-term memory’ in ESL
curriculum has to be discouraged at all costs. In fact, this understanding has a greater
support-base in the coinage ‘creative writing’ which implies that there is another kind
of writing that is non-creative. All writing has to be conceived as being creative as all
reading is creative. The use of the adjective ‘creative’ introduces reductionism in the
understanding of the term ‘writing’. It has to be noted that there is no equivalent such
as creative reading used anywhere in the language. This subtle distinction poses many
philosophical questions.
1. Is all reading creative?

2. Why only some writing is creative?

3. If reading process implies the 'cross-fertilization' of various texts, is not writing too the same?

4. Is there or can there be any great difference between reading and writing except for the physical aspects of reading and writing?

These and such other questions, seemingly easy, are highly disturbing. The artificial distinction between non-creative and creative writing needs to be critically examined. Let us consider a laundry bill. It is in common sense parlance an instance of non-creative writing. But one cannot rule out the possibility of an imaginative reader expanding the boundaries of this text to produce a piece of creative writing. In fact, there is a short-story in Tamil written by Jayaganthan where the story itself is developed from a laundry bill. This argument shifts the responsibility of deciding the creativity of writing to a reader. Writing thus cannot be branded as either creative or non-creative without relating it to reading. This example is sufficient to expose the vulnerability of the distinction between creative and non-creative writing.

Such philosophical discussions are of very little use if they are not applied meaningfully in the actual teaching-learning process. It is for the teacher to bring in the element of creativity even in memory-based reproductions. What starts as linguistic creativity ought to be slowly extended to situational creativity (vide-the discussion on linguistic creativity and situational creativity in 1.4.). It was this understanding that prompted this investigator to exploit the text as a pretext to develop 'creative' writing in the 'experimental group'.

3.1.5. A PROFILE OF THE STUDENTS

To start with, I B.Sc. students of Nutrition and Dietetics were chosen to be the
experimental group and 1 B.Sc. students of Mathematics were to form the control group. The students of Nutrition and Dietetics, perceived by this researcher to be intelligent and enthusiastic, however, showed much reluctance when asked to make an attempt at creative writing. It appeared to be initial hesitancy in breaking away from the traditional method. Even the persistent informal interaction did not yield the much desired output. The socio-economic background of these students shows that for them collegiate education is only a stopgap with no great career ambitions. Nutrition and Dietetics is one of the attractive courses in terms of job-orientation.

The canonical understanding that job-oriented courses have students of high-level motivation was thus proved wrong. Such abstractions and structurations are bound to get disturbed. Every class is a different class and every hour is a different hour. It is with this understanding that this investigator proceeded with this Research Project.

Consequently the Mathematics group was chosen for experimentation. This choice implies a reversal in the general approach to the teaching of English as a second language in various groups. Mathematics group is among the last groups for any kind of experimentation in the general understanding of teachers. With the kind of philosophical commitment that this researcher has argued, in favour of indeterminacy as a guiding principle, such a reversal only falls in place.

3.2. ANALYSIS ONE: 'TEXTS' PRODUCED BY THE 'CONTROL GROUP' (vide-Appendix - II)

3.2.1. OVERVIEW

The students were asked to do the grammar exercises and the composition exercises given in the 'prescribed' textbook (vide-App.III). As the composition exercises in the textbook are restricted to essay-writing and paragraph-writing,
sometimes they were asked to do the 'prescribed' dialogue-writing and letter-writing on topics related to the text. The students considered doing grammar exercises to be very rewarding because it involved a cut and dried simplicity where one is correct or they stand corrected — the standard rules are there to refer to: a feeling of comfort that goes with formal grammar teaching/learning. Composition exercises, according to them, are routine assignments to be done in a mechanical way, with the marks allotted for composition in the semester examinations being the only issue of concern. Most of the students felt that it was irrelevant to 'practise' them in the class; because while the grammar exercises are sure models for the grammar questions to be asked in the examination, the same is not the case with the composition exercises. The composition exercises remain totally unrelated to the questions to be asked in the exam; and so doing what may not help them in the exam by way of reproduction is considered to be a waste. "We will manage to fill the page" was the attitude. Consequently, they never attempted the composition exercise or when they attempted, it was done in a careless manner. It appears that the students expect to be 'trained' for the exam on 'models'. If they are not trained or could not be trained on 'specific information', they would not take the risk of applying their critical faculty; they appeared to manage through the situation.

3.2.1.1. A note on the selection of scripts for analysis

The corpora being large, random sampling had to be done for reasons of space and time; on the basis of which ten sets of scripts (80 scripts) from among the available database of 320 scripts have been selected.

3.2.2. GENERAL OBSERVATIONS (vide-Appendix - II)

3.2.2.1. 'Accuracy' in 'Sentence grammar'

Most of the students have written correct answers for questions on 'sentence
grammar'. The teacher explains the 'grammar exercises' and once the explanation is over, the students are ready to answer the questions. The explanatory notes with examples that precede the grammar exercises give the students the right direction; they need not even take the risk of recalling the 'thumb rules' they had learnt earlier; they need not exercise their critical faculty; all they have to do is to refer to the 'model' given and mechanically 'change' or 'rewrite' or 'make' or 'combine' as per the instructions given. Here, again, it is possible to ask whether or not the patterns are varied from time to time, from class to class, and from level to level. The most serious objection is to the preoccupation of patterns, not to the variations. Though there are variations, they are within some fixed structures or patterns. This thesis has consistently tried to argue against this slavery to patterns. 'Writing' is taught through a set pattern involving exercises in transformation and gap filling and this leads to a kind of writing in which a student cannot make a serious error if he follows the directions. These kind of exercises give a sense of complacency and confidence; and the 'mechanical performance' born out of 'confidence' provides them with a sense of satisfaction.

'Mastery of language' has always been associated with 'mastery of rules in grammar'. In majority of the cases, 'mastery of rules' seems to be 'time-bound' in the sense that they think they know the rules at the time of doing the exercises. The exercises are on 'fragmented' areas of usage and this leads to 'fragmented' knowledge of grammar. Only when they start 'composing', do they realise their shortcomings and start wondering why their 'accuracy' in 'grammar' has not helped in writing.

3.2.2.2. Avoidance strategy

A comparative study of the 'performance' of the students in 'sentence grammar' and 'composition' explicitly shows that there is no one-to-one correspondence between the 'input' of grammar and the 'output' of 'linguistic creativity' and 'compositional ability' (vide-App. II). The set patterns presented and reinforced through various forms
fill the mind of the learner leaving very little scope for 'composition' for the exhausted learner to work on. The much-harped-upon 'accuracy' factor makes the learners 'grammar-conscious' in the sense they are interested in attempting grammar questions which fetch them more marks and give them a sense of satisfaction. Consequently, composition that comes at the 'fag end' is usually a 'hushed-up affair'; or it becomes an exercise that can conveniently be avoided. Most of the students have chosen not to attempt 'composition', in quite a number of assignments as this tabulation shows:

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S - SPECIMEN  
E - EXERCISE  
CA - COMPOSITION AVOIDED

The causative factors for this could be the age-long tradition of privileging 'accuracy' over 'fluency' and 'creativity'; or may be because 'inability to write' hurts their ego—the ego built upon the 'pride' of 'knowing' grammar.
3.2.2.3. ‘Ideology bound’ writing

In the traditional perspective, ‘to compose’ is ‘grammar-conscious writing’. The assumption that knowledge of grammar helps in composing is built on the supposition that writing is more ‘grammar-based’ than ‘concept-based’; the marginalized ‘concept’ gets further reduced under another assumption that it has to be the ‘accepted’ one—acceptable with regard to convention and invariably the teacher assigns himself the role of custodian of ‘acceptability’. The conflict between the ‘concept’ that enjoys ‘acceptability’ and that which does not has ideological implications. History has shown more than adequately that the ‘acceptable ideology’ promoted by the teacher is not always correct. There are two levels of restrictions on the young composer. The first one is the ‘acceptability-grid’ of grammar and the second one is that of ‘concept’. Any discussion on composition that misses out this subtlety of variation is bound to be superficial. As the term ‘schooling’ implies, students are ‘given’ ‘set notions’ about everything through their ‘schooling’ days with emphasis on ‘acceptability’, ‘conventionality’ and ‘glorification’. The teacher / a conventional textbook usually gives conventional acceptable topics and the students respond with the expected practice of ‘glorifying’ the given topic. For example, the first exercise given to the control group is undoubtedly one of the most conventional topics -- Hobbies (vide-App. II, Exercise 1). Eventhough the concept of ‘Hobby’ is not very popular among the Indian students, the topic is very familiar from their school days that the students have exhibited their ‘eulogizing and glorifying attitude’ so impressively, as follows:

“There is no life without hobbies”

“Life without hobby is not accepted as life”

(vide-App. II, Specimen I, Exercise I)

“Everyone should have a hobby” (vide-App. II, Specimen 6, Exercise I)
Wrong notions perpetuate cliches and lead to stale expressions. For example, the composition on ‘Birds’ (vide-App. II, Exercise 2) too move around the ‘set notions’ once again—their appearance, melodious voice, ‘inspiration’ to poets, and bird sanctuaries. Nothing beyond that. They do not seem to feel the need for thinking in terms of examining possibilities that are unexplored or systematically suppressed or undefined such as the role of birds in maintaining ecological balance, their behaviour patterns and the like.

The ‘dialogue writing’ on ‘water scarcity’ is confined to ‘irregular supply of water’, ‘water scarcity being a common problem’ and ‘shifting out of a locality’ (vide-App. II, Exercise 4) and the same ideas are repeated by a majority of the students. The mechanistic way of looking at things seems to impair comprehensive understanding and synthesizing ability. This mechanistic way should not be equated with the weakness due to an imperfect mastery of language. The thinking of most of our learners has been so rigidly structured and conditioned that even a composition exercise in their own mother tongue tends to follow the beaten track. It is not linguistic problem that impairs composing ability. On the contrary, it is the rigidity of structured thinking that affects composing ability and in turn ‘linguistic creativity’. This is the signature tune of this thesis. If they come out of the shackles of permitted pathways, they might think of modern concepts like afforestation, depletion of ground water, water conservation and many other environmental factors in a newer perspective when asked to write on topics like ‘Birds’ or ‘water scarcity’. That this kind of critical thinking could have improved their ‘writing’, is the underlying theme of this research project.

3.2.2.4. ‘Consistency building’ in ‘composing’

Consistency building is another characteristic marker of conventional writing. In ‘composing’ most students perform ‘consistency building’; that is to say, they tend
SPECIMEN 1, EXERCISE 4

Dialogue Writing

Write a dialogue between two women about the water scarcity.

Mala: Hello, Neela. How are you?
Neela: I am fine. How do you do?
Mala: Fine. I am worry Neela.
Neela: Why? What is the reason?
Mala: My worry is due to water problem in my area.
Neela: In my area, also water problem is there.
Mala: Water comes only once a week. We are very much suffered due to this problem.
Neela: I heard that you looking after a house with water facilities.
Mala: Yes. You are correct.

Neela: Nowadays, each and every house has this problem. Our scientists are also frustated.
Mala: I want your help, Neela. Please to saying that is very hard to get underground water because our earth for long distance there are only rocks.
Mala: Alright Neela. See you tomorrow.
Write a letter to a common friend.

