5.1 Introduction
In spite of all the claims made that literacy in English language in the 12st century is losing its significance, especially the writing ability, learning to write in English, be it in mother tongue, ESL or EFL continues to be the crucial aspect of learning. However, the purpose of learning to write may differ. To consider only English as a first language, at one extreme learning to write means acquiring an aspect of minimal literacy; the ability to write something, even if it is a short shopping list. Attitude towards learning to write covers a comparable span. Having the ability to write is regarded as the skill which is the foundation to further professional or academic education.

Learning to write is often considered as any other skill like walking swimming or riding a bike. But it is important to note that there are some skills that are common to the species for example walking, but other skills like swimming or riding a bike is culture and need specific. There are many cultures, in which swimming is not an essential skill to learn like in the central part of India, that has limited water bodies and a big population does not know swimming. Similarly, in Oman’s culture not many people know or they actually ride bikes; especially women because riding bike is not much essential and popular in this culture. So is writing not everyone needs to write or want to write in English.

It is commonly assumed that learning to write in this sense is fairly easy, something that should be got out of the way fairly early in the educational process. Yet it is obvious that more or less perpetual outcry at the writing abilities of the students who have completed their education or have completed a lower level than at which one happens to teach, that some students somehow have still not learned to write, even as late as the end of their elementary education, or their secondary education, or even their post-secondary or post-graduate education.

In learning English as a second language or a foreign-language the difficulties involved in learning to write are compounded; for to all the difficulties in learning to write in one’s own language at a level beyond that of minimal literacy are added to all the further complexities inherent in trying to master a second or a foreign language. It no longer confines having an expertise in the usage of various mediums and be able to cope with special exigencies, it further becomes important to be able to express appropriately and effectively in a different language and in a way, be added when learning to write in English becomes learning to write in English as a second or a foreign language that conceivably it will never be possible to devise a complete taxonomy even for descriptive purpose.

Writing cannot be treated like other skills because of its own distinct characteristics. Its distinct characteristics makes the problems related to it, unique and demands specific attention, strategies, methods and approaches both on part of teachers and students. This study will try to explore the characteristics of writing first that makes it different form the other productive skill; speaking.

5.2 Characteristics of Written Language
Brown (2001) lists out some of the characteristics of writing as a productive skill and discusses some impacts that it may have on students. It also briefly suggests some ways to overcome those issues.

5.2.1 Permanence
Often people say that writing is merely a written form of spoken information so the approach to teach or learn it is similar to speaking. But it is not true because once information is put in written form and delivered to its audience then the writer loses control over it. The writer can no more edit it, clarify it or withdraw any on the information; it is ‘permanent’. This perhaps the scariest factor that refrain people from writing. However, this inhibition of students can be dealt by giving them enough guidance feedback and opportunity to improve before students make final submissions. In other words, multiple draft writing can give students confidence in writing.

5.2.2  **Time of production**
Writing is also different productive skill than speaking from the point of production time. While in speaking, speakers may produce instant and spontaneous ideas, writing comes is a benefit of time in hand. Learners can go back and forth writing ideas and making changes for clarity, accuracy and effectiveness which may make them better writers. This characteristic of writing is good when the writing task is not time bound but it can be scary and daunting when it is to be done in time limits for example; writing 250 words essay in 60 minutes in an IELTS exam.

5.2.3  **Distance**
When people express ideas, feelings, information or present argument through speaking they have an opportunity to clarify, explain and articulate language to make audience get the information as it is intended to be. However, in writing there is a distance between writer and its readers, Writer doesn’t not have an opportunity to go with each copy of the written pieces to help readers interpret the information that is intended. This complication makes hard for the writer to choose words, phrases, sentences and style that could be comprehensible to the general or specific audience.

5.2.4  **Orthography**
Often teachers take writing ability of students for granted. But it is significant to note that writing could vary from simple greeting or a shopping list to complex ideas through manipulation of letters and symbols. It is necessary to understand that language have different phonemes-grapheme system. For example, the difference in Chinese writing which is more pictographic and English which is alphabetical. The difference could be even in the direction of writing like; English written from left to right whereas Arabic goes from right to left.

5.2.5.  **Complexity, Vocabulary and formality**
Communicating through writing has another characteristic too. It is complex skill that need the skill of identifying redundant and confusing ideas and removing them, identifying run on sentences, merging sentences, using cohesive devices for coherence, using appropriate and accurate vocabulary and maintaining formality of the text to match conventions of the target language.

5.3  **Research in second language writing**
There has not been much done and researched in teaching to write as compared to teaching to listen, read and speak. As discussed in the previous literature review chapters, right from early Grammar-Translation method to recent Communicative Language Teaching approaches, not much has been discussed about teaching writing skills. Since the emergence of CLT momentum in 1980s, teachers got more informed about the ways to teach fluency, use of authentic texts and contexts in ESL classrooms, factors involved in learning, the was to
capitalize on motives to learn etc. (Brown, 2001). All these principles were applied to teaching writing but yet there have been several issues that are left in limbo and teachers are to depend on their experience and expertise to find their own ways to teach it.

However, it would be an exaggeration to say that there is no help to teaching writing at all. This study will try to consolidate the popular work by eminent researchers like Silva and Kaplan to name a few. At this stage, it is important to see the confusions that at linked to second language writing in general.

5.3.1 Composition Vs Writing

There have been differences of opinion on the view towards writing. While some view writing as only a graphic representation or spoken discourse, others believe that it entails entirely different set of competencies that are very different from speaking. Brown (2001) explains writing as a nature of composing process that involves thinking, planning, drafting and editing which need specialised and ESL learners do not develop or acquire it naturally. Factors like use of cohesive devices, metacognitive knowledge of English, writing strategies and understanding of native English written discourse greatly determine the success and effectiveness of written discourse.

5.3.2 History of ESL composition

Since 1945, Which marked the beginning of Modern era in second language teaching, ESL composition has witnessed a cycle of rise and fall of several approaches. Silva(1990) explains four major approaches of the modern era which are discussed briefly in the following sections.

5.3.2.1 Controlled composition

It is believed that controlled composition was based on the theories that saw language as a habit formation that had its roots in behaviourist psychology. In this view, composition was only a reinforcement of the oral production. This means that writing was done to emulate the structure and the patterns that were already learnt. This obviously made accuracy the focus on writing there were courses designed that encourages systematic habit formation in a controlled situation (Silva,1990). In this approach to writing the writer manipulates the language patters and the structures that were learned previously and the teacher was there to ensure that correctness was maintained throughout. There were several critics to this because this controlled the creativity of writers and defeats the purpose of writing was a mode of formal communication. Students in this system only imitated and never had a free had to express their original creative ideas.

5.3.2.2 Current Traditional rhetoric

In mid 1960s practitioners and linguists in ESL felt a greater need of teaching writing skills that was not limited to sentence level accuracy. Kaplan (1966) research brought in the theory that was bases on contrastive rhetoric theory according to which every language has different conventions and expectations that is guided by cultures. ESL writers write in their own native language conventions and this may not be acceptable and valued by native English users. Kaplan defined rhetoric as the way I which syntactic units are arranged into larger patterns. It also recommended more drills to make students understand English writing patterns and follow the same. The focus is on the organization of written discourse for instance arrangement of topic sentence followed by supporting sentences etc. This is usually done through modelling, it means sample writings are given for analysis of patterns or the reading with similar organizational patterns are provided (Silva 1990). This was criticised on
the grounds of reducing writing to mere arrangement of sentences. Yet there are many course books that still encourage this approach are well embraced by ESL teachers and student because it works like the guided outline or framework to work in. Oshima and Hogue writing books series is a good example of it.

