CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION
CHAPTER - I

1.1 Language and its Importance
1.2 The status of English language in India
1.3 Aims of Teaching English
1.4 Objectives of Teaching English at the Schools
   1.4.1 The objectives at the Elementary Level
   1.4.2. The objectives at the Secondary Level
1.5 Teaching language skills
   1.5.1 Listening skill
   1.5.2 Speaking skill
   1.5.3 Reading skill
   1.5.4 Writing skill
   1.5.5 Teaching writing skill
   1.5.6 The process of writing
   1.5.7 Reasons for teaching writing
   1.5.8 Analysis of writing skill at school level
1.6 Different kinds of writing and their components
1.7 Task Based Approach
   1.7.1 Advantages of Task Based Approach
   1.7.2 Task Based Communicative Activities in Developing Writing skill
1.8 Need and importance of the study
1.9 Statement of the problem
1.10 Objectives of the study
1.11 Hypotheses
1.12 Assumptions of the study
1.13 Scope of the study
1.14 Conceptual Frame work of the study
CHAPTER – I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Language and its Importance

It is language than anything else that distinguishes man from the rest of other creatures in the world. As Dwight L. Bolinger (1981) says,

"Language is species – specific. It is uniquely human trait, shared by the cultures so diverse and by individuals physically – and mentally so unlike one another".

Language is one of the most important characteristics forms of human behaviour. The purpose of language is communication which means that language helps a person to formulate his thought and encode it for the benefit of others to decode it. In this connection Edward Sapir (1921) says,

"Language is a purely human and non-instinctive method of communicating ideas, emotion and desires by means of a system of voluntarily produced symbols .........Language is a cultural, not a biologically inherited function".

Collins Cobuild Essential English Dictionary (1995) defines language as,
"a system of communication which consists of a set of sounds and written symbols which are used by the people of a particular country for talking or writing. Language is the ability to use words in order to communicate. Human beings have this ability but animals do not".

Language in seen to be a dynamic means of communication, which involves not only a set of fixed structures but a tool that needs to be wielded effectively in different situation for different purposes with different kinds of audience.

Languages are of many types. They are L1, L2, L3, FL, DL, CL and ML. L1 is the mother tongue of the child. It is the first language and is essentially the language spoken by the mother of the child. The child acquires his mother-tongue naturally, gradually, automatically and unknowingly because of the constant exposure to the language in the environment. L2 is the second language which a person learns consciously after or with the mother tongue. Learning of a second language is a special accomplishment because he learns this second language in an artificial environment through formal teaching where we've no contact with the community in which the language is used or spoken.

L3 is the third language which a child or a person learns after learning the first and second language. A child or a person learns a third language either out of necessity
or pleasure. FL is a language spoken in a foreign country. A mother tongue in a country can be a foreign language for another country. DL is a dead language which is out of use and is no more used by people for communication. It exists only in literature. People do not speak or write it. CL is the classical language which is traditional in nature and has a rich literature. ML stands for the modern language which is used by the modern world. A target language is called as TL which is learnt as a target. It is a purposeful activity. Any language can be a target language. In this context Robert Lado (1961) rightly observes, “the first language may be used in the home, the second in school and a third in religious practice”.

Language is an essential part of human life. It is a human and social activity without which a human cannot function in the society William Harpin, (1976) has defined language as, “A language is a system of arbitrary vocal symbols by means of which a social group operates”. It is one of their basic needs, a means of communications and social control. According to O. Jesperson, (1995)

“Language is a set of human habits, the purpose of which is to give expression to thoughts and feelings”.

Although language is one of the most important characteristic forms of human behaviour, it is not inherited but learnt. As Howatt, (1984) points out “human language
is transmitted from one individual to another not by physical inheritance but by learning”.

1.2 The status of English language in India

India, as a country with all its multilingual and pluricultural settings has given the position of second language to English in the school curriculum. The country adopts three language formulas which consists of the regional language of the state labeled as L₁, English as a second language labeled as L₂, and any one of the modern languages, labeled as L₃. Since Hindi is an associate official language of the Nation, it has been insisted that Hindi should be taught as a L₃ in Non-Hindi states whereas a modern language in the states where Hindi is a regional language. Although the notion of three language formula has an important significance in the multi-lingual settings in India, the policy lacks support and practice due to political and regional differences among the people. The study of English as a second language is compulsory in all states irrespective of their local languages. TamilNadu as a state follows the two language formula of teaching L₁ and L₂ in the school curriculum of the state. The state adopts Tamil, the language of the State as L₁ and English as the second language.

The position given to English in the school curriculum was laid down by the Kothari Commission (1964-66). The commission points out that English has to be taught
hereafter principally as “language of comprehension rather than as a literary language”.

The National policy on Education adopted by the Government of India in 1968 stressed the importance of the study of English in these words:

“Special emphasis needs to be laid on the study of English and other international languages. World knowledge is growing at a tremendous pace, especially in science and technology. India must not only keep up this growth but also make her own significant contribution to it. For this purpose, study of English deserves to be specially strengthened”.

Dr. Radhakrishnan Commission in 1948 recommended the continuance of the study of English,

“English should be studied in high schools and in the universities in order that we might keep ourselves intouch with the living stream of every growing knowledge”.