Dear Mala,

Well and wish to hear the same from you. I think that you have done your exams well. You that you have borrowed ten thousand rupees for your friend in a urgent need. But she hadn't returned back. There is no urgency in returning as in borrowing. She has borrowed from all her friends. How could she return all of us. I heard that she has a house and she is going to sell because of her debt. I am now in urgency of money. Please tell her to return my money. This is a fact that the lenders are afraid if they would get their money or not. But the borrowers sit as if they were as masters. So tell her to return my money. Because of this the friendship cuts and causes to many worries. See you in next letter.

Yours lovingly,

P. M. Perigal
to settle too soon too quickly for a kind of incomplete 'blocked' writing; they combine the given hints through arbitrary sequential connections — a composing mode that is marked by a consistent restriction of options to explore and develop ideas. The students opt for the closure of simplistic and unexplored consistency, usually motivated by a desire to please the teacher who expects just this consistency. The following question/answer highlights the point:

**Exercise 7 : Composition**

**Task:**

Borrowing is bad because it can destroy friendship. A borrower, if he cannot pay back, avoids the person he has borrowed from. The lender dislikes seeing him because he suspects his honesty. So even good friends can become estranged. Keeping these points in mind, write a letter to your friend about a girl who borrows from everyone.

**Student response : Specimen - 4, Exercise - 7**

The assumption that the development in 'writing' should be linear and harmonious leads to another kind of 'consistency building' which defies the inherent contradiction in 'meaning'. If at all the students hit upon newer perspectives, they tend to take them for disharmonies in language. They would rather reject them in favour of consistency. This kind of 'structured' writing devoid of critical thinking and creativity only makes the young composers fit disjointed facts or information into structures and slots like the fitter in Charlie Chaplin's 'Modern times'. Thus the 'composers' get reduced to 'fitters' (A fitter only deals with nuts and bolts and fits them in machines). This 'sterile activity' tires the learners and eventually affects their productivity. For example,

**Student response : Specimen - 1, Exercise - 4**

In real-life situations there is a lot of scope for discovery. A composition exercise that
Composition:

once I was coming on the roadway
I saw a woman before me wearing jewels.
The jewels were brighter and shining and
it showed the robbers, come, come and take
me. I wanted to advice her. But I know
that she will not hear my advice.

Suddenly a minute like a flash the
incident happened. Her jewel was taken
by a man was going near in a cycle.
She shouted for help. As I was going
near her a man fast and fast and rolled
down. At last I caught him and handled
over her jewel. She thanked me for
my brave help.
**Hobbies**

Hobbies can be done in leisure time. It makes the leisure time useful. They are many hobbies like stamp. They are used to many vegetables and other things. They used to small bit place vegetables and other plants.

The vegetables carry them market and make them money. So we are used to work. The teacher's teaches time is gold. So the holiday is the useful day.

We are making them the books reading the very interest. So the people is very intelligent. We are people talk the common knowledge. The very big tree the waste time and useful to water we are making them.

The book collecting is a best hobby. It useful to others.
demands the writing of a paragraph from a topic sentence and a set of hints leaves very little scope for discovery. For example,

**Exercise 6 : Composition**

**Task :**

Michael’s climb was done in a spirit of mischief, but it was full of adventure and risk. A Japanese housewife recently conquered Mount Everest and a Chinese woman followed suit. Write a paragraph describing your (or someone else’s) successful fight against a difficult situation (e.g. against a robber to save a lady’s jewellery, against an unruly crowd to save a child in a house on fire), say briefly how it began, what made you take part in it, how you succeeded and what was the result or achievement.

**Student response : Specimen - 4, Exercise - 6**

**3.2.2.5. Problems in discourse organization**

Problems relating to discourse organization are actually the ‘effect’ of the various inter-related factors dealt with in the earlier sections. In the traditional understanding, the privileging of ‘accuracy’ over ‘fluency’, ‘consistency building’ and ‘ideology bound’ writing naturally lead to ‘cohesion’ and ‘coherence’. But in actual practice it is the opposite that happens. What is ‘coherent’ from the privileged point-of-view is actually ‘incoherent’ from the ‘neutral’ or ‘deprivileged’ point-of-view. The following ‘output’ of a learner illustrates this idea:

**Student response : Specimen - 10, Exercise - 1**

**3.2.2.6. A ‘recipe’ for ‘writing’**

The only composition that everyone in the ‘control group’ has attempted is ‘recipewriting’; may be because ‘recipe writing’ is a part of their course (Nutrition and Dietetics). This is a very good example of the ‘structuring’ and ‘stereotyping’ effect, a rigid course can have on young minds. Though it may be argued that within the broad topic of recipe, a learner has sufficient freedom of choice to choose an item
A recipe for writing, sample compositions

Uma : How are you mala?
mala : I am fine.
Uma : How is your mum and dad?
mala : The old line, we don't get drinking enough water for one area.

Soft Custard

Ingredients:

Milk - 340 g
Egg - 1 g
Sugar - 2 Table Spoon

Procedure:

Beat the egg. Add milk and sugar. Mix well till the sugar is dissolved. Heat the mixture in a water bath stirring it slowly. The heating can be rapid till the custard mixture attains the temperature of 70°C. After thin the heating should be slow so that it takes 3 minutes for 1°C rise in temperature when the temperature reaches 84°C the custard would have attained the correct consistence.
of preparation for description, the fact that recipe-writing forms a part of their Nutrition Course problematizes the whole issue. The issue becomes more complicated when language 'output' in this exercise is compared to the language 'output' in some other exercise of the same learner.

3.2.3. SPECIFIC OBSERVATIONS (vide-Appendix - II, Exercises 1 to 8)
3.2.3.1. Error-free 'grammar' and error-laden 'language'

The belief that practice in 'sentence grammar' will automatically lead to correct usage is falsified by the performance of the students of a control group. For example (vide-Specimen 2, Exercise 7). 'If constructions' as grammar work are written correctly and in the 'composition' that follows this grammar exercise, the said learner has used the 'If construction' in the following manner:

"If she continues borrowing, she would feel for it one day".

Only one example is cited here considering the constraints of time and space.

3.2.3.2. Use of 'articles'

Generally, the use of suitable articles in the blanks is the favourite of all learners at all levels because of the 'restricted choice' and 'the easy-to-remember thumb-rules'. But a slight modification in the question has led to wrong/indiscriminate use of articles (vide-App. II, Exercise 3). Instead of the usual "fill in the blanks with suitable articles", the question under Exercise 3 was framed as: "Put a, an, the in this passage wherever necessary". There is more of 'negative use' of articles in unwarranted places which leads to the understanding that even a slight modification in the format of 'practised sentence grammar' would upset all their 'rule-governed activity'. This situation problematizes the tenet that 'practice' in 'sentence grammar' will lead to 'correct usage'.
3.2.3.3. Simple passivisation

Passivisation is found to be one of the typical areas of language production where students produce erroneous language and all Remedial grammar books focus on this. The influence of "The tiger was killed by Rama" syndrome is very strongly ingrained in the minds of the learners because of the 'sentence grammar' approach. This has left the students ignorant of structures in simple passivisation as found in the following illustrations:

"I am worry Neela"
(App.II, Specimen I, Exercise 4)

"She worried"
(App.II, Specimen 3, Exercise 3)

3.3. ANALYSIS TWO: 'TEXTS' PRODUCED BY THE 'EXPERIMENTAL GROUP' (vide-Appendix IV to IX)

3.3.1. Overview

To start with, the students were asked to 'abandon' the textbook and become 'creative writers'. To activate their minds, they were asked to rewrite the traditional stories, to converse with the mythological characters and to write letters to persons of their choice on any matter. (Incidentally, the 'prescribed' composition exercises - paragraph writing, dialogue writing and letter writing were also introduced). They evinced keen interest and set to work. Their imaginative faculty appeared to bring into their writing not only elements of fantasy but also scientific inquiry. The culture brake stopped them whenever their scientific inquiry crossed the traditional boundaries. They wanted to discuss with their friends and with the teacher. Hence groupwork looked ideal. The teacher-researcher kept helping them while the discussions went on. They conversed in English and at strange diversions, there were emotional outbursts in the mother tongue. It took two hours on two different days for the first exercise to be completed.
After the 'freeplay' with the 'social texts', they were allowed to enter the 'prescribed text' to show their writing ability as Writers. They entered the text in the middle to produce 'multiple texts'. For example, the fable "The owl who was God" was 'authored' by the students from the 'middle'. Once again there was a move from 'prescribed text' to 'social texts'. This time, it was not a teacher-directed move but the result of practice in thinking critically about a text. The students seemed to have learned to relate a particular text to their 'own experiences', may be to make it more relevant and interesting. When they were asked to make individual attempts at writing, they were very happy to do so. They were asked to explore the ways in which they could compose 'many other things' on a particular text. Thus the focus of the text was shifted from that of providing information to that which can trigger off the students' feelings and reactions to what they read. For example, the text, "Fighting the invisible", which is about Louis Pasteur's invisible rabies gets 'supplemented' by many other social evils like graft, female infanticide, communalism, racism, etc. Thus the 'text' served as a 'pretext' in triggering-off students' critical faculty and played the role of a 'pre-text' in leading them to several 'post-texts' in the form of the composed pieces of writing.

3.3.2. WHY GROUP-WORK?

The crucial questions that face all Writers are: "How do I write this? How do I get started?" These questions become all the more crucial in the 'writing' class. When students complain about how difficult it is to write in a second language, they not only talk in terms of the difficulty in finding the right words and using the correct grammar but in terms of difficulty in finding and expressing ideas in a new language. What poses a problem for them is not just writing but communicating. The routine textbook writing tasks about a given subject in the class do not seem to help or encourage
in 'finding and communicating ideas'. In addition, usually the tasks are set up in such a way that they can be used for individualized instruction with students proceeding at their own pace. “Independent reading by the student is what the teacher should aim at” (Tickoo and Subramanian 1975: V).

In this context, group work in the class-room might be valuable especially for those who are learning to ‘write’. It has been found by this researcher, that inexperienced writers are less fearful when some of their peers read and comment on what they write. They like to share what their peers produce and they enjoy the uninhibited exchange of ideas that happens in a small group. Group work has been found to be essentially beneficial for second language learners who seem to need more time and opportunity to practise using the language with others, preferably their peers.

The students, in group work, begin by actually ‘using’, even before they write, the content, vocabulary, idiom, grammar and sentence structure that they will need when they do write. Pre-writing activities such as rehearsal of the topic, discussion on ideas put forth by others and making connections among those ideas provide an opportunity for the learners to fully explore the topic. And so when they finally sit down to write, the blank page is no longer quite so awesome but a known arena to play with challenges. Thus the students benefit by helping each other with vocabulary, syntax and organization and by doing a lot of speaking and listening to each other.

Group work brings writing/language learning classes as close as possible to real-life communicative situations. The students speak and not just repeat; they speak not only to the teacher but among themselves. This means then, that students will also listen to each other— really listen. With listening comes comprehending what the speaker is saying. The listener reacts by writing down his version of the information he has just heard. Hence we get chains of language activity in the class-room as the following:
Student A speaks while student B listens
Student B writes
Student C reads what student B wrote and responds
Student A verifies the understanding of B & C

The value of such a sequence of activity is that it begins with the students handling the target language. Thus the possibility of translating and thinking through their L1 before they put their ideas on to paper is undone.