5.3.2.3 EAP writing

Writing in an academic setup was the one that was acceptable by the academic institution. The primary focus is on ranges of genres and task that are suitable in a particular academic setup. The writer in this write to satisfy the academic community who has some well-developed schemata and decides the appropriateness of the writing. The text is written to match certain conventions and fall in certain genre of writing. Students may produce essays, reports, literature review or the thesis following certain format style and conventions to satisfy the academic community. A good example could be this thesis report which is written on the prescribed format guideline of the university.

5.4 Writing Theories

To understand the approaches that guide teaching writing, it is imperative to understand the theories that guide ‘writing’ or ‘composition’. Hyland (2002) describe them from three perspectives; texts, writers and readers. Text-oriented approach views writing as a product under the lenses of surface elements or the structure that the discourse carries. The second writer-oriented approach has a focus on the writer in terms of the process that the writer undertakes in composing the text. The last reader-oriented approaches focus on the reader’s aspect. It focuses on the ways that writer engages its audience through the writing. The following section of this chapter will consider the details that each writing theory perspective entails.

5.4.1 Text-oriented Approach

Text- Oriented Approach considered writing a text that was tangible and could be analysed objectively. In this theory, the human communication was made manageable and concrete by focusing on linguistics and rhetoric involved in writing. There were two broad approaches that compounded the Text-Oriented Approach.

5.4.1.1 Text: an autonomous object

For several decades, writing was considered as a product that was presented as a text and that had elements arranged coherently following the rules of the language. This was based on the structuralistic language theory and had its roots in Chomsky’s grammar-transformation methods. Some of the feature that this approach had were

- Writing is an object
- Text is an autonomous entity that is independent of writer, reader or the context.
- It is merely an arrangement of words, clauses and sentences that follow the grammar rules of the language.
- To understand the text, it was important to know the intricacies of the language. Here writer is an encoder and reader is a decoder
- There is no ambiguity in interpretations because both writers and readers conform to uniform practices.
- Accuracy and explicitness is the language is of prime importance.
- Writing is an extended version of grammar

This kind of approach to writing still holds its ground in many academic setups like business writing classes. The use of computer to check the corpora reflects text being
considered an autonomous object. In this view, the writing is measured based on clauses, passives, compound and complex sentences usage in the text. Hunt (1983) uses ‘T-units’ to measure ‘syntactic complexity’ in the text. Higher words and clauses per ‘T-units’ means higher level of writing.

This theory of writing has shortcoming that cannot be ignored. Writer in this view is reduced to mechanical arranger of words, clauses and sentences which needs awareness and knowledge of grammar and teachers be there to pick up the grammar and the syntactic errors mechanically. A person’s expression and ideas in the composition is less valued and is overshadowed by accuracy.

5.4.1.2 Text: a discourse

The discourse perspective to writing view it as a material that communicates with the readers and is beyond structures (Hayland, 2003). There are several approaches that see writing under the lenses of language patterns that the writer follows in order to keep the text coherent and purposeful. In the early days it was the Prague school attempted to look into the ways writers used clauses to convey what readers already knew or to tell readers something that was new (Firbas, 1986, as cited in Hyland, 2002).

Halliday (1994) further elaborated this perspective of Prague School and put forward the concept of ‘theme-rheme’ structure. Theme was the clause of the sentence that was mentions the subject that the writer talks about where as the ‘rheme’ was the part of the sentence that explained what was being told about the ‘theme (Hyland, 2002)’. In other words, the writer starts with an old information and based on that builds the context of new information. For instance;

While I was watching TV.
I heard some noise.
The noise was of some people fighting on the street.

The first sentence is important to understand the context of the whole event. This means the writer should be coherent in sentence arrangement to make the discourse comprehensible.

The second approach that considered text as a discourse viewed writing from rhetorical perspective. It examined the purpose of the text pieces and the way it was arranged in a bigger text or it could be said that the relation of clauses was more significant in it. The knowledge of writer and readers about familiar patterns made it easier for the reader to infer the connections between clauses, sentences and the group of sentences (Hyland, 2002). For example; if it was a text of cause and solution then the pattern would be

Situation-Causes -Effects –Evaluation

In these approaches, the assumptions and abilities of readers makes the writing discourse comprehensible.

5.4.2 Writer oriented approach

The second theory that the skills of writing is governed by is the one where writer is the focus. This perspective of writing views the process that a writer takes in composing a task, the more significant than the text that is produced as a product. This perspective give birth the popular ‘process’ approach. Hyland (2002) explains three aspects to this theory. The first is where the Writing is a personal expression, the second is when writing is a cognitive process and the third sees writing as a situated act. All the three aspects are briefly discussed below.

5.4.2.1 Personal expression
This theoretical view to writing composition was against the idea of viewing writing as a piece of text that was a systematic organization or words, clauses or sentences in a certain pattern. It considers writing a communication medium that gives writers an opportunity to express their fresh, original, and spontaneous idea without being told what to write and how to write (Elbow, 1998; Murray, 1985). Endorsers of this view believe that writing is a self-discovery and a developmental process which cannot be taught. It is a free expression which should not reflect pre-set rules to writing. So, in the writing classes teachers should refrain from doing things like; imposing views, giving models of writing, suggesting responses to writing. The role of teacher in this view should be to stimulate thinking of writers by providing opportunities to plan, write drafts in cooperative environment and have minimal interference (Elbow, 1998).

However, this view has some assumptions that are questionable. Not all learners have similar innate creativity or intellect to express themselves. The way not everyone can be a great orator, not everyone can become a fresh original writer. Yet this view is very much regarded in creative writing courses but in general do not have much applicability in a general ESL classroom.

5.4.2.2 Cognitive Process

Another view under the writer focused perspective to writing was based on the theories of cognitive psychology and considered writing as a problem-solving act (Hyland, 2002). There is a lot of research done in L2 writing on this basis. One of the eminent work done based on cognitive view to writing was by Flower and Hayes (1981). They believed that the environment in which writing is performed and the memory of writer is an influential factor in composing a text. They also pointed out the features involved in it:

- There are specific goals the writer intends to achieve through writing
- The writers plan extensively
- There is certain element to writing which includes firstly, identifying a problem in a context, then to explore the part of it to operate, after that is the stage of identifying the solution to the problem before reaching the final stage of putting all this into writing.
- Even before actually producing a final composition writer go through the stages of revision, review, and evaluation.
- Planning, writing drafts, revising drafts or editing is not one-time activity or stage, rather this is a recursive and takes place parallelly.
- There is regular evaluation of planning and texts via feedback and there is also a regular monitor (executive control)

This view of Flowers and Hayes (1981) had a more scientific-approach that encouraged teachers to understand that writing involves a number of mental activities taking place. It also highlighted the fact that every individual is different so the stages that they may go through would also differ. Unlike the expressionist view to writing this model of flower and Hayes proposed model to novice writers that would provide them with a shorter version of expert writer. It was believed that this framework and support from teacher would facilitate better and greater writing.