1.3 Aims of Teaching English

In India English is taught as a foreign language. The main aim of teaching English is to help the learners acquire practical command of English so that it may be useful for
practical purposes. There are four main aims of teaching English to Indian school children. They are:

i. Understanding the language when it is spoken by someone else.
ii. Speaking when the need so arises.
iii. Reading the matter written by others.
iv. Writing for the benefit of those with whom we wish to share our ideas.

These aims emphasize the mastering over all the four skills in learning a language viz Listening, Speaking, Reading and writing. Listening and Reading are passive or receptive skills while speaking and writing are active or productive skills. All the four aims of teaching English are equally important to attain mastery over the language. These skills should continue all through the school and not one of them should be neglected, though there are stages when one or other may require special emphasis.

1.4 Objectives of Teaching English at the Schools

1.4.1 The Objectives at the Elementary Level

The objectives of teaching English at the elementary level are:
To understand simple statements when spoken.
To understand questions asked, short talks and short passages when read out (all within the student’s experience).
To ask simple questions relating to his experience and answer them orally.

To read with fluency (both aloud and silently) and understand simple passages within the vocabulary and structural range of the syllabus. Express in writing with reasonable accuracy within the range of the syllabus or topics within his experience.

1.4.2. The Objectives at the Secondary Level

Understanding a prescribed passage read out from the book or a talk at the same linguistic level on a topic of general interest within the student’s experience.

Asking sensible questions and answering the questions clearly.

Carrying on a sensible conversation with clarity of expression on passages or topics from prescribed materials.

Arranging and organizing his ideas in a coherent manner for oral or written presentation.

Reading silently and understanding the main ideas in a passage of simple English within the linguistic range of the syllabus.
Expressing himself in writing on any subject of general interest within his experience.

(or)

a topic from the curriculum prescribed.

Reading a passage on his own using the dictionary for any reference needed.

Reading short stories and enjoying them.

Interpreting materials presented in the form of a table or chart.

Writing simple letters (personal or official) and simple dialogues.

1.5 Teaching language skills

Language is not inherited but learnt. The purpose of learning a language is to communicate in that language. It is essential therefore that every language class is directed to equip students with the language skills they really need either immediately or in future. The learning of English as a second language (L2) is not an exception. The L2 learning like L1 requires the mastery of the four major skills namely, Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing.
According to John Hay Craft, (1973)

"To be able to use the language to convey thoughts, intentions, wishes, information etc, a person needs a mastery of various elements (skills)".

Development of these four major skills has a crucial role to play in a second language teaching programme. The skills, Listening and Speaking lay the very foundation of language learning because learning to speak a language is always the shortest road to learning to read it and to write it.

1.5.1 Listening skill

Learning of a language completely depends on its understanding and comprehension. Listening is an important skill and must be learnt and taught carefully. Jane Willis (1982) writes,

"Listening is receptive rather than productive, but it is an equally important skill. Students need to learn how to listen and to get the chance to listen to different types of English, so they will be able to listen with understanding to spoken English outside the class room".

Listening involves the formation of proper auditory images of phonemic components such as the use of vowel and
consonant sounds, stress, accent, pitch, pause, juncture, intonation and the rhythm of language in isolation and in combination and also the reception, identification, perception and their discrimination from their mother-tongue equivalents and acquisition or development of communicative competence at the receptive level.

There are two kinds of listening. They are casual listening and focused listening. Listening without any particular purpose in mind is called as casual listening. Listening for a particular purpose to find out some information is called as focused listening. Most of the listening in class is focused listening. The teaching of listening should be taught as a skill in its own right in classroom. The teacher must devise various classroom tasks to make listening activities interesting and effective. The teacher should also make it a point to expose the pupils to a good model because the pupils are required to produce the language. The teacher of English should bear in mind that all listening activities should cater directly to the communicative needs of the learners. The teacher should realize the fact that we cannot develop speaking skills unless we develop listening skills. Listening and speaking skills are interdependent.

1.5.2 Speaking skill

The most important among the four skills of a language is speaking or speech. Language is primarily
observed as speech. Speech is the fundamental thing in language learning and reading and writing are secondary.

The purpose of teaching speaking is to make the student learn the features of spoken English which includes pronunciation, stress, rhythm and intonation. The skill of speaking involves the development of communicative competence as the productive skill. It is the foundation of reading and writing.

In order to develop the speaking skill in the learner, the language teacher must speak English correctly and should ensure that his own spoken English is good. To promote speaking skills among the second language learners, the teacher has to make use of various communicative tasks according to the level and mental age of the learner.

1.5.3 Reading skill

After speaking comes reading in language acquisition. Reading is a very complex but an important skill. Reading is decoding print or deciphering print. According to West(1962) “Reading is a process of Sight, Sound and Sense”.

Reading skill consists of three important components viz. (i) recognition of the graphic marks (ii) the correlations of these with formal linguistic elements (iii) and the correlation of these with meaning. Teaching of
Reading is important because reading indicates towards knowing of the language at knowing world's news and important information through print media. It is a source of recreation. C.C. Fries(1945) rightly remarks:

"Our main purpose in developing the ability to read among our children is that we wish to put them in possession of the power gaining pleasure and profit from the printed pages".

An efficient reader is expected to possess the following skills:

i. ability to read fast with good comprehension the texts that are easy in language and content or difficult texts that are familiar;

ii. ability to read slowly but with excellent comprehension, difficult texts on professional, academic and technical subjects in which he has a special interest and requires specialized knowledge;

iii. ability to skim and skip.

iv. ability to use words of reference.