Obviously group work takes a lot more time than the usual writing assignment. But time is a crucial element in the writing process. The students need time to make decisions, to construct and reconstruct sentences, to form and reform arguments, to experiment with new words and above all, time to change their minds. Hence successful composition teaching is in effect killing the tyranny of time. The teacher in these classes is a mere facilitator. During the discussion, the teacher can walk around the room contributing to the groups’ discussions, helping students who are stuck for particular words or phrases or structures and asking leading questions to draw the more passive students into the discussions.

Writing is often an individual activity. But it does not always have to be so in the class-room. Interaction among the students at all points in the writing process — before they write, while they are writing and even after they have written — has been proved to bring in better results.

It has been found by the researcher that doing this kind of writing more and more often has made the students feel that they write rather fluently and that putting words down on paper is not so frightening after all. After a period of time group work has been substituted by individual writing.
In the beginning of the twenty-first century, there lived a fox couple. Unfortunately, the female fox was a member of 'National Feminist Council'. Naturally, she ruled the house, (Oven), while the house owners went to moon for an excursion. The house owners had a kitchen garden (Green House) where they had a grape plant. The male fox was curious to eat grapes without the knowledge of the female fox.

He was waiting for an opportunity. That came when she-fox went for a stroll. But he couldn't make it because of the height. He sat with a bowl of berries in the garden. He came to life when he got a severe kick from she-fox at his back. Then, she-fox abused and cursed her parents for getting her married to this filthy pig. He explained his situation and they both started thinking.

**Climax 1.**

She-fox got on the top of her husband. She reached grapes and she found them so sweet. She couldn't resist. So, she ate all without a single grunt for her husband.
Climax 2:

At that time, the owners came. So, they hurriedly decided to destroy the plant so that no one else could enjoy the sweet grapes thereafter. They shook the plant. The fruits rained down. They ran out quickly with a handful of grapes. But, to their wonder, the grapes were sour.

Climax 3:

She fox got on the top of the male fox. When her hand touched the grapes, she fell dead down with a loud thud. Since it is a grapes (artificial) in a latest electrical machinery.

R S Lakshmi And Group

I. Matha
12. 1. '93.
3.3.3. EXERCISE: 1. CREATING STORIES FROM STORIES (vide-Appendix - IV)

Overview

Students generally like to tell stories and listen to stories. This is most probably because of the prominence that the ‘story-schema’ has in social psychological format of the ESL curriculum under discussion. From the very early stages of their language acquisition, story-processing has played a major role. In on-line processing of stories, there is a lot of scope for ‘activating’ the various levels of ‘knowledge-storage’. There may be a perfect match or mismatch between the ‘existing assumptions’ and ‘new information’. In other words, the ‘relevance’ that the ‘story-schema’ brings about is conducive to acquisition of knowledge. This is a very strong psycholinguistic argument in favour of exploiting stories for the teaching of a second language.

The researcher felt that the narratives which they are familiar with from their childhood would give them greater freedom and greater comfort for innovations in writing. Consequently, such pieces were chosen for this experiment. In all, five groups were formed for this experiment in which the students had the option to join any group.

Experiment 1

For the first group, the story ‘The fox and the grapes’ with the ‘sour’ ending gets placed in the 21st century with the new name “The Miracle of the 21st Century.” The animals no longer live in the jungles. They come to live in the midst of human beings; and so move along with the transferred human qualities. The reference to the she-fox being a member of ‘National Feminist Council’ and the ‘excursion to the moon’ appears to conform to the ‘extended’ time-ie. 21st century.

Till the middle of the pre-writing discussion, the operation of the element of choice was rather powerful. Towards the end, the ‘playful poses’ and ‘infinite negativities’ (Kaufer and Waller 1985: 70) made them confront and inspect the
limitations of their assumptions; ultimately they came out with different endings. But
the traditional assumption that any piece of creative writing is a monolithic structure
created a kind of disturbance. Yet they did not settle down for a single ending. The
disappointing 'sour' note of the age-old grandma's tale has been replaced by 'selfish
gluttony' by some students, 'self-centred destruction' by some others and a 'suspenseful
electrocution' by yet another subgroup. They were so intellectually and emotionally
primed to register their viewpoint that they approached the teacher. Each subgroup
argued that their invention was amusing, new and worth writing down. The teacher
had to resolve the crisis by allowing all the three endings as alternatives. Thus 'narrative
closure' which is almost a foregone conclusion in the grandma's tale under discussion
got destabilized once the methodology was altered. The potential for 'pluralism' even
in 'closed texts' was established powerfully which in effect triggered off the creativity
of the learners in question.

Experiment 2 (vide -App. - IV, Specimen -1)

The second group chose to extend the story of 'The Lion and the Fox'. Extension
and invention took place at all levels that the story conceived by the students moved
around almost all birds and animals. The positional affix 'king' seemed to have sparked
off a great deal of speculation. The word 'king' brings in the notion of autocracy
which implies by denial the concept of democracy. The animals talk about 'welfare of
all citizens', newspapers and news reporters. Immediately after, 'democracy' unfolds
a scene where we find terrorism, violence, the network of spies, transmitters, bullet-
proof cars, strike, economy, tear bombs, firing, chloroform, black cats, elections, election
commission and vegetarianism among the wild animals. 'Democracy' goes well with
economy, elections and election commissions but the way they get juxtaposed with
terrorism, violence, firing, tear bombs and black-cats raises a question. Perhaps the
experience of living in modern times, subconsciously brings into the minds of the students the various associated negative aspects of democracy.

The critical faculty and the creative thinking of the students is clearly seen in their choice of the animals with regard to the various roles depicted in the 'democratic story'. For example, the spies are snakes and lizards; the security is manned by the black-cats; crow is the Head of the Election Commission; and the surveillance is done by the crane and the pigeon.

The fall of tyranny and the victory of democratic forces in the story seem to reflect the characteristic vibrancy of youth. The concluding lines, perhaps, exhibit the natural suspicion that power could corrupt even the good.

There was so much of excitement and pleasant exchanges as the ‘writing’ went on. Everyone came out with a new character and a new concept that everything had to be included to make a very long story.

**Experiment 3 (vide - App. - IV, Specimen -2)**

The third group of nine girls went on ‘an amazing journey’ into space. It is the narration of a heroic adventure in the matrix of present times. The incidents and knowledge of our world--violence, murder of the Gandhis, bomb-blast, planet Mars, laser beam, Octopus, galaxies and video camera get blended so beautifully with mythical creatures found in space, a box from God with the button system that provides everything (may be a scientific version of ‘Akshaya’1) and three-headed monster of monsters.

If scientific thinking initiates the process of dismantling myths, what happens in this experiment can be characterized as the reversal of this process. The students of the scientific era use the laser beam to vapourize the monster of monsters and see ‘Octopus and whale' -- the sea animals -- on the planet Mars which has no sea, according to scientists.
Once there lived a monkey on the river bank. Monkey’s friend crocodile lived in the river. They used to chatter for hours. The monkey would pluck the fruits and serve his friend crocodile. Thus they both became close friends. They spend their time happily. But fate came into their way and broke their friendship.

One day the male crocodile narrated to the female crocodile about the friendship which he had with the monkey. And also he described about the delicious fruits which he would receive from the monkey. The female crocodile demanded for the delicious fruit. When her wish was satisfied, the devil began to work. She thought if the fruit itself, was so tasty then what about the monkey’s heart, which used to eat the delicious fruits daily.
She commanded her husband
to bring the monkey's heart. At first the
male never accepted it. But later when
forced by his wife he accepted to bring him. So the next day when he
met the monkey, he requested him to have a lunch in his house. The monkey
agreed to him.

And they sat on the crocodiles back and set on their journey.
On reaching the home the female crocodile invited the monkey. After the formality
behaviour, the male crocodile told the monkey that he and his wife would feed on him. On hearing this the monkey was
shocked. Suddenly he thought of a plan, and has told them that he had "HIV"
AIDS the dead end.

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"group."
The total annihilation of the human race on earth is shown as the end and left at
that for the reader’s imagination. The nine couples go away to some distant planet to
start a new beginning. The nine pairs (a sign of group identity -- the group consists
of nine girls) started their new life after marriage and then, after their visit to the earth,
“they begin their new life in the planet”. The concept of ‘new’ itself appears to be
relative. What is ‘new’, in the present becomes ‘old’ in future. This process goes on
endlessly. Humans configure and reconfigure concepts as ‘old’ and ‘new’ in the
never-ending chain of epistemological growth.

Experiment 4.a.

The fourth group took up the story of ‘The Monkey and the Crocodile’. In the
traditional story as well as the ‘invented’ story, the monkey is clever and plays the fool
on the crocodiles. The difference is in the ploy. While the traditional monkey gives
the ruse that it had aired out its liver, the ‘invented’ monkey simply says that it is HIV
positive; may be, it is a chronological identity with present times or perhaps an attack
on debased humanity; may be we are going back to the ancient times in the name of
scientific advancement and technological development and prefer to lead a sort of
‘community life’; because in the present day context HIV is associated with the modern
version of ‘community life’. What a powerful impact the continuous propaganda on
AIDS has made! The climax makes the narrative modern.

This group had finished writing this story very fast and became restless when
the other groups were deeply involved in their own world. So they wanted to write
another ‘story’. It looked like ‘inspiration’ led to ‘invention’ and ‘invention’ led to
more and more ‘writing’.

Experiment 4.b. (vide - App. - IV, Specimen - 3)

A ‘retake’ of the ‘Hare and the Tortoise’ is attempted here. The wiser-after-
the-failure-rabbit teases the tortoise to join another race. The tortoise ‘realises’, ‘thinks
in retrospect' and 'works out a plan' with the help of his wife. As in the traditional story, the tortoise wins the race in the new 'creation' too.

The suspense-filled strategy gets revealed at the end with a moral—not the 'tied' moral, "Slow and steady wins the race", but a different one—"the one who has brains will always win". Perhaps this moral indirectly, speaks for 'critical thinking' as the focus is on 'brains' or perhaps it signifies that the 'Slow and steady' sentence grammar has to be substituted by 'brains' which might be 'critical thinking' and which in turn is 'writing'.

**Experiment 5 (vide - App. - IV, Specimen - 4)**

The fifth group extended the story of 'The greedy monkey and the two cats'. The cats, here, do not remain silent spectators to the monkey's greediness but they 'understand and plan'. Ultimately it becomes a different narrative with two different morals. Perhaps no one stops them from finding multiple meanings when 'multiplicity' is at the core of all meaning. Surprisingly, the moral 'Unity is strength' which is 'tied' for centuries to the story of 'The Lion and the Cows' has been transferred to this story, bringing in 'instability' in 'stability'; perhaps it is a 'dismantling' of culture-specific orderliness.

The notion of a fable seems to have undergone a 'shift' in meaning; perhaps a fable need not always be a story with a moral; may be it could even have two morals; perhaps it might become difficult to differentiate the fables in the new context of evershifting morals.