Nevertheless, cognitive model like this were under scrutiny on the basis of the foundation of the methods. According to Hyland (2002), these cognitive models had heavy reliance on think-aloud protocol and there was lack of evidences to real involvement of cognitive activities. Similar criticism from others who argue that there is no evidence to fully worked out theories in such cognitive models and they fail to explain and generate any behaviour in writing and hence do not give any strategies to teachers that may help them teach writing to their students (Scardamalia & Bereiter, 1986; Bizzel, 1992).
Not very convince with the cognitive model of Flower and Hayes, Scardamalia and Bereiter (1986) believed that writer differ in their writing practices and provided deeper psychological insight into it. The two models to it were ‘a knowledge telling mode’ and ‘a knowledge transforming model’. While, the first model focuses the the issue that novice writers do less planning and revision than the expert writers because they are more concerned about their objective to tell what they know about the topic, he genre or the task given as assignment, relying on their memory, the latter concerns the ways expert writers analyse a problem and set goal in a writing task.

Although these cognitive models of teaching writing have their existence in modern ESL/EFL classes especially at higher level education set-up but there is little evidence that proves that these models make ‘good writer’. Yet one thing good that these models have got in second language classrooms is the fact that writing is not limited to a finished product.

5.4.2.3 Writing: a Situated act

Different from the cognitive view to writing, this writer orientated view emphasizes on the actual performance of writing in an environment. This view to writing sees writing as a social act performed in a situation which is specific(Hyland,2002). In other words, the writing is influenced by factors like individual’s attitude towards writing, the social experience that the writer has. The writing is also influenced by the political and the institutional context. Prior (1998) mentions that writing is not an isolated activity, it is largely influenced by the information from the reading, observation, acts talks, thinking and feeling around (cited in Hyland,2002).

Hence, it is important that the teaching and writing research should take all these factors in account. Ye, this theory that is more focused on the writers and does not concern reader for who the whole writing is actually done for.

5.4.3 Writing: Reader-oriented

The final theory that surrounds writing is from the reader’s perspective. According to this view the writers choose their words, structures and style to address the requirements and expectation of their readers. To put it in simple words, ‘writer write for readers’. This view has foundation is the language theories that see interpersonal functions of language where writer is the encoder and reader is a decoder. Hyland (2002), discusses it in the light of social interaction, construction and as a power and ideology.

5.4.3.1 Social interaction
Writing is a communicative act through which writer addresses presents understanding which satisfies the needs and interests of potential audiences. A writer shapes a discourse assuming the expectations of readers. Readers on the other hand predict the purpose of writer’s text(Nystrand,1989). In other words, writers are the ones who understand the reader’s knowledge about the format, content interest and styles. The writer has an awareness of it potential audience because of his exposure and experience on a particular society.

Acknowledging this aspect of writing is crucial in second language teaching because there are differences in the ways that language societies organize their ideas in writing and this variation has been studied by many like Connor and Kaplan in the writing features of second language writing; ‘Contrastive rhetoric’. The ways ideas may be organized and presented in Hindi or Arabic would be very different from English. A person with these languages as their first language may transfer the same style of writing to English context and may fail to make a desired impact on native English readers.

Hence the social interactionist view keep writer- reader relationship central to writing. It takes writing beyond the text as a product that includes organization of words, clauses and
sentences. It also goes above the facts of the whole process involved in writing. A writing may have accuracy in terms of grammar and organization but if it fails to interact with its audience then it is not a good writing.

5.4.3.2 Writing: Social Construction

This theory to writing is rooted in sociological philosophy in which people operate in the way that is collectively accepted in a society. This perspective to writing writer in neither a person creating ideas as an expression through a process nor is the one interacting with the audience rather writer is a member of a community. Writing is a social act and it can be understood only by understanding the community practices. A writing conveys a meaning and establishes it existences in a community only when is exhibits the patterns and conventions that at agreed in that community (Hyland, 2002). For instance; if there is a lab report written for chemistry then it should be conforming to the style of it or say a reflective writing written in an academic setup in the western education system may reflect the reflective cycle of Kolb’s or Gibbs because they are the one that are commonly agreed in a western academic community.

Another way to explain it writers make their writing legitimate and accepted in a community by positioning themselves and their ideas conforming the agreed style of that community. Porter (1992) defines this constructionist theory and goes to say that this theory has a focus on the textual nature or the style of a community. These communities have set conventions, mechanisms, a power and a hierarchy with some vested interest. Swales (1990) call it ‘genre’ which is actually a set of socio-rhetoric characters set by a community to accomplish specific goals.

This idea of writing has a wide spread influence on academic writing. English for Academic Purpose and English for Specific Purpose in the Western Academic set-ups is a good example of it. University agree on certain pattern that student would be using in their writing. For example; the way a argumentative essay would be structures or the way a lab report would be written in agreed by the academic community. There is a strict framework where students perform their writing and there is also a framework on which reader, in this case the academic gauge writing as good or bad. John (1997) in the socio-literate view that literacy in writing can be acquired by have maximum exposure to discourses from different social context which would enable development of theories of genre. People would will be able to produce text in those genres will be members of that academic community.

However, the current ESP and EAP writing does acknowledge that the writing that is produced by student is under the influence of their prior discourse experience rather than their explicit understanding of rules. The danger of this view to writing is a set convention may become dominant and compliance to it would bring social prestige. In ESL context, there could be threat that students may be at a risk of questioning their L1 literacy and would be in the stress of rectifying all that comes with their experience in writing. It would be like killing all creativeness.

5.4.3.3 Writing: Power and Ideology

The final reader oriented theory to writing emphasizes that the environment of the society, culture and institution is influencing factor defining writing. Researcher working under Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) have attempted to study relationship between discourse and social groups. The research shows the way people write is influenced by the factors like; values, interests, socio-historical and political power governing institutions (Hyland, 2002). Wodak (1996, cited in Hyland, 2002) mentions that this view of writing has some basic principles.
• The emphasis of this view is on the social problems in addition to the language.
• There is a relation between power and discourse
• Langue in the discourse represents society and culture and the changes in it.
• The purpose of the discourse is to represent ideologies of a society.
• It is important to see the relationship of history and discourse
• Discourse can be analysed and explained in the light of systematic methods followed in a society
• Critical Discourse Analysis is committed to the social patterns because writing is a social act.

Hence, this view of writing encourages teachers to make learners aware and writing in relation to groups and context write to unpack the community needs.

5.5 Why learning to write is more challenging than other productive skills of language?

Writing activity is usually an ordeal and is avoided by the learners whenever possible. But the question arises that why it is such an ordeal and what are the actual difficulties in it?

People who produce equally good writing are judged to be equally skilful, despite the fact that what some do with ease and fineness other do laboriously and haltingly. Similarly, those who produce bad writing are all judged to be lacking in skill, even though they display the same vast range of differences in facility. In a current euphemism people who produce bad writing are called ‘novice’, even if they have been writing for years. The confusion is understandable in teachers who have over-riding concerns with quality, but for psychologists setting out to understand writing it seemed important to recognize that skill can take different forms.

As people learn a language, it is often more convenient to express ideas orally but struggle is when they want to express the same idea in a written form. This section will try to figure out how and why writing as a productive skill is more challenging than the spoken language for ESL students in particular.

ESL students in a formal education system have certain constraints which could be different from others who learn English as a second language in an informal setup. Students learning English formally at institutions have a considerable amount of writing to do. However, this writing may not be the one that is done in their own native language and may be less valued by English academics. This difference leaves ESL students confused and disoriented particularly the ones who are mature and have a set on conventions which may be entirely different form their first language (Kutz, Groden & Zamel, 1993, p. 30).