In teaching reading English, the teacher should use different types of materials and learning activities to develop this skill among the pupils.
1.5.4 Writing skill

Among the four major language skills, writing is the last but the most difficult of all the language abilities to acquire. Since writing is a difficult art, the learner needs an intensive apprenticeship in mastering the skills of writing. None can forget the fact that if one takes more efforts, the writing will be more effective and rewarding. In developed societies, ability to read and write has been treated as a vitally important index of well being. In developed societies, literacy and ability to read and write has been treated as a vitally important index of well being. Writing is one of those taken for granted accomplishments in the social and cultural life of human beings. Writing is of immense importance among the members of the intelligentsia. According to Bacon, (1981) “Reading maketh a full man, conference a ready man and writing an exact man”. It implies that perfection in a man comes only through writing work. Krashen S. (1994) writes that “writing competence is the abstract knowledge that a writer has about writing.

Writing has been treated as a vitally important index of well being. Persons who have difficulty in expressing themselves in writing are handicapped in our society. Writing requires greater precision and care than speech as it is a more formal activity producing a permanent record. When we speak we can gauge our listener’s response and clarify any points if they are uncomprehended. As no such
interaction is possible in a piece of writing, one's communication skills have to be unambiguous.

Writing is often regarded as the visual representation of speech. It is a skill in which we produce a sequence of sentences arranged in a particular order and linked together in certain ways.

According to T.C. Baruah (1985) some of the components of the writing skills are,

i. Writing the letters of the alphabet at a reasonable speed.

ii. Spelling the words correctly.

iii. Recalling appropriate words and putting them in sentences.

iv. Using appropriate punctuation marks.

v. Linking sentences with appropriate sentences connectors and sequence signals. For example, article, pronouns etc.

vi. Organising thoughts and ideas in logical sequence and in suitable paragraph around topic sentences.

vii. Evaluating the significance of a word or a sentence in the overall context of the written passage.

viii. Using the form and register appropriate for the subject matter and the audience.
1.5.5 Teaching of writing

For efficient learning and adequate mastery of the English language, the learners should acquire the writing skill along with other basic skills. Therefore the English teacher must help the pupils to develop and improve their writing skill according to the objectives given under each level of education.

Teaching of writing should involve the two important aspects of writing, namely mechanics of writing and writing as a means of communication. Mechanics of writing includes the proper and correct formation of letters, attention to their size and slant, the development of each letter, the spacing between words and sentences. The second aspect of writing deals with writing as a means of communication in the form of letter writing, transcription exercises, and composition. The teacher of English should train students to master the elementary mechanics of written work viz., handwriting, spelling, capitalization, punctuation, word order and word division within the range of the vocabulary and structures of their curriculum.

Teaching of writing at the advanced stages consists of the three stages, controlled writing, guided writing and free writing. Controlled writing concerns with structures, use of appropriate words, punctuation, word order etc., and not with facts or ideas where as the guided writing concerns itself with ideas and facts given by the teacher for the
students to express in their own sentences observing the mechanics of writing. In free writing, the student is expected to express himself effectively on familiar topics without any help from the teacher. In the words of A.K Paliwal (1998),

"Generally the controlled stage concerns itself with the production of accurate language in context, the guided stage with the organization of material which is given, and the free stage with the production by the student of both content and language".

Thus teaching of writing should aim at improving the learner’s proficiency in the integrated use of the language components such as,

i. writing without grammatical errors.
ii. drafting and replying letters in everyday life situations.
iii. describing a person, a thing or a process.
iv. developing short stories, paragraphs using givens hints or notes.
v. expanding a given passage or a title.
vi. making notes and summarizing a short passage in simple English.

The students must be taught to write correct English with accurate spelling and good pronunciation. The main responsibility of the teacher is to help the students gain a
mastery over the language, a control and use of it. Faulty diction, failure to structure, materials to emphasis, subordinate ideas, digressions and interpolations, shift in person and tense, defective use of phrases, omission of connectives, poor prepositions, poor sequence of ideas etc are to be taken care of in good writing. The English teacher has to train his pupils by giving frequent and regular practice in writing because practice in English writing is of great value not only in school work but also in social, public and business life.

1.5.6 The process of writing

Writing is a conscious and deliberate process. The process of writing is divided into three stages, manipulation, structuring and communication. Manipulation consists in the psycho-motor ability to form the letters of the alphabet. This stage is very important because it gives the knowledge of writing the letters of the alphabet. This is the rudimentary stage in writing. It requires a very fine control of the small muscles of the fingers and the wrist.