This exercise has proved that when freedom is given to the students to break away from the confines of stereotypes, it would generate new intellectual energies and creativity.
3.3.4. EXERCISE 2 : DIALOGUE - WRITING (vide-Appendix - V)  
**Overview**

Dialogue-writing, the exercise meant to improve the communicative competence of the students is prescribed under composition from class VI onwards. (from class V onwards in English Medium Schools). It is the researcher's experience that usually the students open the dialogue with "Hello, good morning" (two lines already over) and end with "Good bye".

A : Hello! Good morning!
B : Hello! Good morning!

........
........
........
........

A : Okay, Good bye!

B : Good bye!

In between, they write some incoherent utterances, usually parts of the question literally lifted and fitted in. May be because the situations like "Write a dialogue between a bank officer and a farmer asking for a loan" are least inspiring.

Here again, the 'story-schema', was thought to be most effective. The students were asked to converse with the mythological characters of their choice, Rama, Sita, Ghandhari, Yama and Kumbakarna came alive. Enthusiasm in discussion and eagerness to express their views was seen throughout the class. Writing brought in situations of

- dialogue between sita and a person
- dialogue between Rama and Sita
- dialogue between myself and Ghandhari
- dialogue between Reporters and Kumbakarna
This exercise has been found to be more interesting and challenging because it calls for the evaluation of the whole text— the context and the characters in order to create a new one. Sita, Rama, Lakshmana, Ravana, Yama, Ghandri and Kumbakarna are all household names with the majority of learners in the ESL curriculum under discussion and the emotional involvement with these characters paved way for reconstructing a new story world. Perhaps they are possible worlds, imagined, believed and wished for; may be the students have wished that the lives of mythological characters turned out differently. On the whole there were four groups.

**Experiment 1 (vide - App. V, Specimen - 1)**

In the first dialogue, a ‘person’ goes to Heaven and prefers to talk to Sita. The ‘person’ had to come to Heaven at a very young age because of the ‘Ayodhya problem’. The words ‘Rama’ and ‘God’ have been underlined by the students; may be to point out that ‘religion’ which should unify and ennoble has become an instrument of controversy. According to the epic Ramayana, Rama stands for God and the associated concepts are peaceful reign, justice and equality. In the absence of Rama, his brother Bharatha worshipped Rama’s Pathukas (chappals) and the mere presence of the Pathukas provided the people with peaceful and happy life; may be the students are disturbed to find Rama’s image in his ‘abode’ at Ayodhya becoming the cause for turbulence all over the country.

Here, Sita is not portrayed in her traditional accepted role but as a woman with modern sensibilities—as the ‘person’ would like to see her in the backdrop of her own experiences.

**Experiment 2 (vide - App. V, Specimen - 2)**

The second group shifts the scene of Sita’s ‘entry into fire’ to twentieth century. Sita becomes furious and asks for a divorce. The dialogue comes to an end with a crisp cinematic statement, “we will meet in the court”. Freedom from the tyranny of
Conversation

The ‘Horrible experience at the yana’s world.’

Our reporters with great effort had gone to visit the yama world to ask permission from Mr. Yama Dhama to have an interview with Mr. Kumbhakarna. On agreeing to put his photo in our magazine, he agreed for us to have an interview with Mr. Kumbhakarna.

At first we reporters were astonished at the huge size of Mr. Kumbhakarna.

Kumbhakarna: who are you tiny creatures?
Reporters: we are from planet earth and we have come to ask you a few questions to improve our magazine circulation.

Kumbhakarna: okay ask the questions.
Reporters: What is the secret of your energy?
Kumbhakarna: Some of your things is the secret of my energy.
Reporters: How much do you consume for one day?
Kumbathar: Not much gentleman. Just four pots per day.

Reporters: Well now coming to talk of your generosity in helping your brother Ramana, do you think it was right?

Kumbathar: I felt it was right at that moment.

Reporters: How did you ever sleep for 6 months. Did you use mosquito nets to avoid mosquitoes at night?

Kumbathar: We did not have so much of mosquitoes as you have nowadays. I slept very peacefully. Only people of good thoughts get good sleep.

Reporters: How then did you respond to the aroma of the several dishes brought before you to wake you up?

Kumbathar: Well you see I was just then dreaming of delicious dishes. It made me really hungry and when the food was brought I got up.

Reporters: We think that it was wrong on your part to
fight for your brother. You never thought about the
critical situation of Seetha Devi.

Kumbhakarna:
What good did Seetha Devi get by going to
Rama? He was a suspicious fellow. I did think for
her. I thought I could later advice Ravana by just
defeating Rama.

Reporters:
But your brother was on the wrong side according
to your brother the epic.

Kumbhakarna:
There is no man on this earth without doing a mistake.
Usually Soparnagai was responsible for all this.

Reporters:
Well whatever the reason be you should have tried
to stop him from fighting and saved his life.

Kumbhakarna:
I did achieve advice my brother, but you see he
didn't listen to me. He knew I was right but his situation
was critical at that moment.

Reporters:
We think you are like the political leaders of
nowadays who nod their head for ever the wrong doings.

Kumbhakarna:
you can't say that I am such a dummy. I didn't
listen to leader who often does mistakes your political
leaders never do anything correctly.
Reporters:
We feel that it was not fair on Ravana’s part to send you to war as you were so huge compared to Rama’s armies.

Kumbhakarna:
I would say that Rama was not fair. He acted cunningly by having one of our own brothers Vibhishana as his spy.

Reporters:
Do you think that without Vibhishana help Rama would not have won?

Kumbhakarna:
Naturally Rama would have lost because he would not have known the secrets of our kingdom.

Reporters:
But the epic says that Rama was an avatar of Vishnu and he had come to win a battle with Ravana.

Kumbhakarna:
I’ll say you a thing just because Rama was God he can’t ask Seetha to get into fire or he can’t be stopped by asking his brother Lakshmana not to cut off Somapanc’s nose. If he had avoided he could have avoided all the loss of life.

Reporters:
Then you still support your brother Ravana as right.

Kumbhakarna:
Well I would say yes. There are many ways of correcting my brother. He could have used Ahimsa instead of violence.
Reporters:
One more doubt Sir how much do you have such a trim body. Did you visit a gym or did you practice yoga.

Kumbakarna:
Well we in those times lived in fellowship with nature which in turn gave us a healthy soul and body.

Reporters: Well it was very nice to talk with you. He really learnt a lot. We would like to have a photo of you. Please hold your weapon in your hand up your hip. There now its over and thank you.

Kumbakarna: Thank you also for I wanted to say my ideas freely to somebody and you did help a lot. Dhana, Vasanthi, Vasuki, Samnana, Veni, Abirani, Selvamani, Karthia, Sundari, R·D. Kari tha, Sunalchi, Zena, Dhana.
logos—the established beliefs which they feel difficult to accept—seems to have given the learners the exhilarating freedom of tracing convincing arguments born out of conviction.

**Experiment 3 (vide - App. V, Specimen - 3)**

The third group meets Ghandhari and speaks on her self-denial. In the beginning of the dialogue, Ghandhari confesses that she has to obey the promises made during the marriage ceremony; may be to mean that meaning is ritual-bound and word-bound. But if she were to be born in this century, she declares that she would try all possible ways to regain her husband's eyesight and for that pursuit she will make use of her eyesight. Here, the meaning of the word and the act of 'sacrifice' is seen to have a multiplicity in terms of time and experience.

Another insight to be noted here is, with regard to Thirdhirdhrashtra's silence on ill-treatment meted out to Dhraupathi. His silence is not attributed to the blind love for his son, as is established for centuries but seen by the students as "disrespect for Ghandhari's sacrifice". Perhaps the students were primed to think that if meaning is ritual-bound leading to Ghandhari's self-denial in the name of sacrifice, what has happened to the promises taken through the rituals by Thirdhirdhrashtra as the king, as the father-in-law and essentially as the man with regard to treating women respectfully.

**Experiment 4**

The fourth group goes as reporters to Yama's world to meet Kumbakarna. The dialogue starts on a humorous note: Yama, the Lord of Death, who is known for strict adherence to rules compromises to allow them to meet Kumbakarna on condition that his photo be published in their magazine; perhaps the students decided to transfer to Yama's world the modern notion that every thing and everybody has a price.

The first question to Kumbakarna is "what is the secret of your energy?" This is a question that has been popularized all over the country by two great cricketeers of
India — Kapil Dev and Sachin Tendulkar — in an advertisement for a particular beverage. The advertisement has obviously created a set of ‘existing assumptions’.

At one point Kumbakarna makes a statement: “I felt it was right at that moment”. Perhaps it emphasizes that what is right is not always right; that is to say that all concepts and all beliefs keep changing.

What is found common in all these experiments is that the students dare not show their identity. The introlocutors in all these conversations are merely ‘A person’ or ‘myself in a dream’ or ‘the reporters’; may be because of the fear of crossing the cultural boundaries; or perhaps the centuries-old suppression of not being oneself in ‘writing’.

After a period of time, another exercise in dialogue-writing was given; freedom was given to choose their own characters for the dialogue. Their choices were:

- dialogue between an advocate and a witness
- dialogue between public prosecutor and the accused
- dialogue between a student and Veerappan
- dialogue between a mother-in-law and the daughter-in-law
- dialogue between God and a lady.

**Experiments 5 and 6 (vide - App. V, Specimens - 4 and 6)**

The first two dialogues take place in a court. They start as per the legal procedure, critically examine the facts, pass through the anti-climax to the conviction at the end; it looks like ‘freedom at all levels’ has dictated ‘discourse organization’ and ‘fluency’.

**Experiment 7 (vide - App. V, Specimen - 5)**

The students’ meeting with Veerappan, the sandalwood smuggler, does not project the government’s view of him as a murderer; instead it reflects the image the public has of him — a modern-day Robinhood, bold and intelligent with high political
Situation

Shoba is the daughter-in-law of Ambujam. Shoba is pregnant. Ambujam is a traditionalist. Ambujam compels Shoba to take scanning. Shoba and her husband Shyam consulted the doctor. They are so happy to know that they are expecting a female child.

Shyam: Ma, ma! I am so happy now.

Ambujam: Is it? Tell me the good news.

Shyam: Ma, I am so happy that Shoba is going to give birth to a female child.

Ambujam: Oh, I am also so happy to hear this.

Shyam: Ma, I have got promotion today. Luck favours me since the girl child appeared is Shoba. Ma, I am having camp for one month in Calcutta. Tomorrow I am leaving.

(On the next day Shyam starts to Calcutta.)

(Then the breeze turned as storm)

Ambujam: You! Rascal! How dare are you to tell me that you are carrying a female child?
Shoba: What do you mean? She brings luck to our family. Your son has got promotion. Are you not feeling proud of your granddaughter?

Ambujam: I am not happy. Instead, I am so angry. First of all, you absente the child. Otherwise you should spend your life in your mother's house only.

Shoba: Who are you to order me? It is my house. If you don't like female child you get out of our house.

Ambujam: See here, Shoba. You should face so many problems because of female child. Don't you know?

Shoba: I know. But we should be ready to face all the problems and succeed in life. Don't you know about Mrs. Indira Gandhi?

Ambujam: I knew. But the great soul had been shot terribly. Even though she worked hard for the development of India. But why did the society kill her?
shown: you see even many... the faced the problems all over the world. she brought lot of reforms. But she is a woman, isn’t it?

Ambujam: That is not the case for all the women. Women must be submissive. They should cook and clean and maintain the family properly. That is their duty.