Another challenge that ESL students may encounter is the structure; the one that might be used in their own native language may be different from English. For example; the style in which a summary may be written in Arabic may be very different from English which could be termed as the contrastive rhetoric (Connor, 1997; Kaplan, 1987). There could also be other challenges like, limited knowledge of genres in the second language, familiarity of topics etc.

Looking at the complexities in learning to write in ESL and EFL it is crucial that Language teachers have an understanding of different theories, methods and approaches in language teaching. Nagel (1961) says that a good theory tries to put forward the factors concerning language teaching and the relationship between the factors. It also provides well-researched direction to teach and enquire further (cited in Stern, 1983). Endorsing this fact, it is crucial to know the theories, approaches and methods that compound effective English Language
Learning. However, prior to the understanding of approaches or methods of teaching EFL learners there has to be a clear comprehension of the difference between English as a foreign and second language. This chapter will look into the conceptual difference between EFL and ESL. Then it will try to explore various challenges that are encountered in teaching EFL learners with special regards to teaching writing skills. In addition, there will be further study of various traditional and contemporary approaches that are prevalent in teaching writing to EFL learners.

5.6 Challenges in EFL Teaching

Chapter two has discussed the various methodologies and approaches of teaching language. It has also discussed various approaches of teaching writing. But teaching writing in L2 (ESL/EFL) is relatively new. The act and process of writing in a non-native language is very different from writing in one’s own language in a language. Chaudron (1998) states that average L2 learners are sparingly able to involve themselves in a target language environment naturally and extensively. This is due to the fact that they live in another country or are isolated socially or economically from the full participation with L2 speakers. Hence the potential value of instructional access to the L2 increases by default. In other word teachers teaching EFL or ESL students bear a greater responsibility because the dependence of the learners on them for learning the target language is more. Kroll (1990) also holds a similar opinion and says that teacher involved in teaching ESL should consider the fact that ESL learners' face dual challenge in getting an expertise in writing. One is from the nature of the new target language and the other is the distraction from the mature mother-tongue.

5.7 Writing as the most challenging skill to Teach

The complexity to become a writing teacher is the same as having an expertise in writing and is an ongoing process (Kroll, 1990). This complexity escalates in an adult English Foreign Language (EFL) Learner’s classroom. Teaching to write to ESL learners in tertiary education setup has been one of the issues for a long time (Belcher & Braine, 1995). EFL or ESL learners, who aspire to enrol in professional courses or academic course at tertiary level, where the medium of instructions is English, often find difficult to meet the expectations of the course. However, this situation can be handled well and the students can develop their skills in writing if the teachers have a good insight of the problems that ESL learners face and positive attitude towards the errors on learner’s part (Grabe & Kaplan, 1996; Zamel, 1983).

Nevertheless, writing has not received much attention as compared to other three macro skills i.e.; listening, reading, speaking. Krashen claimed that “studies of second language writing are sadly lacking” (1984, pg. 41). This does not imply that writing skill can be ignored in any academic setup. Writing has always been and will continue to be an important skill of language learning is both native and non-native language learning and thus need attention. In fact, quality writing is the substantial evidence of the language proficiency of the learner.

Watkins (2004) identifies some merits and demerits of teaching writing skills and some important reasons that makes learning to write crucial. This can be listed as:

1. It is imperative to learn to write because it is a mode of communication.
2. Secondly, it is a tool for consolidation of language learnt. In terms of aspect like grammar and vocabulary
3. It is a simple way to apply and practice the language beyond classroom setup
4. It is a tool to achieve the professional goal of documented business.
5. Often assessments are through the medium of writing
Brookes and Grundy (1998, pp.3-4) also list out several reasons to make learning to write crucial aspect of language learning outside the classroom. Writing is a skill that can surpass time because ideates and information can be left for later time through messages and notes. Besides it is an effective tool to record voluminous data and information which is otherwise beyond the capacity of brains. Moreover, writing enables dual process of writing and composing at the same time. The outcome of writing is significant because the skills required for writing is not the same as speaking. Writing is a result or the product of brainstorming, pre-drafting, writing, re-drafting, reviewing and revising which is recursive and parallel (Brown, 2002).

5.8 Types of Classroom Writing

It is well established that writing in ESL is imperative but challenging. At this stage, it is also important to understand different types of writing that may occur in an ESL classroom. Brown (2002) points out five categories of writing performance in classroom which could be put under the headings of imitative, controlled, self, display and real. All these forms of writing have different aims are carried out in their own ways.

5.8.1 Imitative

The first one is Imitative which is usually done at the lower levels of learning stage. Learners often imitate writing letter, words or sentences to familiarize with the orthographic codes. There are some dictations involve some dictation too. Dictation may have steps:

- Short paragraphs may be read out at a normal by teachers once or twice.
- Teachers may divide the paragraph in short phrases or units and read them in breaks with some pauses.
- Students write down the phrases or the units phrases that they heard during the pause.
- After the paragraph is read in short units, the second round takes place when teacher reads the full paragraph at a normal speed for students to check what they could follow and write.
- Teachers use some rubrics to score the writing of students. Often punctuations and spelling are taken easy but grammar is of focus.

5.8.2 Controlled Writing

Brown (2002) mentions that this writing is often reinforcement of some grammar concepts that have been previously learnt and so there is very limited scope to creativity. This intense writing could be done in three different ways; controlled, guided and dicto-comp. Controlled writing may include task in which students have to change structure that have been already learnt for instance; all the present tense verbs in a paragraph has to be changes in past tense.

The other intense writing could be guided. It means students still do not have creative option but it is not like the one in controlled form either. Teachers use some kid of simulator to guide writing. For example; pictures of a story line are shown or a video is shown then the teachers ask some questions like where is the even happening, who are the character, what were they doing etc. This gives students an opportunity to write in a guided fashion but they have some amount of liberty to choose structure and lexis.

Dicto-comp has a different approach to writing, teacher in this may read a paragraph at a usual speed twice or thrice, then put some key words of the event on the board for students to recall the sequence of events. Students use these key words to rewrite the who paragraph.
5.8.3 Self Writing

One more way of class writing is the self-writing which students do for themselves mainly. Sometimes they may do it for one person. Note-taking from the lecture or a reading could be a good example of it. Students may take notes while listening to a lecture or make notes while reading an article. These notes are for themselves to comprehend information. Journals could be another example of it which students write for a teacher in which they record their emotion, feeling and events.

5.8.4 Display Writing

Display as the word suggest is the writing that is done to display once comprehension in the form of answering questions in an exam, writing essay on a topic given to display the knowledge of lexis related to it and paragraph convention, or a report that a student may write it to display their grammar knowledge, understanding of paragraph organization, understanding of text etc.