The next stage is structuring. Here the learner is required to organize the letters into words and the words into phrases and sentences. At this stage the learners see the syntactic relationships of the language items and thereby understand the structural meanings of the syntactic units.
The third is called the communication stage. This is the highest level in the process of writing. Communication in writing like interpretation in reading is the ultimate goal. At this stage the writer is able to select the appropriate structures and vocabulary in the overall context of the passage, keeping in view of the subject matter and the audience. Development of the skill of writing should proceed through all the three stages ultimately leading to the art of self expression. John Munby(1978) in “A Taxonomy of language skills, writes the sub skills of writing as,

1. Manipulating the script of a language
   i. forming the shapes of letters
   ii. using the spelling system
   iii. using punctuation

2. Expressing information explicitly

3. Expressing information implicitly through
   i. influence and
   ii. figurative language

4. Expressing the communicative value of sentences and utterances.

5. Expressing relations within a sentence using,
   i. elements of sentence structure
   ii. modal auxiliaries
   iii. intra-essential connectors

6. Expressing relations between parts of a text through lexical and cohesion devices
7. Expressing relation between parts of text through cohesion devices

8. Using indicators in discourse for
   i. introducing an idea
   ii. developing an idea
   iii. transition to another idea
   iv. concluding an idea
   v. emphasising a point
   vi. explanation of a point already made
   vii. anticipating an objection

9. Reducing the text through avoiding irrelevant information.

1.5.7 Reasons for teaching writing

The info-tech facilities at times may seem to have reduced the task of writing but there are still occasions where we have to commit ourselves in writing. We teach writing in schools in order to solidify the student’s grasp of vocabulary and structure and to complement the other skills. The goal of writing is to develop the student’s ability to write up to the point at which written homework can be given. Appropriacy can be developed through writing. Listing the reasons for teaching writing, Donne Byrne(1978) says,

"... the introduction and practice of some form of writing enables us to provide for different learning style and needs. Some learners especially
those who do not learn easily through oral practice, feel more secure if they are allowed to read and write in the language. For each student, writing is likely to be an aid to retention, if only they feel more at ease and relaxed”.

According to William Harpin, (1976)

“The goal in writing is two fold. Psychologically students are more impressed by exercises that are to be written and handed in than by those that are to be learned. Realistically the teacher knows that writing home work exercises and other written activities help the students to acquire the vocabulary and the grammar of the lesson. Practically the students’ minimum contact with the language in the classroom must be expanded as much as possible. The overall objective then will be to help the learners express their ideas in written form”.

Alexander Pope in his essay on criticism says that

“True ease in writing comes from Art, not chance. Effective writing is an art that has a style and flavour and comes through practice. It is ninety nine percent perspiration and one percent inspiration”.

20
Writing will be effective if it is, clear, concise, exact and appropriate. It is clear when it expresses our ideas that reader can understand. It becomes concise when it uses sufficient words to impart the message but not so many as to obscure the meaning. It is exact when it uses vocabulary correctly and follows those conventions for spelling, punctuation and grammar. It is appropriate when it uses the correct tone for the situation and the reader. In order to write clearly, concisely, exactly and appropriately certain skills and knowledge are needed.

1.5.8 Analysis of writing skill at school level

No effective learning of language skills is possible without effective teachers. This is perhaps more true of teaching writing skills in English at different levels. The teacher of English has to make the English classroom as the practice ground of developing the writing skill in English. The mastery of the writing skill is the sign of the successful completion of learning English as a second language. Teaching writing skill in English at the school level aims at developing in the learner a minimum adequate proficiency in the second language which will serve as a core capable of further development for achieving mastery in it.

Writing is an expressive skill. It involves various sub skills at different levels in schools. The learning of writing in English begins with mechanics of writing. Penmanship
is the starting point in writing. At this level, the pupils master the sub-skill of reproduction. The ability to copy accurately is learnt at this first stage. Starting with the individual letters of the alphabet, the pupil proceeds further in the mastery of this skill towards copy writing exercises. The pupils begin with calligraphy note books and moves on to writing in four lined note books. This involves the development of a neat handwriting. At the second stage, the pupil writes words, sentences and passages dictated to him. Understanding is necessary at this stage for proper performances. At the next stage he varies the sentences according to new rules and patterns he has learnt. The performance of the learner at this stage is more a guided work. The next level in writing skill is the student's communication of his own thoughts in writing. The highest level in writing skill is the ability to vary the style, tone and choice of language in accordance with the subject matter purpose and intended readers. It is at this highest level of writing skill the individual writer reveals himself through his writing.

These various levels and components of writing are gradually mastered by the students of English as a foreign or second language in three stages. The three stages are known as the junior, middle and senior years of language learning. In the junior years, the pupil masters the mechanics of writing. The training that is given at this stage is in the form of copy exercise and dictation.
Handwriting and spelling are developed. The pupil learns the word order and basic patterns in English. The pupil learns essential punctuation marks and their uses in writing. Writing is mostly guided at this stage. In the middle years, the guided written work slowly changes into free written work. Based on the basic patterns that the learner had mastered at the junior stage, he applies the rules of transformation and modifications and enlarges his grammar. The learner develops the ability to choose the language. At this stage training is given in free composition work. Starting with the structured answers the teacher leads the pupil to free work. The pupil masters the skill of arranging the sentences according to the order, paragraphing exercises and developing the hints or story based on the directions or guidance. This is followed by free composition work of simple nature. The teacher helps in the selection and arrangement of ideas. The senior years in English language learning concentrates on specific writing skill. It is a continuation of the free composition introduced during the middle years. The learner learns to present the same ideas in different ways. Writing in different manners for different purposes is dealt elaborately in this stage.

The skill of summarising, paraphrasing, note making, note taking and reporting are introduced at this stage. The target at this stage is the ability to give expression to one's ideas. Different styles of writing for scientific reports
processes, emotions and feelings are emphasized and project reports are practised at this stage. The pupil masters also the skills of selecting the language and style to suit the tone of expression.