Shoba: Nowadays women’s have 100% liberty. They are working in every field: Teachers, Engineers, Doctors, Political Leaders, etc.

Ambujam: If she grows up the dowry during her marriage in inevitable.

Shoba: But nowadays dowry is unlawful. We can take actions and we can also send them to jail.

Ambujam: Even though there are a lot of laws in favour of women they are not practically useful.

Shoba: If all the women in the world begin to avoid female child the life could not exist. Do you agree?
Ambujam: (After a long thinking in a half-hearted way she tells to Shoba)

What you say is also correct. I am always looking from the family point of view. But you are always looking from the world point of view. O.K. You do as you like. I have no objection.

Shoba: Thank You very much, nice ma.
connections and with a sense of humour. He has hidden his ‘property’ not in the Swiss Bank but in the ‘Treasure Island’. The Chief-minister and police department are, for their people the guarantors of a meaningful social world. Usually, in such an intersubjective context, meaning is tied to a figure of authority. Inspite of all the statements proceeding from the Chief-minister and the DGP against the murderer, ‘the denial of literality’ does not seem to take place.

**Experiment 8**

Another group has ventured to talk about female infanticide. All the problems that lead to female infanticide—the secondary status of women, familial responsibilities, dowry, impracticability of laws—are thrashed one after the other very effectively through the dialogue. Incidentally, the concept of ‘point of view’ introduced by the mother-in-law brings in the positive attitude at the end; that is to say, that the same problem can be looked at from different points of view by different people at the same point of time; and the different points of view do not clash but settle the problem amicably.

**Experiment 9 (vide - App. V, Specimen - 7)**

Yet another group’s discussion revolves around suicide. The lady who has committed suicide is made to stand before God. God philosophises on life, the impatient lady retorts, calling His questions ‘stupid’ and ‘silly’ and says that He talks without any mercy. Perhaps it denotes the defiant attitude of youth; or the corroding faith in God; may be because the students learnt from their experiences that neither the good ones are rewarded nor the evil ones punished. She demands “It is my body, my life, I did it”. Perhaps there is a shift of focus from metaphysical to ontological.

These five experiments which are developed as argumentative discourse stand as a contrast to the exercises in dialogue writing done by the control group; there, the dialogue on water scarcity remains descriptive or narrative discourse (vide-App. II,
Exercice 4). Some of the students had initiated the argument on government's inaction but left it in the middle; may be because 'argumentative discourse' does not fit into the learner's residual strategems of knowledge-telling which seeks harmony. Argumentative discourse represents conflicting knowledge and perhaps the learners take it for disharmonies in their knowledge; But, here, in the Experimental group, 'freedom' and change in methodology seem to have directed the students to 'consider' their 'opponent' in their argument; perhaps they are encouraged to see through the 'incorrigibility' of language.

Review

It is the researcher's opinion that this type of writing encourages the students to examine closely and critically not only their diction and syntax but also their conventions of naturalizing personal beliefs and social and academic experiences; probably they are stimulated to put into question all such conventions. The writing class seems to have become an arena where the learners evaluate typically accepted metaphysical, ontological, epistemological, psychological and cultural beliefs. Writing is done for its own sake; not for the fear of the teacher nor for examination purposes; but for the intellectual growth of the individual.

3.3.5. EXERCISE: 3 LETTER-WRITING (vide-Appendix VI)

Letters are one of the most widespread forms of written communication. We teach letter-writing not only because they are so useful but it gives us a chance to deal with a variety of forms and functions that are an essential part of language mastery. Letters are written to apply, thank, invite, explain, inquire, acknowledge, apologise, congratulate, complain etc., These different language functions have their own associated vocabulary, connotations, sentence structures, choice of words and tone to fit the addressee. Moreover, there are various levels of formality and informality within each function.
Respected Sir,

Hope you are fine in your 'Maths Heaven'. I regressed my brain over your theorems, and lost myself in your genius works. I was very much surprised by the way your brain cells work. Your work shows that you're a born Mathematical Genius. I was very much worried by the unawareness of the Indian people at your time.

Though I am a Maths student, I am haunted by an axiom which I couldn't make out. Anything you zero is one in the axiom. Another axiom states that any infinity power anything is infinity, that any the infinity power. This is what puzzles me. In the case, what will be the answer for infinity power zero (i.e. \(0^0\))? I am sorry to worry you with this simple problem. I conclude this letter with the hope of clearing my doubt.

Faithfully yours,

A Maths lover

Address on the Envelope

To

Mr. Srinivasa Ramanujam
Professor of Maths in Heaven.

(Maths Block,
N<header><header>1</header><header>0</header>0^9
Maths Heaven,
Maths Galaxy -112 30 40 57 189.

Erode-9,
22.1.93
Letter-writing is prescribed for the tertiary students along with dialogue-writing under composition. To make it different from the routine letter-writing exercise, the students were asked to write letters on any problem to persons whom they think would provide the right solutions. Perhaps the words ‘problem’ and ‘solution’ sounded subject-specific for the students of Mathematics that they immediately started writing letters, obviously to Ramanujam, the Mathematical genius. The other two groups have written to Professors in Mathematics. Their genuine doubts — may be the curiosity to know — have made them to go on fluently explaining, describing and questioning. The first two groups have started with a ‘formal’ format but the tone seems to be ‘informal’; one group has the ‘informal’ format and the ‘informal’ tone. They seem to identify themselves with Ramanujam on a friendly level. Perhaps it indicates that if the teacher-student relationship is friendly, there would be more of fluency and coherence in ‘writing’. Perhaps, in letter-writing ‘formal’ and ‘informal’ are not associated with the format.

It looks like that if the students identify themselves with the problem and the person to whom they are writing, critical thinking gets sharpened leading to better writing. It is interesting to note that creativity is shown even in the usually colourless ‘address on the envelope’. For one group, it is

Mr. Srinivasa Ramanujam,
Professor of Maths in Heaven,
Lt. $\lim_{n \to 0} \frac{1}{\alpha}$, Maths Block,
Maths Heaven,
Maths Galaxy-112304057189.

For another group it is Mr. Srinivasa Ramanujam, Mathematician, C/o. His highness God, Heaven, Indra World - 1234 ......................$\alpha$. What is obvious here is that once they break away from the shackles of stereotypes, their creativity gets foregrounded.
The Owl Who was God

All the other creatures laughed loudly at this silly question, and they set upon the red fox and his friends and drove them out of the region. Then they sent a messenger to the owl and asked him to be their leader.

The messenger met the owl when it was again dark and requested him to be their leader. The owl thought some time and replied, "After two days I will say my opinion". The messenger returned and said to the secretary bird that the owl would say his opinion later. All the creatures prayed to God, "The owl must accept our request".

The red fox and his friends were suspicious about owl's activities. So
they decided to follow the owl wherever he went. The owl did not get any idea of how to see in the day time even after thinking for two days.

At third day night the owl had gone out for its good. At that moment, he came across a group of tourists taking rest. He was inquisitive to know about the articles present there. As though he was examining the things he came across the most attractive piece of glass. He was completely ignorant to know that it was a lens. He took it and placed it safely at his house. Then he went to sleep worrying about what he was going to do the next day.

The next day morning as he and his wife were sitting close to each other thinking of the disaster which was going to befall, the wife picked up the piece of glass without her knowing. She was just placing it close to her eyes and she found
that she could see. She announced this with great joy to her husband. Just then the Secretary bird had come to take him to the place where they were going to crown him their leader.

By now the fox had been following the owl and he found that he was going to use a lens as he heard their talk. Therefore the fox was also present when they were going to crown the owl, their leader. He said that he had a proof to show that the owl was using a lens to see during the day time.

The owl now knew that there was no other way to get escaping so he removed the lens and beg fox accepted his frankness, and promised that he would leave the forest.

- Zeeta & Group.
Extension of the text, sample compositions

The Owl Who Was God

"Can he see in the day time, too?" asked a Red fox. "Yes" choed the French Peable. "Can he see in the day time, too?"

(i) All the other creatures became puzzled about this question. "How do you doubt him? Do you have any doubt?" asked the creatures. The fox said that being a member of "Forest Union Library" he had a chance to know that only couldn't see in the day time. These words aroused their sixth sense and they started discussing. The fox and his companions became annoyed by their mumminery sound. At this time the Secretary bird cried that they decided to conduct a defeat for the owl. Everybody accepted it. They chose the concrete highway as the venue for the next day's test.
The next day they conducted many tests and they realised the truth. The
creatures wanted to teach a lesson to the Owl. Hence they followed him,
along the highway. The Owl believing that, it had been accepted as
the king walked in a grand manner. A hawk who was acting as outrider,
observed a truck coming toward them at 50 miles an hour and he
reported to the Secretary bird. All the
creatures left the Owl and they escaped.
The Owl not realising the truck coming
and it was killed.

---

(ii) The creatures thought that the doubts
about the vision of the Owl during the
day, time accused in the mind of Fox
was absurd. So they decided to continue
their lives under the leadership of the
Owl.

Then the very next day they appeared
before the Owl. It was high noon. The
Owl's slow walk gave him majestic
appearance. There was a first class welcome dance by the Peacock.

While they were going on the highway for a jolly ride, the creatures were very much frightened on seeing a tuck coming towards them. The Secretary bird wanted to pass on this news to their leader. But, the owl cried out that the tuck was coming. At once it ordered to the creatures to pass on to the platform. So, the creatures were happy and they shouted that the was God, they cursed the fox.

In fact, the owl cheated them.
A friend of the owl was working in an optical shop. So it lent a pair of contact lens to the owl. Using that lens, it was able to see in the daytime.

_____x_____

Group members
S. Sathyabama & Group
3.3.6. EXERCISE :4 EXTENSION OF THE TEXT (Vide - Appendix - VII)

This section is an exemplification of Beuys' statement (1980: 8-9):

_The sentence ‘Everybody is an artist’ simply means that the human being is a creative being, that he is a creator, and what’s more, that he can be productive in a great many different ways._

‘The owl who was God’ by James Thurber is the fable prescribed. The students were asked to enter the fable in the middle and to explore differently; so that they may enter into the process of the text. It is asking them to be competent readers with sensibility by actively playing out that role assigned to them. It seemed an exciting challenge to the students to see through the eyes of the creatures and to speak through the mouths who speak not. Students have willingly reconstructed the fictional world of “The owl who was God”.

One version goes this way; a retest was decided for the owl because the fox brought scientific information on owl’s day-blindness. Later at the same venue, all the creatures deserted the owl at the time of crisis and only the owl got killed. The creatures do not save the owl and teach a lesson as usual but allow ‘arrogance and exploitation’ to die. May be the students prioritise education and scientific knowledge over illiteracy that causes blind submission.

Another version of the same group seems to glorify the mental alertness of the owl. By using a pair of contact lens, the owl has saved all the creatures in time and retains the title of God; may be to mean that presence of mind is superior to literacy. The moral in the original text, “You can fool too many of the people too much of the time” seems to get cancelled in the first version and seems to get concretized in the second; perhaps contradictions do exist even in perceived orderliness.