5.8.5 The Real Writing

There is also some real writing that takes place in ESL classrooms. Especially in an academic set-up. Students write an assignment to communicate their comprehension or write a survey report but this is not communication alone as students also display their language ability through it. Some of the example or real writing that could be seen in real environment are:

- Academic writing: In Academic ESL classes, there is some real writing that can be seen. For instance, students do a content—bases task or researching causes of air pollution and some solutions to it. There would be real exchange of ideas between students or student and teachers which takes the form of writing in which information is the focus but language is to be taken care of too. EAP and ESP class tasks are an example to it.
- Vocational or technical writing: This writing takes place when students are learning English as their second language for occupational purpose. Real letters and reports could be part of task in these classrooms for example English in technical courses where ESL students learn to write an incident report.
- Personal Writing: in interactive classroom, often students write letter, postcards, diaries for buddies or for instructors as a task which would be genuine. (Brown, 2002, p. 343-346)

The variety of tasks that are possible done in ESL and EFL classrooms are done in the light of certain researched approaches or the methods in writing. Second language learning (L2) writing, provides and wide range of approaches and methods that can be prudently applied in the EFL and ESL classrooms to address to the needs of the adult EFL Learners. So, at this point it becomes vital to comprehend the salient features that different approaches that are based on various theories of writing.

5.9 Methods and Approaches in Teaching ESL/EFL Writing

Since the dawn of the 20th century there have been consensus on the fact that on one hand spoken language is a phenomenon that is a natural process whereas ability to write in the given language comes through instructions that are explicit in nature. The invention of written form of language was primarily done to represent verbal expression through symbols and most of the children would not be able to learn this skill unless they were taught explicitly with rigorous practise. Most of the children writing was not possible (Peregoy and Boyle, 1997, p. 2). Academic success is often determined by the effectiveness of spoken and
written language. According to Silva (1990) the methods and approaches to teach writing to second language or L2 learners can be attributed to the theories that evolved in the United States on mid-nineties. There were several theories that gained momentum in a particular era and faded with criticisms but never died. The historical background of methods and approaches of teaching language gives an insight into present day pedagogies, trends and finds direction for future growth. Having a similar view Silva (1990) presented a coherent model that illustrated the relation between the theories and the practices prevalent in second language writing.

L2 writing instruction practice
L2 writing instruction theory
(approach)
L2 writing theory
Research on the nature of L2 writing
Research on L2 writing instruction

Hence to be effective teachers of ESL/EFL writing, it is vital to understand well researched theories and the approaches involved in L2 writing L2 writing. However, irrespective of the approach or the theory one thing that remains constant or inevitable in writing is the:

**Context**

Reader
Text
Writer

Ongoing innovation and creation researchers, theorist and teachers involved in teaching ESL/EFL writing have been proposing viable and realistic approaches to ensure that ESL/EFL writing remains credible and fuels success. There are various traditional and contemporary approaches worth considering. Based on the composition theory Johns (1990) proposed the three approaches; process approach, the interactive views, and the social constructionist views. While Silva (1990) discusses four influential approaches in second language composition i.e. "controlled composition, current –traditional rhetoric, the process
approach and English for academic purposes.” Similarly, Hyland (2002) classifies the writing approaches which are text, reader and writer oriented.

Nevertheless, all the approaches have its roots embedded in one or the other language teaching theory. Though there is no rigid division that regulates the various approaches but yet for the sake of convenience and on the chronological order of the historical development, the approaches the can be broadly classified into product, process, genre and a contemporary examination focused sample approach.

5.9.1 Product Approach

In the product approach writing was kept gauged through the lenses textual product. The rules of structuring information and coherence were of high importance (Hyland, 2002). In other words, in this approach writing objective was to produce a composition that focused on imitation of language structures guided by teachers. Hence it was a controlled writing done to demonstrate accuracy in producing a learnt grammar structures. This is more teacher oriented approach and s also called controlled composition or the guided composition and current – traditional rhetoric of 1960’s. The approach had its origin in theory established by Charles Fries and was the forerunning theory of A-L approach of language learning.

Undergirding controlled composition or the product approach is the notion linked with structuralism theory of language learning too that considers texts as autonomous objects which can be analysed and is governed by a set target structure. These set are texts in which words, clauses and sentences are arranged in a logical manner. (Silva, 1990; Hyland 2002; Kaplan, 1970). Pincas (1964) believed that in ESL/EFL writing the primary focus should be on the formal accuracy and correctness. This can be done through control and a habit formation. The attention has to be paid on errors that can happen due to the influence of L1. Similarly, Silva (1990) states that product approach focuses on the micro level sentence arrangement. Texts are seen under the light of the elements that constitutes a paragraph. For instance; the arrangement of topic sentence, supporting ideas followed by concluding statement. Incorporation of discourse markers or the transitional signals was also kept on priority. Further the arrangement of paragraphs was under the set rules of the purpose of the text as to whether the text is narrative, descriptive or comparative etc.

This approach to teach writing to ESL learners is still in practice but there has been criticism of it too. Researchers and practitioners like Erazmus (1960), Briera (1966) and Rivers (1968) disapproved the approach mainly on two features of it. Primarily it was under criticism because in this approach writing was viewed as a stand-alone product by the teachers. Moreover, there was excess stress on the organization of words, grammar, sentence organization, and paragraph organization. This reduced the text to a collection of sentences put in correct order following the rule of grammar and vocabulary learnt. This made learners or writers manipulators and imitators of rules learnt and made teachers editors and proof readers who were there to check that grammar and organization of sentence and paragraphs. In short, the approach was a mechanical way of writing with limited scope of critical thinking and creativity on writer’s part.

5.9.2 Process Approach

A decade or two ago practitioners and the researchers of writing to native speakers of English started exploring the processes that was involved in producing a written discourse. Researchers found that writing involve an intricate process which had many sub processes included. The process of writing did not appear in a set pattern rather it was at cycle of patterns. This process was also varied on the language proficiency level of the writers. Expert
writer went through a different process of writing than the non-expert writer but all the writers did go through a process of writing.

The writing teachers who were discontented by the popular product-approach of teaching writing thought that process-approach has a bright side. They believed that keeping it was better to support students in the process of writing than to remain at the other end and be there to only point grammar and structural errors in learner’s texts. This would be more beneficial in identifying the underlying issues of the learners and help them overcome the challenges encountered thus help learners become independent and effective writers (Murray, 1980).

Murray (1980) who was known professional and a writing teacher reported the process of writing which was the reflection of his personal experience of writing. His writing involved a series of drafts that he worked through back and forth to finally reach a stage to say what he wanted. Based on personal experience of writing he came with the “process approach” of writing. This approach attempted to shift teacher’s focus from the product (vocabulary, grammar and sentence sequencing) to the actual process that a writer goes through. However, this approach with not have any clear pedagogical method or directives that could guide teacher’s role in teaching through this approach. In addition, often in teaching writing to ESL learners the teachers tried to address the exam needs of their learner. In other words, the learners were taught writing in a way that they could satisfy the pre-requisites of the assessments where learners had to demonstrate their ability to write.

However, the period of early seventies, the curriculum was guided by ‘communicative teaching approach’ with the use of functional-notional syllabus. This took away teachers focus from accuracy in the language and now language was viewed more as a vehicle to communicate. It was identified that every learner’s need and purpose of learning a second language was different and they had different ways to acquire it. Learner’s language needs were also seen in term of the language item needed and the setup or scenario in which it was to be applied. In the same period where the grammar-translation method was fading and practitioners were embracing communicative-approach, process approach to teach writing was born.

This was the perfect timing as the whole language teaching’s focus had moved to communicative ability. So, there was not good reason to focus too much on the accuracy in writing either thus there was embracement of the process-approach in writing. Teachers in this approach could be facilitators and make students go through a process of critically
thinking writing, planning, drafting and editing. This took away the control that the writers were in when followed a process approach and made them more confident and independent writers.