Organisation of ideas in the proper logical sequence which the pupil has learnt in the previous stage is rounded up with the ability in expressing idiomatic or figurative language. The pupils learn and practice critical and literary writing. The mastery of the writing skill in English at the school level depends on the ability in expressing one’s thoughts and ideas on the major forms of writing.

1.6 Different kinds of writing and their components

Every good writer has a purpose when he or she sits down to write. The purpose may be to explain or inform; to create a mood or stir an emotion; to tell about a series of events; to persuade the reader to believe something or do something. A writer may want to do several of these things in a single essay or report but he or she will know what the primary purpose of the piece of writing is and will select and arrange words and details that best accomplish that purpose.

The ultimate aim of writing is to enable the pupil to arrange his own words, in his own way freely on any major forms of writing. The different kinds of writing depending
on one’s writing situation are categorised into Narrative, Expository, Argumentative, Descriptive, and Reflective writing. They are the five different kinds of writing for developing a message to the readers. The first kind of writing known as Narrative writing tells a story or depicts a series of related events usually in chronological order. It narrates an incident. This type of writing deals with perceptions - most commonly visual perception. In essay writing, a narrative always makes a clear and definite point. Here the references like character, place, time events, and results are depicted clearly. The second kind of writing is known as Descriptive writing which describes a person a place, an object and so on. Description is a method of writing that establishes a mood or stirs an emotion. Description works by using images - words that help us experience something with our senses; to see it, hear it, smell it, taste it, or touch it. Figures of speech such as similes and metaphors are frequently used in description. It creates a word picture. It is either objective or subjective and it provides a factual picture of writing.

The third kind of writing is Expository writing which explains the writer’s viewpoint. The purpose of writing is to explain or inform, to define, or to clarify an idea. It reveals what a particular mind thinks or knows or believes. Exposition is constructed logically and is divided into various more specific plans such as illustrations, classification, process analysis, cause and effect analysis,
true and false, comparison and contrast, general and particular.

The fourth kind of writing is the Argumentative kind which is otherwise called as persuasive writing. It strives to persuade readers to change thinking or take some actions on controversial issues. It appeals to reason in the form of argument, offering evidence or logical proof. It presents the points in two opposing points of view on given topics. It should clearly state the points, both sides using examples and contrasts. The last form of writing is Reflective writing in which the writer gives his thoughts on some topic. They are reflective and are of an abstract nature.

These major kinds of writing, namely narrative expository, argumentative, descriptive and reflective writing help the learners in developing their writing skills towards communicative aspect. To achieve mastery and perfection in all these major kinds of writing, the learner should have adequate knowledge about the various components of these kinds of writing. A thorough knowledge and understanding of the components before attempting to write, assures success in their writing endeavours in future life. Therefore the adequate knowledge of the following components is highly essential in developing proficiency in the writing skills of the pupils in English language learning situation. The components of writing skills are communicative quality, organization, relevance, linguistic accuracy and linguistic appropriacy.
Communicative quality refers to the writer's ability to use the linguistic structures as effectively as possible for satisfying immediate communicative needs. Organisation is the quality which refers to the writer's ability to arrange the grammatical patterns and items of vocabulary related to the topic area. Relevance deals with the ability to use the ideas and supporting materials which are closely connected with the content of the text. Linguistic accuracy means using the correct forms of language, punctuation, spelling or vocabulary. A.K. Paliwal (1998) writes that "accuracy is the ability to perform a task without making a mistake... the quality of being true or correct". Linguistic appropriacy means the use of language correctly without making an error of structure or of spelling. These components can be best developed through regular practice. Since the art of writing is really a difficult art to master, it could be cultivated and developed through a phased programme, using innovative, alternative and diversified teaching strategies and approaches.

I.7 Task Based Approach

In order to develop the communicative skills in English, various methods have been tried out by teachers and researchers at different levels. Krishnaswamy (1986) Ramachandran (1985) and Ramani (1985) were against the uses of communicative approach at school. Yet the studies conducted by Alan Bretta and Alan Davies (1985), Prabu (1984), Sadhana Guha (1988), Sasikala (1997), and
Julusen (1986) have already pointed out the efficacy of the communicative approach at school level. Rajendran (1992), Droge, Despina Maria (1994) and Mc Lerenclemane (1994) used task-based approaches in developing writing skills among the different language learners. Silvia Bruti (1999) used fairy tales for developing writing skills.

Apart from the above, innovative studies have been undertaken by some researchers in the field of teaching writing in English. Lerner (1988), views experimental approaches such as the language experience approaches are effective for reading and writing. The shift from form based approach to task based approach becomes a new venture in teaching language skills to the L2 learners. This task based approach has ascended to a position of prominence in L2 learning classroom. It is seen as significant further evolution of communicative language teaching, both in terms of views of language in use and the development of language classroom methodology.

With a rise of Task Based language learning (TBLT) a variety of interpretations of what exactly constitutes a task have come up. According to Willis J.A., (1996) a task is,

"an activity in which the target language is used by the learner for a communicative purpose in order to achieve an outcome".
Since the advent of communicative language Teaching (CLT) it is believed that language is best learned through task based activities. Many research findings in the second language acquisition reveals that the task based approach has a richer potential for promoting successful learning than through the traditional methods of teaching. Willis J.A., (1996) defines

"tasks are always activities where the target language is used by the learner for a communicative purpose.....in order to achieve an outcome."