All the groups use different ploys to save all the creatures or to kill the owl only or to make the owl confess. What is so obvious is the logical, lengthy, fluent discourse.
An important thing to be noted here is that no version ends up with a moral. Many literary texts appear to comment upon themselves, to solve the enigmas they set up. When self-interpretations are explicit as we find in this fable, a common student’s response seems to be a protest—a protest against the author who has taken all the fun away by doing the work the reader ought to do. Because as he/she reads the text, different projections stem out making him feel an ‘author’.

Asking the students to co-author the fable has provided a good scope for improvisation and for freedom in elaboration of form and content as they explored different possibilities. May be, it is a liberating experience for most of the students to write in voices other than their own; may be they are still unsure of their voices, perhaps they consider an exercise of this sort as creative, a synonym for ‘fun’.

The notion of ‘author-ity’ has crippled the student writers’ ‘uncontrolled outpouring and consumption of discourse’, may be for sound cultural reasons as Foucault states (1979:159). The power of the name, ‘author-ity’ may be well beyond the limits of the student writers; but there is another kind of power associated with writing i.e., the sense of satisfaction which is as powerful an incentive to keep on writing as is the desire for ‘author-ity’. The writing experiences have provided them with opportunities of exerting control over their environment, eventhough for a shorter duration and the exhilaration that results from mastering the flow of textuality. The students seem to have proved that they are not intellectually incapable of entering their discourses into textuality nor of performing textual acrobatics.

3.3.7. EXERCISE : 5 PARALLEL WRITING (vide-Appendix VIII and IX)

The exciting experience with the text, "The Owl who was God" served as a triggering-off point for the students, that they wanted to do something with the other texts too. It was suggested that instead of making changes in a given passage, for a change, the students may read and study the text and then write their own on a similar
our govt gives more opportunities to Sc. & s.t. Once upon a time they were in very low condition. At that time this system was needed. Now-a-days most of them are in a good position. So now-a-days our govt may give equal opportunities to all castes. This system affects many people. The well-talented students don't get admission where and which cause they want to join.

So it is high time to take serve action against this anti-social element. We must know about the whole world and we all are one. We must love all.

So I request you to take steps to prevent such problems.

Thanking you,

Yours faithfully,

T. Latha.
FIGHTING THE INVISIBLE

There are many invisibles in the societies. For example, we take corruption. Everywhere at every corner we can see this. From small work to the top, we can see this. It is found between the ordinary people up to the leaders. In the house itself we can see. If anyone ask their children to go to the shop and buy something means, at first he will ask in turn what they will give. So here itself we can see this. If we go to any office and if any files have to be passed means for example in municipality for clearing the dusts on the road means, they won't even see us and give response. We have to give money for the poor and their only have to give money to the concerned person. It leads like that.

Next we can see between the nation leaders also. During one's rule, people will
say that he only corrupted more and so
the nation becomes destroyed. But it is not
like that. At the starting point itself there
will be seen, but now it is seen in a large
quantity. Now only people are coming to know
that. They think that money only is an import
thing in the world. In order to earn a lot, they
follow this type of earning money. Once it is
started it cannot be abolished in a moment.
It will take time to cease.

The ministers and some national leaders
are elected by this only. They are giving black
money to the leaders and so the leaders sup
port them and so they make them as their chiefs.
The national leaders will give speech that they
would take action against corruption. But they
would not do. In order to get votes from the
people, they brainwash the people. The innocent
people also believe that and put votes. Then
only they will realise it.
In Schools and Colleges also it can be seen. In some institutions, they get money according to the castes. They are not seeing the marks and not giving beat. Even in temples, if we give money means they will give special due to see God. Like wise in every nook and corner. It can be seen.

This invisible disease that is killing the people one day will definitely lead all to death. This can be abolished only by the younger generation. They should stand against this corruption and the world prosper. If this doesn’t stop means, it will prosper. As the steps for cancer, aids are taken before itself, it must also be taken immediate steps.
theme, may be using as a guide the vocabulary, sentence structures, cohesive devices and organization of the model text.

When asked whether they could make this exercise an individual attempt, they asked for a group discussion, to precede ‘writing’. At the end of the discussion, they said that they would retain the titles, ‘Fighting the invisible’, and ‘My struggle for an education’, but they would take a ‘digression’ and go on an ‘excursion’. The readiness to break down the prevailing cycles of educational reproduction was obvious on their faces.

If for Louis Pasteur, fighting the invisible rabies was agonizing, for these students, the invisible things were quite different - real forces to reckon with: unemployment, AIDS, casteism, communalism, blood cancer, dowry, female infanticide, Reservation policy, pollution, racism, corruption, addiction to alcohol, graft and untouchability.

Some students wanted to write essays and they earnestly started. Inside the class-room, ‘writing essays’, always means ‘writing summaries’. Hence, they always need time to ‘prepare’ themselves for writing essays; ‘prepare’ means 'rote learning'; The writing process would usually be a struggle to recall from memory, interspersed with torturing stops when students, literally closing their eyes, begin from the beginning in a whisper with the hope that the ‘flow’ would bring them the continuity. But here, a marked change was seen. Feeling so confident, they never looked up for a moment. They seemed to have enjoyed the ‘writing’ session; may be the change of emphasis from the ‘knowledge displayed’ in reading to the ‘display of knowledge’ in ‘writing’ has given them the sense of satisfaction.

Some other students felt that the ‘invisible’ is so deep-rooted in the society that either they wanted to write letters to the experts concerned or to hold dialogues with
of the family and also economic needs of
the family. But they are not experts in studying as those who were called as
forwards. So they lose opportunities. During
this period, the politicians to get people for their party
Support gave many concessions such that
giving clothes, rice and the places allotted for their
Studies. The politicians ruled the State or central government cheated the people
by these methods. They thought that the people
are fools. I think you also must know about
the Mandal Commission problem before one
Year. The politicians doing everything only
for the welfare of their family.

Because of this problem, having
good education became a struggle. The
student who scored highest marks now looses
a professional course studies because of
his Caste. But the student who passed these
got a seat for professional course from
the percentage of allotment for the lower
castes. So to get a required seat the
forwards gave 'Somethings' to the Thasilda
and they could change their Community by
the getting focus Community Certificates.
So the Students were affected more by
this educational System. As you said before that the Contact through Letter is
like one way traffic, i.e. one person's
thoughts only known. I expressed my
opinions on our educational System and
requesting you to write a letter as soon
as possible, with a Solution for this
Problem.

With Love,
One of the Indian Citizen
J. Abidani.
23.93

My Struggle for An Education
- Booker T. Washington

From

N. Yosodha,
B.Sc. Maths 1st Year,
Vellalay College for Women,
Thiruchendur.

TO

The Educational Minister of Tamil Nadu
Nadars.

Respected Sir,

I wish to bring to your kind notice about my college admission. Education is a necessary thing for everyone. Without this, we can't live in this world in future. I have got good marks in Higher Secondary Examination. I want to get the Computer Science course in college as this world become computer world in future. I had sent
applications for Maths & Computer Science. But the admission card was given only for Maths.

On my admission day, I want to ask for the computer course. I asked their administrative officer for it, but they didn't give proper answer. My parents gave Rs. 3000 as donation for the Maths course. I am not at all interested in taking Maths. I can't do anything. Eventually I paid Rs. 3000 I can't get the course what I wanted. I request you to take the severe steps to change the mode of admission.

Thanking you,

Yours Faithfully,

N. Yasodha.

Address on the cover:

To

The Educational Ministry of Tamil Nadu.
them or to send a report. Perhaps they thought that essays have to 'wait' to be read (acted upon) whereas the personal interaction in the form of letters, dialogues and reports might 'initiate action'; may be their previous experiences of writing these exercises had given them a sense of achievement; may be they realized the importance of 'involvement'; may be they are confident enough to move from 'literary texts' to 'social texts'.

While 'dealing' with Navin Sullivan's "Fighting the invisible" the students came across 'collective problems' and hence used 'writing' to effect 'collective responsibility'. But Brooker T.Washington's "My struggle for an education" seemed to have provided an occasion for being provoked; no student would have been spared from the 'struggle' for education in college and so their immediate reaction was to find a remedy for it and not merely talk about their struggle extensively. They do mention about their path of struggle but the 'mode' they had chosen—letters to the President of India, The Prime Minister, The Chief Minister, The Minister for Education and to Jawaharlal Nehru—obviously indicate their intention that the 'struggle' should not continue, perhaps because, the choice of mode depends on the 'inner drive' and not proceeding either from the syllabus or from the composition teacher.

3.3.8. COMPARATIVE ASSESSMENT (vide-Appendix X)
3.3.8.1. A study of the scripts of the same learner

In the beginning of the course, the students of the experimental group were also asked to write on the conventional topic, 'Hobbies' to make an assessment of their writing ability. An attempt has been made to compare the scripts mentioned above with those of later exercises involving creativity with regard to their 'grammar' and 'compositional ability'. A few scripts chosen at random are compared here.

There seems to be a marked difference between a writing exercise which is uninteresting for the students and that which inspires them in terms of grammar on
A STUDY OF THE SCRIPTS OF THE SAME LEARNER

SAMPLE SCRIPTS

P. K. Van

1. Bee (Maths)

Hobbies

No one can be waste for ever. We must spend our time usefully. Hobbies is very interesting one.

I like hobby in the way of beautiful garden. Some like of stamp collecting, drawing, coin and etc. But I like these:

I like planting. It is a chance also. In my house a beautiful garden in back yard. The garden area is full of beautiful plants, vegetables, and trees. Some plants gives a beautiful flower and some plants gives a pure vegetable and the tree gives a fruits,

The garden gives my useful things. The tree gives fruits and wood etc. The wood can be processed as chair table etc. The tree spend the air with our pollution.

Some plants gives some variety flowers. The colours are very beautiful. In my house daily my mum cooked only pure vegetables only.

Some people like stamp collecting, and take some photos and collecting books, and old coins etc. But these they are not very useful. But in the garden they have many useful in the garden and benefit to her.
Hitting the Invisible

In Krittha Yug there are only 4 groups are available between the people. This partition is based upon their nature & work. But now a day it was fully developed and makes lakhs & lakhs of partitions. This type of partition lead to greater changes and damages to the world. Due to this type of partition the Forward caste people only get much affected. For example: to get an admission to the Forward class group is much tougher even though they possess high marks comparing to SC/ST etc. The same priority basis is adopted for the scholarships & some other problems. For example: If a student who belongs to a rich family can get the scholarship at the same time the student belongs to higher caste can’t get these types of scholarships even though he is a member in poor family. At same time they even started to fight between the same caste people. The good example for this topic is the Apadhdaya issue.

The Organization functions under the name Bharathi had also ask the caste, religion, during the admission of the students.
From

P. k. Vani

34, Nisusan Illam
Pandiyam Nagar,
Naduchur.

To

The Education Minister,
Govt. of Tamil Nadu,
Nadcar.

Respected Sir,

I have finished my Higher Secondary course in last year. I got good marks in English & Science. But I have not get admission in any college. Because I could not give donation as a result of my poverty. By this reason in my life one year has been lost. Though I have good marks in +2, but they are not useful in my life. I hope that I will get the admission for next year. Many students have been the recommendation letter from the honourable Minister of very high people. So please you take necessary steps to these.

Thanking you,

Addressee on the Envelope:
The Education Minister,
Gowt. of Tamil Nadu,
Nadcar.

Yours Sincerely,

P. k. Vani

2. 3. 78
My hobby is Gardening.