Though the process approach appeared as the perfect approach to teach writing in a second language learning scenario but this too was debatable like other approaches. Nevertheless, this time the criticism was more about the implementation of the approach in the classroom. It was argued that this approach required a great amount of input from both teachers and the learners. In addition, every individual is different and take a different pace and process to write which can be disruptive in a formal classroom setup. The second criticism was the practicality about the writing process in classroom practice versus writing in exam. Students sitting a language exam are time pressed with on single final writing which contradicts the process writing approach where students have an opportunity to have their own pace of writing process with several drafts (Horowitz, 1986). Thus, this process approach is seen less feasible in ESL classrooms and formal exam oriented organizational setup. But it has been well received in teaching writing in native language.

ESL classroom have been in the search of more pragmatic approaches to teach writing and genre-approach has given some support. Motivated by the dissatisfaction of product based approach there were many practitioners who advocated Process-based approach in teaching ESL/EFL writing. In this approach, writing was considered “an art, a creative act in which the process- the self-discovered and expressed”(Berlin, 1998). In the approach to teach writing the emphasis was not on the linguistic know-how that needed accuracy in grammar rules and organization of sentences, rather it was to support the process of writing which went through brainstorming ideas planning, drafting, and editing. The teachers and learners focused content. That included ideas being discussed(Badger & White, 2000). Similarly,Hyland (2002) sees it as a “problem –solving” activity borrowing the techniques of theories of cognitive psychology. He also considers writing being a complex process that is not limited to one straight draft of writing. Writing a long process in which writer logical generates ideas, writes multiple drafts and in the process often takes inputs from teachers and peers, goes through the writing back and forth to make more sense and do the editing before being able to produce the final piece of writing. (Flower, 1989; Flower & Hayes, 1981; Zamel,1983).

Unlike the product approach in the process approach, writer is pivotal and is engaged to find out ways to express ideas, meaning and forms to readers which are meaningful (Silva,
That implies that the text is of a secondary concern. In the process approach to teach writing to ESL/EFL learners are introduced to the techniques and strategies that helps the students discover their topics and get engaged in it. It is followed by brainstorming and discussion then the planning of the work which is the part of pre-writing. Learners are expected to have a draft or multiple drafts before turning in their finished product or composition. Writing is unfold gradually, usually starting with the first stage when learners discuss the topic of writing and have inputs from teachers and peers to have a deeper understanding of the topic which can be coined and the “brainstorming stage” or the pre-writing stage. Followed by planning and writing where more focus is on the idea that is to be conveyed through the compositions. It is the first draft stage. Next is the second (or more) drafts are to tweak the language structure to give more clarity to ideas. This could be coined as the editing stage. ‘Writing is a creative process, is non-linear, and recursive which is done similarly by the native language and the second language writers (Silva, 1990).

Teacher’s role also is very different in when adapting this approach. The classroom becomes student centred and the teacher is a facilitator where teachers facilitate and support student to learn to write and do not actually teach how and what to write. Teacher’s input is usually seen as less important because the ideas are to be drawn from students. This all makes the process of writing focused on students.

The following illustration can well explain the complex process involved in writing.

PREWRITING

COMPOSING/DRAFTING

REVISING

EDITING

PUBLISHING
In this approach, as can be seen in the illustration, writing is recursive or cyclic. The multiple drafts are on the feedback from the readers which in a classroom scenario is from the teachers or sometimes peers. Feedback thus is crucial in the approach that keeps the cycle active. As mentioned by Keh (1990), reader’s feedback the factor that drives a writer into the process of writing several draft before a final composition. Reid (1992) also point out the importance of feedback form peers and believes that peers can be the real authentic audience who can engage writers in the process of drafting and re-drafting. Feedback can also can take place in conferences where readers may give feedback to writers or teachers may give feedback to their students which enables writers to revisit and improve writing to have clarity and better way to negotiate meaning which satisfies the real purpose of writing; communication (Shin, 2003). Writer values more of the feedback coming from teachers or readers than being corrected on their accuracy at micro-level (Muncie, 2000).

Teachers teaching writing in ESL setups found great benefits of the process approach but it did have some concerns. Opponents criticised it mainly to the fact that it did not prepare students for any academic exams which is an important characteristic of formal educational setup. Horowitz (1986) views that the approach creates an environment that does not reflect the real situation in which students would have to perform writing. In other words, the way students plan, draft, edit and re-draft in classroom writing activity and the support that they get may be very different in an exam situation which would usually be time pressed with not support.

It also over emphasizes the individual psychological functioning and neglects the sociocultural context that is the realities of academia.” Besides process approach involves a monotonous process without any consideration of the people who the composition is being written for or say the target audience is ignored in this approach.

Johns (1995) strongly expresses views against the process based approach by mentioning that this movement expects second language learning students of become effective and experienced authors in the target language at the stage when they are not ready. This idea also turns a blind eye on the fact of register and the argument that are to be made carefully. It also ignores the purpose that an author has when he sets out to write for potential audience and community.

This criticism to the process approach began to give way to another approach to teach writing with a new name – “the genre approach”.

5.9.3 Genre Approach

Originating in sociology and postmodernist philosophy the Genre approach writing as a social act, and to understand it fully it is pivotal to have an insight of decision of individual writers to discover the symmetriespractice that are of preference in a community. According to Hyland(2002) ‘A text conveys certain meaning and gains its force as a particular kind of action only within the community for which it is written, exhibiting the patterns and conventions which reflect the sociocultural understanding of that community.’ In other words,
writing is based on a systematic pattern of social organisation. For instance; essay written by biology students follows a different form of arguments, assumptions, interpersonal conventions and ways of presenting facts and theories as compared to students writing an essay on a business subject or literature. Hence at the core of the approach there is a belief that writing should “offer students explicit and systematic explanations of the ways language functions in social contexts” (Hyland, 2003). It is also believed that genre-approach is a class that includes communicative events that have a purpose and have a recognition or acceptance by the expert members (Swales 1990)

The genre approach came into existence after the rejection to the product and the process approach to teach writing. This encourages students to explore recurring text forms in native setup themselves and follow it. Vyotsky (1978) mentions about some of the salient feature that a genre approach focused classroom may have. There is collaboration between teacher and students but the teacher has a responsibility to lead and scaffold the writing task. This means that in addition to being a facilitator and teacher has an onus to lead the class to ensure maximum involvement and performance of students. The scaffolding is usually done by activities like discussions on the topic, analysis of the useful language and structures for the task and modelling of the genre text. The support given through scaffolding the task lessens as the task progresses and learners emulate the model to compose parallel text. Hence, the teacher is more in command and lead at the initial stages but gradually decreases to the role of a facilitator (cited in Hyland, 2003). This is very similar to a child learning to swim when instructor talks the child to a shallow side of the pool and provides physical support like a floating board. However, as the child gains confidence and develops the silk, the instructor withdraws gradually.

The proponents of this genre approach see a lot of benefits in it in ESL/EFL (L2) Classroom. It is believed that in absence of such conventions second language learners would remain unaware of the real authentic use of the target language. Paltridge (2007) argues that although there planning drafting and editing stages are not rigorously implemented in the genre approach, which any ways lacks implementation directives, students get better exposure to reoccuring text structure. Awareness of this is more beneficial in a creating a parallel composition especially in early stages. Teachers in this approach can scaffold useful language and appropriate genre specific structures. This is an important aspect of genreapproach because if students are not explicitly made aware of the language and the convention of genre then it is likely that they may fall back on their first language (L1) conventions which may be very different from the second language. For example; the way a problem-solution essay is organized in English may be very different from the way it may be structured in Chinese and so the lack of awareness may make a Chinese new writer follow the structure of their L1 problem-solution essay.