According to Ellis Rod (2004),

"a task based approach is one in which appropriate contexts are provided for developing thinking and study skills as well as language and academic concepts for students of different levels of language proficiency. Students learn by carrying out specific tasks or projects".

Michael Swan (1990) rightly says,

"These are times when the same language practice can take place more interestingly and more directly if the students are simply asked to talk about themselves according to certain task".

29
Nunnan (1993) defines a communicative task as,

"a piece of classroom work which involves learners in comprehending, manipulating, producing or interacting in the target language while their attention is principally focused on meaning rather than form. The task should also have a sense of completeness, being able to stand alone as a communicative act in its own right".

Skehan (1996) writes that,

"tasks ..... are activities which have meaning as their primary focus. Success in tasks is evaluated in terms of achievement of an outcome, and tasks generally bear some resemblance to real-life language use. So task based instruction takes a fairly strong view of communicative language."

According to Krashen (1996), “Task based teaching can be adopted to meet the needs of all learners.”

1.7.1 Advantages of Task Based Approach

The advantages of Task Based Approach are numerous;

i. Task based approach is goal oriented, leading to a solution or a product. The tasks involve learners in
comprehending, manipulating, producing or interacting in the target language.

ii. The task based approach ensures students' progress and learning increases.

iii. It helps the students to know there is more than one right way to do things.

iv. Students acknowledge their mistakes and try to rectify them.

v. Memories are enhanced.

vi. Self-esteem of the students increases and they feel a sense of responsibility.

vii. Work is completed and accuracy is improved.

viii. Students develop and use a personal study process.

ix. Students become strategic and independent learners.

x. The students are empowered to succeed and feel a sense of accomplishment at the end of each task based activity.

xi. On-task time increases, students are more engaged.

xii. It is enjoyable and motivating.

1.7.2 Task Based Communicative Activities in Developing Writing Skill

Although writing is the most difficult skill to acquire and to teach, it is one of the most needed skills in day to day dealings of an educated individual. Learning of a language remains incomplete without the writing aspect. The goal of writing is communication. The development of communicative ability through writing confidentially and
naturally must be given early practice at the earliest possible stage. The advanced stage in teaching writing ends with productive writing which is looked upon as the ultimate stage of language learning and a superior indication of language mastery. But what chiefly matters is that teaching of productive writing has been the most neglected aspect in English classroom. This calls for a good and steady effort of the teachers of English to offer the kinds of stimulus to develop writing skills through various writing activities. These writing activities are carefully designed by the teachers of English in such a manner to achieve the goal of writing skills. For this, the teachers of English need to have a good writing proficiency and communicative competence.

1.8 Need and importance of the study

As Verma K. Shivendra (1995) says,

"Every reform in education centers round the teachers and every advance depends almost solely upon their intelligence, character and skill, the teachers are the king pins of any educational system".

The progress and standard of any nation cannot be beyond the standard of her educational institution. The standard of any educational institution in turn cannot rise above the level of its teachers. Since education is the most potent instrument for the progress of a nation, the quality of
education needs to be improved. It is universally acknowledged that any attempt at improvement in the quality of education is ultimately dependent on the quality of instruction that defined in terms of the degree in which the presentation, explanation and ordering of elements of the learning opportunities given for a learner. Therefore, teachers the lamps that kindle learning are the crucial determinant of quality of education. Their education is a pre-requisite to the success of any innovation in education. The success of second language learning therefore heavily depends upon the quality teachers of English.

The quality teachers of English can be produced if we have good system of quality teacher education in English. Therefore Teacher Education in English is of utmost importance and everything necessary has to be done to ensure that the teacher education institution produce English teachers of high quality at various levels. The proficiency and competency on the part of the English teacher in developing the writing skills in English play a significant role in second language learning at all levels of education. Realizing the situation, the study makes an attempt to develop the writing skills of the secondary grade teacher trainees, who are solely responsible for the primary education of the country. The primary education of a country determines the entire education of the country. Unless it is properly laid, one can’t build a good edifice over it. According to the secondary education (1953), the
present practice of mechanically applying the same methods to dull, average, as well as bright children is responsible for much of the ineffectiveness of the instruction given in schools. If these various groups of children are allowed to proceed at their own appropriate pace and the method, approaches well as the curricular load are properly adjusted; it will be good for all of them. It will save the dull children from discouragement and the bright children from a sense of frustration.

Thus the policies and commissions lay great emphasis in providing good and quality primary education to all children. Just as the maxim says, a blind can never lead a blind; an incompetent teacher in English can never produce competent learners in English. This is particularly true in teaching writing in English because the proficiency in writing is a good sign of good quality education in English. Therefore the competency on the part of the prospective teachers in writing skills was felt as one of the valuable inputs in English language education.

The investigator has been serving as the teacher educator in teaching English Language Education in District Institute of Education and Training (DIET) for the past six years. Her experience in teaching English Language Education to the teacher trainees helped her to understand that the student teachers find it difficult to express themselves in written communication. As a teacher educator she adopted a number of instructional strategies
but with no substantial learning gains on the part of the student teachers. Although the time honoured traditional methods prove successful results in developing the writing skills of the second language learners, its contribution towards developing the communicative competence in writing is not up to the required level of learning. Therefore the traditional method of teaching writing is to be supplemented and supported by using various strategies and approaches for successful learning outcomes.

