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This is a thesis about relations: between grammar and composition and the teaching of one and the other. It seeks to reveal that relations exist where only differences were seen before and this could have immense practical value in the classroom. This thesis proposes to open questions and suggest, explore and develop certain alternatives to more or less traditional ways of considering grammar and composition.

Structural grammarians more often than not employ sentential grammar for unravelling the meaning of the 'texts'. Even the more sophisticated Chomskyan model is no exception to this general trend — the abstractionism of the model only increases the gap between grammar and composition. Despite the remarkable growth registered in grammar and composition, there has not been a significant move to fill the gap between the two. The signification of a 'text' cannot be discussed in relation to the 'structures' perceived to be transparent. The 'propositional content' of a 'text' is neither necessary nor comprehensively available because of the ever-shifting, transient character of language and language-based human operations. Only the 'illocutionary intent' is available, that too for a perceptive reader as his/her 'own 'construct'. This 'construct' too is neither definite nor fixed. Hence 'composing' cannot be taught on the monolithic block of structures. For this purpose 'composing' has to be conceived as critical thinking.

Structural grammar is inadequate at three levels. It treats a 'text' in isolation and thereby fixes the boundaries of the text in question. No text has fixed boundaries and the never-ending chain of traces available in a text makes the boundaries ever-expanding. Isolationism of structuralism reduces the
indeterminate possibilities of signification as something determinable and final. Inter-lingual and intra-lingual intertextuality would relate a text to the broader sociohistoric matrix. This will open up the indeterminate character of signification, the dynamic nature of the sociohistoric matrix contributing to such a process.

Post-structuralists' insights have been exploited for establishing a link between grammar and composition. In the light of Derridian thinking, the terms 'grammar' and 'composition' come to mean things that are radically different from the traditional understanding of these notions. To break new ground, one has to critically examine the older as well as the newer perceptions. The endless play of signifiers implied in language as a system have been extended to perceptions leading to interpretations to make composition an open-ended activity. This post-structuralist perspective is neither a theory nor a model; neither does it define the meaning nor does it direct one to find it; it rather demonstrates the impossibility of any established theory by critically undoing the hierarchical oppositions on which the various theories depend.

The present study does not take either grammar or composition as a fixed platform to argue from. Rather it seeks to underline the pulsating balance between the two, the ever-shifting character of reality and language-based operations. This project tries to bring about a correlation between the current developments in Psycholinguistics, the philosophy of language, the 'endless deferral' involved in the signification process in terms of the differential quality in the depth of 'decomposing'.

The first chapter as the Introduction to this thesis presents arguments to project the relevance of this research project. Research developments in the area of teaching of grammar and composition are reviewed to bring to sharp focus the
research gap that justifies this research. The observation that there is no meaningful link between the teaching of grammar and the teaching of composition has been taken as the central point to be tackled by exploring the possibility of transforming the teaching of grammar into the teaching of written composition. For long, the notion of grammar remained abstract, sentence-based and form-oriented and thus missed out the vital link with written composition. With every new development in linguistic theory, there have been consequent developments in grammar teaching. But ‘structuralism’ and ‘sentential grammar’ remained to be the basic principles. Consequently the gap between grammar and composition remained unfilled, perhaps, for too long a period. The first chapter proposes a critical strategy to be the most suitable actualization procedure. In their redefined status, grammar comes to mean writing and to write is to think critically; and to compose is to decompose through critical thinking. In other words, the notions of grammar slide and merge into the notions of composition. The ‘Introduction’ also presents a sociolinguistic perspective of the SLT/L situation in India with a view to assessing the epistemological significance of ELT/L and this is linked with the relevant and current pedagogic theoretic models of ELT/L.

The second chapter presents a brief review of the literature in the areas of teaching of grammar and teaching of composition. This review itself is an attempt at problematizing the earlier theories as well as the very notions of grammar and composition and the process of problematization leads to a better understanding on ‘why compose’ as well as ‘how to compose’.

The third chapter discusses the issue of an alternative strategy to be evolved for ‘composing’ in the ESL curriculum in question. To achieve an ‘explanatory adequacy’ is the basic tenet of any scientific exploration. Within the available
theoretical refinement, especially in the area of 'composing', one can only make a conscious move in the direction and this has been done in the third chapter. It has been established through the analyses that composing involves creativity. The very understanding that learners bring into operation their 'world knowledge' in the process of writing, a top-down effort in cross-fertilization, implies the aspect of creativity that is involved in 'composing'. The evidence of the hypotheses confirmed or tenable can only be given in qualitative terms in a research of the kind undertaken here. Any attempt to quantify the results would lead to atomization of the writing process by splitting them into quantifiable components. The analysis of the data shows that the use of the critical strategy proposed here would be of great help to both the students and teachers in their 'writing' endeavour in ESL class-rooms.