My hobby is Gardening. In our backyard a beautiful garden is in our house. It is a beautiful garden in the street. Fruits, flowers, vegetables were in it. My family was got for it. I am stay in the garden more time. It is a very interesting. I am very happy of the garden. It is see and the time is passed of it. The hobby is very useful to our family and their relations. My hobby is useful to our regards and herbarriyan. In the holidays I go to the garden and got fruits and flowers. I have very interested in our garden. My parents were help to my hobby. Hobbie is a leisure time pursue. My hobbie is very useful my study. Hobbie makes us a good joy.
2.3.93

My Struggle for an Education
- Booker T. Washington.

From:
M. Kasthuri,
B.Sc., 2nd maths,
Vellalar College for Women,
Erode - 9.

To
The Educational Minister of Tamil Nadu,
Madras.

Respected Sir,

In this letter, I wish to bring to your kind notice about my struggle for an education. Nowadays education is available only if wealth is available. I was born in mid classes. So I did not give the donation and was not admitted in 2 or 3 colleges. But my aim is study well and get good job. There is no other way to study.
Without donation, somehow my parents arranged for money by paying debts. Then at last when we went to the college, they asked for any recommendation. Then my father went to the recommendation he was very tired. Some how, with great difficulties and worries after ten days I received recommendation letter. Then we went to interview for the college. They asked more amount of money but we had only a few. Then I was joint that college. The college Correspondent Post Pond this problem day by day and at last he asked to them my admission.

Yours faithfully,
M. Kashyani

Address on the envelope:-
To
The Educational minister of TamilNadu,
Madras.
one side and fluency, imagination and discourse organization on the other. The argument
does not imply that creative writing or critical thinking will give the mastery over
language overnight. The consummated knowledge of lexis, syntax and discourse
which lies latent in everyone, after ten years of exposure to the language will get
sharpened and enlivened by such exercises, it is hypothesised.

3.3.8.2. A study of the scripts of the two groups

A comparative assessment of the scripts of the two groups has been attempted
to highlight the features of differences and to focus on human variables. While the
students of control group had either avoided writing composition or left them
incomplete, the students of ‘experimental’ group insisted on completing and
reattempting their ‘composings’. The causative factors could be many. The students of
‘experimental’ group are highly motivated; motivation that comes of ‘freedom’ enjoyed
at every level — freedom in the choice of the subject and the mode of expression and
freedom to interact among themselves and with the teacher which could be termed as
‘infectious atmospheric-freedom’. Their ‘composing’ is not related to ‘sentence-
grammar’ in the sense that they are not made to feel ‘grammar - conscious’. Rather
they are encouraged to be creative and critical which produces a conducive climate for
their spontaneity and fluency in ‘writing’.

Individual freedom itself acts as a motivating factor in bringing out the individual
uniqueness. Every individual is unique and every ‘text’ is unique. The ‘thisness’ of
an individual or a ‘text’, to put it in the philosophical language of Duns Scotus, adds to
the plurality of life and reality. Freedom involves in recognizing this uniqueness of the
‘text’ as well as the individual. Every piece of composition is unique in the sense that
there is uniqueness about each ‘text’ produced at one point of time. If this is so, then
no standardization is possible and no statistical evaluation is necessary or even possible
in terms of a particular ‘text’ or a series of ‘texts’ produced by the same learner or by the same group or by different groups.

It does not mean that ‘freedom’ in ‘composing’ makes the learners produce error-free composition. They do make mistakes but a comparative study of the scripts shows that mistakes get reduced in course of time. In fact, ‘freedom’ in ‘composing’ inspires them to produce more and more pieces of composition; and every piece of composition becomes a different version which again is unique by itself. In such a situation, the learners are not constrained to produce error-free standardized ‘text’ nor do the teachers return the corrected ‘text’ which might make the learners feel psychologically insecure in handling the language again. In the process of redoing the ‘texts’, the learners produce different versions which turn out to be stylistically and conceptually different ‘texts’. ‘Revision’ here does not lead to repetition but to revision and results in ‘invention’ and ‘inspiration’; Every ‘invention’ has its own positive ‘impact on the ‘inspiration’ of the learners, that is a desire to ‘write’ (critically think) more. This in turn leads to yet another ‘invention’ and thus it becomes an endless spiral. In ‘decomposing’ the previous ‘text’, that is to say, in the process of changing the mode of writing, content too changes and that results in yet another newer version. For example, when the students are asked to change the mode from letter-writing to essay-writing and then to dialogue-writing, the content gets modified and refined and newer perspectives are brought out. Human mind works on relative terms and ideas old or new, similar or contradictory align themselves in newer perspectives. Thus building up of consistency in writing or getting bound to an ideology, gets cancelled in the process of ‘writing’. The continuity in original thinking brings harmony in discourse organization. ‘Writing’ proceeds spontaneously and fluently, synchronizing at times and striking discordant notes now and then as it happens in real-life situations.
Creative work

This is one of the methods of improving thinking capacity. It helps to improve the language and also helps to enrich our vocabulary or word power. By practising this, we can face our problems boldly. Because we can think in many ways and solve them correctly. We are able to go into the society with awareness. We can work in the world of terrorism with confidence. By writing many ends for a story, it helps to think an incident in many ways. By writing new & different ends for the old story, they make us to perceive the world differently. This system is based on our interest to think practically. This system also based on and express them properly. This system also based on what we know. So we can think freely. By practising this, we can become broad-minded people. It improves our originality. It creates more & new thinkings.

5. I can feel a change before writing these exercises and now. Earlier, I was not able to express my opinion clearly. There was always a deviation towards others' notions. But now I can stand on my ideas confidently. It also kindles my creative thinking. These exercises consume comparatively larger time and reveal a fruitful result. Of course, it brings a gradual development, not an immediate improvement.
6. It makes me to think in all possible angles, a problem that comes to me. I acquired a clear thinking. That thought I can somehow prepare myself for all the things of life. The exercises made me to read as many books as possible so that I can know, the different ways to approach a problem.

Success or failure that does not pay. Only participation is important. This spirit I get from the exercises. And it is a really a pleasant time for me while I'm attending this. This is a free time for me and a time completely different from my classes.

7. It was something new to me. It helped to learn to think for the first time. I really couldn't believe that even I could write such ideas. It really helped to think and create ideas. It gave me confidence in myself. It increased my interest in studying more articles. It helped me to think about the world in a new way. I could analyze every individual. I really loved English classes. These are true and not just another essay. It helped me to compete. Now even I take a stone I can write what I think of it. Like that I have begun to think about the things around me. I feel its thrilling.
1. At the beginning we thought that these classes were boring and uninteresting. These exercises were cut-out positions and we wasted our time. But later we noticed that these exercises were more interesting than our subjects. It improves our creative work. While preparing a textual essay or summary we had to make great effort and always remember about seeing more marks. But these exercises we do in a happy manner and no year about marks or examination. It develops our power of imagination. We get the chance to preparing our own creative works and not being in a particular circle. These classes provide us to think in a different way and move in different way. Some of our works were appreciated and some of it are connected. Never mind they help us to improve our skill.

2. First of all, I should be thankful to you for such motivation. It had helped to understand my position and standards. I am not to make some improvement. It makes me to think wise, I mean in making better decision. My mother said that I'm talking reasonable nowadays.

   I had made some friends. My topic of conversation have changed. This enables me to observe lot of better ideas. I'm trying to make use my time as good as possible.

3. Your exercises were very much helpful in increasing my English knowledge and also in writing capacity in English. This now very very helped in preparing assignments, for Julius Caesar. I am now able to write in English any dean and also without any struggle within myself.
3.3.9. EVALUATION OF THE ‘EXPERIMENT’

For evaluating this experiment, the reactions of the students and personal reactions of this investigator have been of tremendous help in judging the efficacy of this strategy in terms of its usefulness and productiveness in the class room. The students were asked to ‘evaluate’ the ‘composing’ classes towards the end of the ‘experiment’. Almost all the students said that they liked these classes as it was ‘different’ from the other classes. The students have mentioned many facts to be the positive factors resulting from the experimental work. This investigator, a practising teacher for two decades, is fully convinced that this experiment has proved to be quite effective in making the students produce original and creative composition. The most encouraging factor was the keen interest, involvement and enthusiasm shown by the students during the ‘activity’.

3.4. A CRITIQUE OF THE ANALYSES

The students, in the ‘control group’ have been taught grammar in a formal way for nearly 10 years on an average and their knowledge of grammar as evidenced in their responses to grammar exercises, on isolated sentences is quite good. It is obvious that their knowledge of grammar does not automatically lead to composing abilities in all areas of human experience. In fact in many instances, most of these students had answered all the grammar questions (on isolated sentences) but avoided the composition exercises. The only composition exercise that almost everyone in the class had attempted was recipe writing and invariably all of them had written the exercise well. Communicative pressure and the interest evinced in a particular communicative situation or a topic regulate their language use, it appears. This situation poses the following questions:

1. How can the wide gulf between the knowledge of grammar and ability to compose be bridged?
2. What is the strategy for broadening their areas of interest so that similar communicative pressure can be built to ensure communicative competence in various human situations?

3. Is the dichotomy between areas of interest and others tenable and maintainable in scientific terms?

4. If it is tenable, what will be the redefined role of a teacher of English?

These questions and such other related questions (not listed here) lead one to critically examine the role of a teacher of English - (teaching English as second language in a totally alien cultural setting. English does not occur in these cultural situations except in the text book and the class-room).

In this critical examination one is confronted with the enormity of the problem of identifying and characterizing, in scientific terms, the exact features of the redefined role of a teacher of English. Suffice it to point out that the aspect of plurality of approach underlies as a keynote of such a redefined role. A teacher of English, especially at the tertiary level, is not merely a trainer in a set of behavioural patterns of language production; s(he) is an interpreter of reality in an alien language. This interpretation ought to have components of topical human interest in order to ensure a motivated participation and enriched communicative productivity of the learners. In this investigator's view, teaching of English at the tertiary level poses the challenge of developing, nurturing and remediying human perceptions rather than language skills.

With a view to move towards achieving this goal, an alternative strategy has been used for 'composing' in the 'Experimental group'. The 'composing activity' in the 'Experimental group' is found to be characteristic in terms of fluency, creativity, discourse organization, imagination, freplay, and 'endless deferral' in implementation. The 'composing' class has been reinforced and redirected by persuading and
manipulating the students into becoming more critical and subversive about their residual assumptions about 'writing'.

The critical outlook has changed the students' attitudes and approaches to 'texts'. The learner-consumers have become learner-producers of their own readings of the 'texts' and of their own written 'texts'. 'Composing' has been done with curiosity and the spirit of adventure. Established beliefs appeared to undergo a process of getting 'dismantled' and 'remantling' took place.

The alternative strategy seems to prove that the students can play intellectually with 'signifiers' and develop an inquisitive attitude to question all things that are considered to be unalterable and monumental. The endless play of signifiers implied in language as a system has been extended to perceptions leading to interpretations to make composition 'an open-ended activity' as opposed to the logocentric tradition where the need for 'closure' remains triumphant. Composing ceased to be a sterile activity and became an act of discovery.