New techniques for teaching writing are to be adopted by the teachers. The researcher felt that the lack of communicative competence in writing will pose great threat towards language attainment in English in one's life. Therefore a good and steady effort in this direction is quite essential. Writing is a complex process, special care and attention at every stage of education should be taken on the development of the writing skills of the learners. To achieve this effectively the approach or techniques to be adopted should be creative, interesting, enjoyable and above all innovative. Keeping this in mind, the investigator has been on the lookout for a suitable approach for developing the writing skills of the teacher trainees. Accordingly, designing task based communicative activities in developing writing skills seemed to her to be an authentic approach. This has led the investigator to carryout the present research study.
1.9 Statement of the problem

“Effectiveness of Task Based communicative Activities in developing the writing skills of the teacher trainees”.

Meanings of certain terms used in the study

The meaning of certain key terms used in the study along with their operational definitions are given here under.

Effectiveness

According to Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary of Current English (1986) ‘effectiveness is ability to bring out the result intended’.

According to Longman Dictionary of contemporary English effectiveness is, ‘ability to have a desired effect’. As far as this study is concerned, effectiveness refers to the impressive results produced in developing the writing skills by the teacher trainees consequent to the use of task based communicative activities.

Tasks

T.L. Tickoo in his book Teaching and Learning English defines task as a unit of teaching learning that generally contains language data and an activity or a sequence of activities to be carried out the learner. A task normally has an aim, which provides the purpose for the
activity; in most cases the activity goes beyond the practice of language for its own sake and it is distinct for this and other reasons from the term 'exercise'.

**Communicative**

According to Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary of current English (1986) communicative is 'ready and willing to talk and give information'.

**Task-based communicative activities**

Task-based communicative activities means the communicative activities organized around tasks for classroom interaction and learning. Task based communicative activities aim to improve and extend the learner's range of skills in written aspects of English.

**Developing**

The term 'developing' is used to plan, design and frame task based communicative activities.

**Activities**

Activities are the specially designed resources in classroom teaching and learning processes which directly or indirectly support and supplement the content of the lesson. Activities are of many types such as motivational activity, self learning activity and evaluation activity. Activities create interest among learners and it is highly motivating. Activities may be presented through a variety of games,
roleplays, simulations and realia such as pictures, objects, graphs, and charts. The teacher acts as a guide, facilitator and director in classroom activities. All activities have been prepared with an aim of achieving a specific competency related to learn excellently, quickly and self-confidently.

**Teacher Trainees**

Teacher Trainees are those who are undergoing secondary Grade Teacher Training after completing their higher secondary course. The educational qualification for the teacher trainee is a pass in higher secondary Board examination only. These trainees after completion of the two years course enter into teaching profession and teach English at the Elementary Level (Class I to VIII).

**Classification of Teacher Trainees**

According to gender (a) Male b) Female

According to the subjects studied in higher secondary course:

(a) Arts (b) Science (c) Vocational

According to the type of school studied in higher secondary course:

(a) Govt (b) Aided (c) Unaided

According to the locality of the school studied in higher secondary course

(a) Rural (b) Urban
According to students’ parental education
a. Below X standard
b. Between and XII
c. Above XII standard

If we go on analyzing the classification we can find out how these factors influence positively or negatively on the abilities of the teacher trainees in developing their writing skills in English. Apart from the above, the teaching efficiency of the teacher depends upon, the various factors such as method, in which she/he is teaching, the use of teaching learning materials by which the interest of the children is kindled towards competency, the teacher’s readiness to act as a friend, guide, facilitator, manager, director and an advisor to the students in this process and also how she/he has enhanced his/her learning skill through out the teaching profession.

1.10 Objectives of the study

1. To find out whether there is any significant difference between the pre-test mean scores of control and experimental group in different kinds of writing.

2. To find out whether there is any significant difference between the post-test mean scores of control and experimental group in different kinds of writing.

3. To find out whether there is any significant difference between the pre-test mean scores of control and
experimental group in different kinds of writing with regard to gender.

4. To find out whether there is any significant difference between the post-test mean scores of control and experimental group in different kinds of writing with regard to gender.

5. To find out whether there is any significant difference between the pre-test mean scores of control and experimental group in different kinds of writing with regard to subjects studied at the higher secondary level.

6. To find out whether there is any significant difference between the post-test mean scores of control and experimental group in different kinds of writing with regard to subjects studied at the higher secondary level.

7. To find out whether there is any significant difference between the pre-test mean scores of control and experimental group students in different kinds of writing with regard to the type of school studied at the higher secondary level.

8. To find out whether there is any significant difference between the post-test mean scores of control and experimental group students in different kinds of writing with regard to the type of school studied at the higher secondary level.
9. To find out whether there is any significant difference between the pre-test mean scores of control and experimental group students in different kinds of writing with regard to the locality of school studied at the higher secondary level.

10. To find out whether there is any significant difference between the post-test mean scores of control and experimental group students in different kinds of writing with regard to the locality of school studied at the higher secondary level.

11. To find out whether there is any significant difference between the pre-test mean scores of control and experimental group students in different kinds of writing with regard to the Parents' education.

12. To find out whether there is any significant difference between the post-test mean scores of control and experimental group students in different kinds of writing with regard to the Parents' education.

1.11 Hypotheses

1. There exists no significant difference between the pre-test mean scores of control and experimental group students in different kinds of writing.
2. There exists significant difference between the post-test mean scores of control and experimental group students in different kinds of writing.