Additionally, Paltridge (2001) argues that the distinct language awareness and structural awareness that learners would get through in genre approach would enable them acquire the knowledge of meta-linguistic in English text and in turns would empower them to be more articulate in applying to in relevant scenarios. Swami (2008) seconds the benefits of genre approach and claims that it opens the window to the real writing in the English world and nurture a positive attitude and motivation towards the language. These positive characteristics of it have made it a popular approach in many ESL classrooms in the countries like Australia.

Yet, some are not very convinced with Genre Approach as they see it as a barrier to free creative writing and thinking. Some believe that if students are being taught to follow a particular genre then actually they are gain being taught to imitate someone and it doesn’t not technically help learners have the ability to write and express their original ideas in their own
way. This may defeat the purpose of giving autonomy to the learners in expressing themselves the way they want. (Caudery, 1998)

5.10 Designing Writing Tasks Principles
In the light of all the learning theories of second language, writing and the traditional and contemporary approaches in writing gives researches a foundation to develop tools to teach writing to ESL and EFL learners. Some the basic principles that Brown (2001) suggests that there should be some principle taken into consideration while designing writing teaching techniques

5.10.1 Practices of good writer
While designing writing activities it is important to know the thing and the practices and the aims that that good writers have and they follow. The task of writing should have the following:
- a decided or an agreed main idea, objective or a goal
- have a sense of the audience for who the writing is done for
- tasks should have some planning stage and time because good writers do not write without planning
- ways to easily flow in the first idea on writing
- have a general plan in which writing would proceed
- phase to take feedback, revise and edit

5.10.2 Balance process and product
As theories suggest that writing is a composing process, students should have an opportunity to have multiple drafts before they produce a text as a product. It is important to keep in mind while designing that students have ways to create a clear, well organized piece of writing with some level of accuracy. To do so the elements of process and product approach should be balanced.

5.10.3 Consideration of cultural and literary background
In designing tasks in for ESL classrooms it is important the remember the concepts on contrastive rhetoric. Every language has its own elements and style of writing. The students may have writing style which could be very different from English so students should be first made aware of conventions and rhetoric involved in English writing to expect some acceptable English writing as a final product. Some knowledge of L1 rhetoric and conventions of the students could be of great benefit for teachers. If it was possible teachers would be able to help student more in this area.

5.10.4 Reading and writing relation
Careful observation of text in English could be of great benefit to all level of ESL writers. A great deal of learning can take place just by reading. Range of relevant texts would help in many areas. Awareness and learning of syntax, organization, and lexis would be some to name. This would also reduce the anxiety related to unfamiliar topic and make students focus more in writing than the accuracy and complexity of information. In other words, while designing writing tasks, there should be ways to have maximum comprehensible input through relevant reading. Reading could be topic related or genre related.

5.10.5 Authenticity
Writing could be real or for display but it should be authentic. Even if students are writing for display they may have real audience. For example; they may write for other students. Some of the other ways to have authentic writing could be having class newsletters, writing invitation letters to other classmates, writing advertisements or resumes. There could also be some occupation related writing such as complaining about a product, writing a complain to the council or making a hotel reservation would be some to name. This would give ESL writers some level of authenticity to writing. They would see the real use of that writing in future and hence make them more motivated to convey meaning more clearly.

5.11 Evaluating ESL Writing

In addition to the complexities involved in teaching writing there are challenges to gauge writing as good or bad. Concerns about evaluating writing as a whole is not new, it has been since the evolution of second language learning in the main stream in the 1960s. Evaluation of writing is among the least studied areas, undertheorized, and not well articulated (White et al, 1996). The cognitive, constructivist and the socio-cultural theories of writing have on one hand redefined perspectives to writing but on the other hand, have made evaluation more ambiguous. As Hyland (2002) mentioned that there are various theories to view writing. Some view as a text which looks into the text as a product. Teachers in the influence of this view are more concerned about the grammatical accuracy in the text. They look into the text at micro level. Other may be with a view text in the light of the process and would gauge a good writing on the bases of the portfolios maintained to prove the process involved in writing. However, there would be other teachers who would see writing at a broader genre level, they would be more interested in the rhetoric and the conventions involved in it. These various views of writing make evaluation of writing a challenge.

These ambiguities in evaluating writing have left teachers in two different camps. There is psychological aspect on one side and rhetoric on the other. However, in the limited research in evaluating writing there are some suggestion made to evaluate text that this study would rely on. This includes peer feedback, self-evaluation and evolution from teachers. Understanding the fact that writing is an ongoing process, feedback and evaluation give an opportunity to reflect review and improve.

5.11.1 Dialoguing written feedback

This is a way in which teachers make student evaluated their own writing and the writing process in order to develop more control. Reflective and interactive logs could be maintained to such evaluation. Logs are like the learning journal, students can write their goal, thought and progress of their task in it and may use it to interact with teachers in a formative manner that would help in accomplishing writing (Glen, 2009).

5.11.2 Self-assessment

It is believed that self-assessment of writing through reflective writing based on the criteria that describe the requirement of the writing task would be a way towards constructive evaluation (Bloom, 1997; Elbow, 1997). This form of evaluation may include the task like reflecting on the writing portfolio that was maintained. However, there are arguments against see that this evaluation actually even may not improve writing any writing ability of students. The first argument is about the fact that reflective writing done without any help can be done only if the writer is a proficient effective writer, who have capability to be self-critical (Perl, 1979). Secondly, the nature of the reflective writing task actually makes students reflect more of the language and judgement of their teachers instead of their own critical reflections (Yancey, 1998).
5.11.3 Peer feedback

Peer feedback is an important way to evaluate writing. It is a way in which students are able to get feedback from real audience. It has a potential to change the narrow view of assessment; this makes ‘assessment of learning’ shift to ‘assessment for learning’ (O’Donovan et al., 2004, cited in Parr, 2011). It is much harder to be critical of one’s own writing that being critical about other. So, giving peer-feedback is more effective than self-assessment. Sample of real written work when are evaluated under on the guidelines of marking criteria gives student better sense of their quality work which enables them to give peer feedback and in the process become critical about their own writing. The peer evaluation makes the compare their own written task with the ones of their peers and learn some good points on one hand and when they spot errors it gives them an opportunity to reflect on their errors too. In other words, peer evaluation is not only helping others but also learning for own selves.

5.11.4 Teacher Evaluation

There has been many research that show that there is a correlation where teachers associate essay traits with high and low scores. Holistic evaluation that is done by teachers is based on the discourse and sentence level quality. Research at university level writing evaluation says that their teachers’ pay more attention to content, organization on the content, organization and coherence more than accuracy in evaluating both ESL students and native English students writing (Breland and Jones 1984; Freedman 1979; Santos, 1988). Experienced teachers not only have good strategies to use criteria for evaluation writing but know the ways to conduct themselves during evaluations and all this need good training and practice: (Weigle, 1994) this does not imply that there would be absolutely no difference between the ways teacher evaluate writing but certainly there would be some level of uniformity.

Freedman and Clafee (1983) explain three main elements that helps in evaluating compositions: the first is to read and text to comprehend and them form an image of it, second is to store the image of the text and form an impression, and finally articulate evaluation. To reduce some level of ambiguity the institutions have criteria to facilitate evaluations. Brown (2002) suggests six general categories of evaluating writing. Content, organization, discourse, syntax, vocabulary and Mechanics.