The striking difference between the usual composition exercise and these 'freeplay' exercises, as observed by this investigator is that the latter are considerably longer and more revised. The students were very particular that their thoughts, being new and unconventional, should not be misunderstood and hence came forward to 'explain' things. This new situation seems to have broken the myth that the teacher 'explains' and the student 'listens to'. In a reversal of positions, the 'listening teacher' became a 'confidence builder' for the students. They started demanding 'feedback' before starting the next exercise. It is a characteristic reversal of attitude that instead of the teacher waiting for the 'feedback', here the students 'demand' a feedback from the teacher. Amused by their own hidden-talents, may be unexploited, the students wanted their scripts back to be preserved. "I never thought I could do this much this way" they exclaimed.
3.5. ANALYSIS IN SOCIAL SCIENCES

Social research encompasses scientific investigations conducted in the field of social sciences. Observation, hypothesis and verification are the three procedural components in a scientific approach. Since human behaviour in all its facets cannot be subjected to controlled experiment and observation, the social sciences usually follow inductive method where quantitative measurement cannot be applied with precision. Generally, the methodology consists in building up of hypothesis supported by selective experiments and observations. In social sciences particularly in Economics and Ethnography analytical studies are considered to be more important for empirical research. Empiricism becomes meaningless unless it is guided by some principle, theory or analysis. The empirical generalisations examine the validity or otherwise of both the assumptions and implications for an analytical work. The generalisation becomes the basis for analytical works. But the conclusions arrived at by scientific methods are not final. They are only relative to observed phenomena, facts discovered and reasoning developed. Research related to human behaviour is the most complicated affair as the variables are too many; especially so in an ESL classroom where human variables cause enormous problems.

3.5.1. ANALYSIS AND SYNTHESIS

Both analysis and synthesis are explanatory methods. They are helpful for our understanding of things and their relations. Some phenomena are essentially complex. They are understood by means of simplification through the analysis of their component elements. After the analysis is made, the relevant facts are separated out and related together in order to find out a general law. Analysis is made in order to know the cause or the effect of a complex phenomenon. It is also called a method of discovery. It can determine which elements are relevant and which are irrelevant. The objective of analysis is to test the hypothesis and this method is used in subjects like Chemistry
and Biology. A synthetic method is necessarily expository but it puts together the elements of a phenomenon in a systematic manner. This method is extensively used in Geometry and pure Mathematics. Analysis or synthesis is only a method and not an end in itself. For learner problems in an ESL classroom, analysis might help in making general observations but they cannot lead to definite conclusions or help towards building a theory or a method.

3.5.2. DEDUCTION AND INDUCTION

The main task of deductive logic is to clarify the nature of relation between premises and conclusions in valid arguments. Sometimes the premises may be materially false but yet the reasoning may be correct. Deductive reasoning does not wait to examine the material truth or the propositions. In social sciences like Economics, where there is limited scope for experimentation the deductive method is useful. Induction gives rise to empirical generalizations through two processes: observation and generalization. Some of the important theorems of Physical and Social sciences have been developed through this method. Induction being scientific in nature might help in developing theories but it could also lead to wrong generalizations. Moreover without deduction, Induction becomes destructive and produces only a mass of unrelated and unconnected facts. Most of the structural linguists have been making use of ‘Induction’ and ‘Analysis’ for their language research. For example, Chomsky’s generalizations on ‘universal structure’ are the result of limited incomplete experiment.

3.5.3. MEASUREMENT

In social sciences, we face problems which are subjective and qualitative. eg. skills, values, attitudes, utility etc. Qualitative data cannot be quantitatively or objectively measured. But it is argued that qualitative data cease to be of much scientific value if such data are not quantified. The qualitative data can be translated more or
less satisfactorily to quantitative terms and such translation involves several steps: description, categorization and determination of quantitative incidence and inter-relations which are usually known as 'content analysis'. Content analysis is an attempt to convert symbolic behaviour into scientific data. The ultimate purpose of 'Content analysis' is to help in testing of hypothesis by providing necessary quantitative data. Quantitative distinctions are substituted for qualitative ones for theoretical and practical reasons. Under the qualitative method, qualitative description or experience becomes the basis. Whatever information is collected, is arranged and described and the obvious inference is drawn. The conclusion in this method is not based on any rigorous analytical technique. Qualitative method is essentially subjective and philosophic in nature and so this investigator has chosen to make general observations and some specific observations on the writings of the 'control group'. This is because quantitative analysis has its own inherent shortcomings. It does not account for many factors like unattempted questions, absenteeism, avoidance strategy, 'incomplete' composing and especially 'the human variables'; the most important factor.

3.5.4. STATISTICAL METHODS

Statistical methods are applied to simplify a huge body of quantitative data into a simple statement of facts and tendency. Their objective is to facilitate comparison, study relationships between the two phenomena and to interpret the complicated data for the purpose of analysis. Sometimes absolute numbers are used and percentages are neglected; and if percentages are calculated, they tend to be different from what the numbers say, in many cases. This research project is not conceived on these lines. This investigator is philosophically convinced that such number game is not feasible with 'composing'.
3.5.5. IS QUANTIFICATION POSSIBLE IN ESL EXPERIMENTS?

Essentially complex phenomena can be considered with respect to their constituent elements (Analysis), and, at the same time different elements and their properties can be related together (synthesis) to fully explain such phenomena. In this sense, both analysis and synthesis can be called explanatory methods. In a synthetic method, exposition is possible because the entire elements are completely known and it puts together the elements of a phenomenon in a systematic manner. However, the discovery of truth is made possible only by the method of analysis. Thus synthetic thinking is made possible by analytic thinking. Each one is the ‘other’; the two are interdependent and supplementary to each other. The formulation of a concept or a law works in the direction of evolving a synthesis that makes use of analysis. For a fuller understanding of things and to arrive at the truth in a more convincing manner, a combination of synthetic and analytic methods is found to be more useful. In the same way, pure induction and pure deduction are only theoretical possibilities. Induction and deduction are only complementary to each other. The combination of the two methods underlies all scientific developments. This deductive - inductive method or Logical Positivism is the basic tenet of this analysis.

The implication is that in every analysis there is synthesis and in every synthesis there is analysis; in the same way, in every deduction, there is induction and in every induction there is deduction. In such a situation, no statistical evaluation is possible.

Language learning is a complex phenomenon and the human variables involved are too many; especially so in an experiment that involves a lot of individual freedom, motivation and uniqueness (uniqueness in terms of the individual and in terms of the ‘text’ produced); hence no standardization is possible in the context of the learner variables. This leads to a situation where standardized evaluation or statistical evaluation becomes irrelevant, thereby discarding quantification as a matter of impossibility in such an experiment.
3.6. REVIEW

This chapter focusses on reporting the field work of the project with details on the text book used, the question-paper pattern, the sampling population (of both the ‘control group’ and the ‘Experimental group’) and the ‘composed’ products of both the groups. It highlights the contrast in the output of the students following two different strategies. The simultaneous projection of the ‘sterile’ and ‘closed’ composing activity of the former and the development of the latter as a cline in terms of fluency, creativity and open-ended composing activity ‘problematises’ the notions of grammar and composition and this might prove to be of much help in evolving a certain strategy for pedagogy.

The analysis will show that the experiment and the analysis do not follow the highly structured, perhaps, over-worked methodological rigor. This research project is opposed to all such privileged concepts and privileging certain methods as rigorous automatically makes certain others less privileged. Not all scientific inventions have followed such privileged rigorous methodology. Taking bath in a bath-tub was sufficient for Archimedes to formulate the law of floatation. Fall of an apple was sufficient for Newton to formulate the law of gravitation. If they had waited for a rigorous methodology to express themselves, they, perhaps would not have come out with their laws. What is important is ‘demystification’ of certain privileged positions and methodologies. This has been attempted in this thesis. A thesis with a post-structuralist philosophical underpinnings cannot project any rigorous methodology which might result in self-contradiction.

This thesis may also face a criticism that it shows an inordinate slavishness to the metaphysical conclusions of Derrida. Derrida’s theory starts with the ‘problematisation’ of Saussurian linguistics and extends to use of language and language based activities. Any discussion on writing has to consider the philosophy of writing
in the first place. Writing is not merely the physical aspect of putting pen to paper which is a reductive and degenerated perception of writing. In this thesis, reading and writing are collapsed through a process of ‘problematization’ and composing has been critically examined. Composition is not merely a product of language. Any piece of composition is only a temporary stopover in the process of composing and ‘the best is yet to be’. If this process-orientation is rejected for the comfort of the finished product of composition, the whole idea of composition gets reduced to the physical aspect of writing. It is against such a reductive understanding that the entire project is geared up.

Only a few specimen scripts have been presented in this analysis considering the constraints of space. The observations made on these scripts are meant to project them in the light of the philosophical underpinnings of this thesis. This thesis does not project a perfectly and clearly spelt-out theory. Moreover, terms such as ‘perfect’ and ‘clear’ are value-loaded and imply a hierarchy and privileging. A thesis that argues a case against such hierarchy and privileging cannot impose the same without self-contradiction. It is the structuralist dictum that reality is ordered and that a clear description of reality is possible. In fact, it is the other way round. Life, reality and all language-based activities are both chaotic and unpredictable. In order to achieve collective existence, we impose order. That is why Derrida argues that the language-based activities are done out of necessity and not out of legitimacy. With this philosophical orientation, one may perceive vagueness in this thesis. But the aim of this project is to disturb the well-settled notions of clarity, perfection and rigor.

Whether or not the thesis can be implemented in the day-to-day class-room situation is only a speculative question. This researcher has presented sufficient evidences to make the discussion pedagogically fruitful. Only further research in this and other related areas will ‘demystify’ the area more.
NOTES

1. A blessed vessel (Indian mythology) which has the power of providing an unending supply of food to the person who possesses it.

2. Rama, the chief character in the Indian epic, The Ramayana, is believed to be the incarnation of Vishnu, the supreme god. Rama came to be counted as Vishnu’s seventh Avatar.

3. In The Ramayana, Sita is the daughter of Janaka, the king of Videha and the wife of Rama. Sita is held to be an unparalleled heroine and the epitome of all womanly virtues.

4. Ghandhari is a character in The Mahabharath, a great Indian epic. When she married the blind king Thirdirdhrashtra, she refused to see the world which her husband could not see and blindfolded herself for life.

5. In the Vedas, Yama is the Lord of Death with whom the spirits of the departed dwell.

6. Kumbakarna, the mighty Rakshas, is the brother of Ravana, in the Mahabharath. A monster who, under the curse of Brahma, slept for six months at a time and remained awake for the next six months. He is known for his gargantuan appetite.

7. Lakshmana is the brother of Rama, particularly known for his total devotion to Rama.

8. Ravana is the king of the demons called Rakshasas. He forcibly carried away Sita, the wife of Rama, to his kingdom.

9. Demolition of Babri Musjid constructed at the supposed site of Rama’s birth-place at Ayodhya has caused a political storm in India.

10. One of the greatest epics of India.

11. A character in The Mahabharath. This blind king married Ghandhari and by her had a hundred sons, the eldest of whom is Duryodhana. His blind love for his villainous son leads to the great war in The Mahabharath.

12. Draupathi is the beloved consort of the pandavas in the Mahabharath.

13. A forest brigand and renegade wanted by the police in Tamilnadu and Karanataka (India). He is also a notorious sandalwood smuggler and poacher.