3. There exists no significant difference between the pre-test mean scores of control and experimental group students in different kinds of writing with regard to gender.

4. There exists significant difference between the post-test mean scores of control and experimental group students in different kinds of writing with regard to gender.

5. There exists no significant difference between the pre-test mean scores of control and experimental group students in different kinds of writing with regard to the subject studied at the higher secondary level.

6. There exists significant difference between the post-test mean scores of control and experimental group students in different kinds of writing with regard to the subject studied at the higher secondary level.

7. There exists no significant difference between the pre-test mean scores of control and experimental group students in different kinds of writing with regard to the type of school studied at the higher secondary level.

8. There exists significant different between the post-test mean scores of control and experimental group students in
different kinds of writing with regard to the type of school studied at the higher secondary level.

9. There exists no significant difference between the pre-test mean scores of control and experimental group students in different kinds of writing with regard to the locality of school studied at the higher secondary level.

10. There exists significant difference between the post-test mean scores of control and experimental group students in different kinds of writing with regard to the locality of school studied at the higher secondary level.

11. There exists no significant difference between the pre-test mean scores of control and experimental group students in different kinds of writing with regard to the Parents' Education.

12. There exists significant difference between the post-test mean scores of control and experimental group students in different kinds of writing with regard to the Parents' Education.

1.12 Assumptions of the study

1. Task based communicative activities can be framed to develop writing skills in English.

2. Teaching through Task based Communicative activities is more effective than traditional method of teaching English to develop writing skill.
3. Teaching the skills of writing though task based communicative activities enable the learners to learn the writing skills with interest and ease.

4. Teaching the skills of writing by using task based communicative activities caters to the needs of all kinds of learners at their own speed. It narrows down the gap among them.

1.13 Scope of the study

Introduction of English at the school level aims to develop the communicative competence of the learners both in spoken and written aspects of the language. To achieve this end the teachers should be trained in such a way to adopt various pedagogical interventions and techniques to meet the communicative needs of the learners.

Most of the students leave the school with poor writing skills. This is because of the teachers who do not pay enough attention to the skills and abilities of writing. The planned teaching on the part of the teachers using innovative teaching methodology becomes very essential. It is against this context, the present study aims at the development of task based communicative activities in developing the writing skill of the teacher trainees who are the future teachers in this society.

In order to develop the writing skill of the teacher trainees, the researcher has developed different task based communicative activities. The research has designed tasks
for the competencies which develop the skill of writing among the teacher trainees.

The tasks based communicative activities have been framed in order to understand the components of different types of writings. These tasks call for effective training because real-life writing is purpose-driven and it involves highly complex set of processes.

The main focus of the study is to measure the effectiveness and advantages of task based communicative activities in developing the writing skill of the teacher trainees in English. For this, the trainees in the District Institute of Education and Training (DIET), Theroor are selected for the study. The investigator feels that the task based communicative activities will be more effective in developing the writing skills because the teacher trainees are unable to communicate better in different situations. So the investigator made an attempt to use task based communicative activities in developing the writing skills of the teacher trainees. Further this attempt is an innovative method which was not tried so far at the secondary grade Teacher Education Level. Hence this research study becomes a new and challenging one to use the task based communicative activities to develop the writing skills of the teacher trainees for their better performance in written communication. One group is considered to be the control group and the other experimental group by the flop of a coin. The teacher trainees are divided into two groups
based on the achievement test marks specially conducted for this purpose. These two groups are matched on the basis of their previous achievement in writing tested through pre-test, developed for the purpose. The control group is given the treatment of traditional method of teaching writing and the experimental group is given a method of teaching writing by task based communicative activities. Out of hundred students, fifty students constituted experimental group and the rest formed the control group. The two groups are matched on their performance in writing skill with the help of pre-test and post-test. The study aims to measure the extent to which task based communicative activities enable the learners to achieve mastery level in writing in English. It also aims to find out the significant difference in the achievement of the trainees, in terms of gender, subjects studied in higher secondary course, the type of school studied in higher secondary course, the locality of the school studied in higher secondary course, and the level of parental education when they are taught through the traditional methods of teaching writing and by using task based communicative activities.

1.13 Limitations of the study

The Limitations of the study are as follows:

This study is confined to the teacher trainees in the District Institute of Education and Training (DIET), Theroor in Kanyakumari District.
The sample consists of hundred students (50 control group and 50 experimental group)

For developing writing skill of the trainees, five different kinds of writing such as Narrative, Expository, Argumentative, Descriptive and Reflective and their components, Communicative quality, organization, relevance, Linguistic accuracy and linguistic appropriacy are tested in the study.

The task based communicative activities are designed to develop the five different kinds of writing and their components.

The experiment was conducted for a period of fifty working days (2 hours a day).

The achievement tests used in this study to assess the writing skills of the teacher trainees are teacher made ones and not standardized ones.

1.14 Conceptual Frame work of the Study

The present study consists of five chapters. The first chapter gives the introduction and the overview of all the chapters. It tells the need and the pedagogical importance of the present study. The second chapter presents the review of related studies, done in abroad and in India. The third chapter deals with the methodology of the study by giving the detailed account of the sample of the study, the method of various task based interventions given to the
experimental and the control group students. The fourth chapter consists of the result analysis of the study and the last chapter gives the conclusion with new stimulus to develop the writing skills of the D.T.Ed Students.

The review of related literature is presented in the succeeding chapter.