He also suggests giving summative and specific feedback on the all the six areas which could be a combination of verbal and written feedback. Ur(1991) also points out various issues related to correcting written text in ESL classrooms and offers some suggestion that are crucial when giving feedback in a second language or a foreign language writing.

When a written piece of text is submitted by an ESL or EFL students the biggest challenge for the teachers is to make a balance on what is more important and what to give feedback on. There are many things to look into. The first is to see if the content is relevant to the task given and is it interesting enough. The second thing that comes up is, if the ideas have been organized in some logical ways which is readable, logical comprehendible and coherent. In other words, there is a logical flow of language by some segregation through paragraphing. Finally, there is the syntactic form or say the grammar which includes accuracy at sentence level. It also includes vocabulary, spellings and punctuations.

Generally, teachers are aware that content and organization needs more attention but often it is hard to ignore the grammar errors because it hampers the understanding. Grammar errors like spellings, word forms, punctuations are so easy to identify that teachers go on to correct grammar; in fact, students also want teachers to correct their grammar points.
Ur (1991) advises teachers to should correct grammar errors but it should not convey the message to students that it is the single most important thing in their writing. A possible way to do this by noting some corrections within the body of text and then comment suggesting improvement on the content and organization at the end of the text before giving any evaluation. If possible, evaluation can be held back for the second draft.

Students often receive their written text full of corrections by teachers and it appears that nothing was right on the paper. Now the question that arises is how many and what mistakes should be corrected. This answer could be taken form the role that teachers have. It is to be seen whether the teachers are there only to make instruction or they are there to support and encourage learners. Undeniably correcting errors is important but too much or correction can risk student’s confidence and demoralize them. In addition, too much of focus on errors can distract both learners and teachers for the more important purpose of writing which is conveying a content in an organized manner. How much correction is to be made also depends on level of students and the context. So, it is advisable to correct only the errors that are distorting the meaning because too much of correction could do more damage than any good (Ur, 1991).

The other problem related to giving feedback on written texts is what should students do or say what teachers want students to do once they receive feedback about the errors on their paper. Not many students like to rewrite their text with corrections suggested by the teachers, nor do many teachers like to take extra work of correction. In other words, writing second draft or rewriting is a tedious task. However, the fact is rewriting text is crucial for different reasons. One is that it reinforces learning; secondly the rewriting is an important stage in a writing process. Nevertheless, if we encourage learner to write second draft them it becomes their right that the draft is read by teachers and the feedback is given. A good approach is to have a draft system, the first draft could be a provisional draft which would get teacher’s feedback and then the second draft is taken as the submitted final which would become assessment or part of assessment portfolios (Ur, 1991).

There is no doubt that correcting writing is not an easy task particularly in large ESL and EFL classrooms. There are suggestions that such classes can have peer corrections done but the challenge is that at lower levels often learners do not have enough understanding of what a good written text would entail. The second issue is whether learners are keen and on giving and taking peer feedback.

Peer-correction is certainly time saving and it is also beneficial for students because in the process of identifying errors in their peers writing they develop the skills of looking at the text critically for content, organization and accuracy and this learning helps them to improve their own writing. However, it should not replace teacher’s corrections and feedback. It can become a take for the first draft of writing when learners sit together and give feedback to each other before it is shown to the teacher for feedback. The down side of it could be the issue of trust and ego linked to it. Students may not trust the ability of their peers or may not be open to criticism form students of their own level. This can be more challenging when students do not have a good rapport with each other. So, it is very important that students develop good relations with each other. This would not only make the peer-corrections easier but would improve the class environment in general.

5.1.1 Writing Assessments

Testing or gauging student’s proficiency in writing is often done through essay. In fact, all the language proficiency test such as IELTS, PTE, TOEFL include writing as a major component. Writing in an examination scenario is time pressed. There have been several researches criticizing it. Neither effective writing is possible in a time presses situation, nor it can test all the aspects of learning process involved in language production (White, 1994).
White (1994) suggests assessing writing ability maintenance of portfolios. Teachers can maintain a comprehensive record of different tasks done by students in a course and see how students have progressed in their writing process, how and what a student achieves through peer feedback and teachers feedback. Portfolio can be more objective for assessment purposes using clear criteria of marking and guidelines.

A comprehensive checklist for students to do peer-feedback, self-editing and evaluations can go handy too. So, teaching and training students the criteria of writing can help them do peer-feedback and be more conscientious while doing their own writing tasks. All these steps can make writing classes more collaborative and student-centered. This can make learners and teachers work closely for a common goal and teacher takes the role of facilitator. Hence a maintenance of portfolio can be a better option than making students write in a time-pressed scenario.

Though there are some good guidelines to support teachers in setting up tasks, working around their involvement in ESL classrooms and giving feedback but there isn’t and clear recommendation about the teaching approach that fits all. Personal struggle of the researchers encouraged this study of testing a graded approach model to teach writing to ESL/EFL adult learners.

This eclectic approach was found to be effective among the adult ESL/EFL learners who do not have much time like the other young learners to go through a long road to develop writing skills. Hence, trusting the positive outcome of this research, it is recommended that teachers can support their adult learners in a more effective manner if a ‘graded-approach’ of teaching is adapted. The graded approach encourages teachers to have one set of approach for a certain proficiency level of learners. The approach that was found to best suit a level of learners is detailed below. The rational of the approach and the effectiveness is also discussed in the following sections.

5.12 Conclusion
To conclude, writing is a productive skill in a language which has it very distinct feature that make it different form the other productive skill: speaking. Writing in L1 is very different from writing in L2, these differences make writing challenging in L2 there. Also, there are different theories that form perspective towards writing which in turns gives way to methods and to evaluation of writing. Some argue that writing is text-oriented, other believe it is writer-oriented, yet another view is reader-oriented. The three theories to writing gave foundation to three different approaches to teach writing which were product, process and genre respectively. Each of these theories, method, and researches show that, several approaches have emerged, gained momentum, got criticism and faded but never disappeared from EFL/ESL classrooms because they bring along their own virtues. Product approach focuses mainly on the linguistic and the organization, while the process inclines on the activities involved in writing, whereas, genre advocates systematic pattern based on social organization. Hence none of the approaches can be ‘fits all’ flawless approach. In other words, one approach cannot cater to the needs of all the EFL/ESL learners with varied level of language proficiency i.e. beginners to advanced level. For instance; if a process approach or a genre approach is adapted in a classroom of beginner’s level EFL students who barely can frame sentences will be a vain. On the contrary, a too focus in an advanced level EFL classroom will not bring in and quality writing with improved contents if a product approach is practices in an advanced level class. There are several aspects that research advises to take into consideration while designing writing curriculum. the evaluation of writing should also be a focus in a formal ESL/EFL curriculum to ensure positive backlash.

Every approach has its own good and if these are taken into consideration and wisely used to suit the language proficiency of the learners then the skill of effective writing is likely
to bear fruits. Hence, this study formulates a ‘Graded Approach Model’ (GAM) model in a tertiary ESL level writing curriculum to ensure all the approaches namely; product, process and Genre are blended gradually in the curriculum to see that it moves from simple to complex. The model also tries to take all the ESL learners factors into account while choosing the class activities all this will be discussed in detail in the following chapter.