CHAPTER 6

SUMMATION

6.0 INTRODUCTION

This chapter summarizes the very important findings of the study undertaken to enhance the writing skills of Arts College students, which has been already presented in the earlier chapters. This chapter also brings out the prevailing situation of English in India, and the need for such a study of Arts college students’ writing skills, hypothesis tested, error analysis and inferences derived from the analysis and theory and application of task based language teaching method in classroom. It also includes the findings of the comparison of Pre test and the Post test and a few remedies and suggestions for further research. The present study entitled, “Enhancing the Writing Skills of Undergraduate Students in Arts and Science Colleges” has fulfilled its objectives and through this study, the hindrances in learning writing skill have been identified and it provides evidences of how through tasks, learners’ writing skill has been enhanced.

English has become the global language and in India, it has always played a major role in communication, especially in recent times, at different levels of society. Besides, English has also become a status symbol for people across the world. Hence learning English has also become a significant need for the young people. With the establishment of global and multinational companies in India and also due to the computer revolution, young people are expected to possess a good knowledge of English. It is believed that unless the students are good in communication skills, they cannot have good jobs and their chances of getting a good
job would be limited. When they cannot communicate with others effectively and easily, they would miss the status in the society. Even for their day-to-day activities, business, in their jobs, in offices and for helping the children at home, they require a certain level of English language. Thus, English has become the basic qualification and necessity for the college students.

In the present scenario, it is important to be aware of the standard of students who enrol themselves in Arts and Science colleges after their schooling. Most of them have a standard of English which is deplorable. The reasons for such a standard could be attributed to certain environmental factors. Some of the causes could be traced to the kind of schooling they have had. In most rural schools, there are no qualified teachers and classes are conducted in big groups where there is very little scope for individual attention. Besides, there is no motivation to learn a foreign language. English is being taught as one of the subjects and not as a language. There are other interferences like socio, economic and cultural barriers. There is no disagreement with the idea that the skills are a vitally important necessity and they already do not have the expected mastery in the language skills.

Among the four skills LSRW, Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing, writing skill is taken for study as it requires advanced learning and academic writing is very crucial for their jobs. The learners need guidance and constant practice in order to improve their writing skills. In writing, different structures are used and it is an individual activity. Writing in English develops academic, occupational and personal writing skills. Writing skills make the students acquire vocabulary, structures of language in the proper context. Hence this study focuses on assessing the first year
Arts college students writing skills and their present level and suggests a method, Task Based Language Teaching method to enhance their writing skill.

**6.1. Divisions of research work**

A case study of group of learners has been done for research. A group of 80 students comprising four different categories of rural male, urban male, rural female and urban female students of Arts and Science Colleges in Salem district are taken as samples of case study. The study is done in different stages. Initially, the preliminary questionnaire was administered to the students to collect information about their background and social conditions. Then the students’ existing skills in 4 different items such as verb and tense, write a story, prepositions and positive into negative is tested. Errors in the pre test are identified and examined to predict the causes and the hindrances. In the next stage, through designed tasks, the same grammatical items and writing skill is taught. Though periodical tests are conducted the final test is taken for evaluation and assessment. Comparative analysis of pre test and the post test is done in order to provide the findings.

**6.2. Findings**

The findings of the present study comprise the analysis of the errors committed by the first year Arts College students in different branches of engineering. The analysis of the pre test and the post test results and the discussion of the effectiveness of the tasks are summarized as follows.

**6.2.1 Pre test and Error Analysis**

The errors in the pre test show that the students have a disappointingly low standard of English. Because of their weakness in grammar, they make faulty
sentences. It shows that the learners' knowledge of grammar and their application of grammatical rules are deplorably bad. As the test is conducted in “usage of verb and tense”, “prepositions”, “turning positive into negative” and “write a story”, the errors are also categorized in the same way. The total errors in positive into negative are more in number than other errors. Though they have relatively a less number of errors (454 in verb and tense) when compared to other areas of grammar, they are unable to change positive sentences into negative. This shows that the students have deficit knowledge in verb and tense and the mother tongue interferes in their acquisition of English. The complacency of students and inappropriate uses of verbs are the main causes. What they have acquired in second language also has more impact on the learning process and this is also another reason to have poor knowledge of grammar.

Among the errors both interlingual and intralingual errors are commonly found. The various errors are: wrong use of plural verb with singular subject, singular verb with plural subject and the wrong use of verb with ‘each’ and ‘every’ and ‘either…. or ‘ conjunction and confusion regarding the collective nouns.

The students have a serious problem in using the prepositions and the total number of errors are 980. In prepositions, the students are not given proper training and teaching in their earlier stage in schools. So, the students are unfamiliar with the use of prepositions. The interference of post-positions in Tamil plays a vital role in committing the errors. As they do not have enough practice, they commit errors and the mother tongue interference is felt always. When compared to the urban students, the overall performance of urban students are better and the socio-economic conditions of the rural students are one of the main causes. The other causes are the
complexity of the language, the inability to use it in the proper way and complacency. Out of 22 rural male students only 22.2% have cleared the test and out of 18 urban male students only 33.33% have cleared the test. Out of 24 rural female students, 29.15% and out of 16 urban female students 37.5% have cleared the test. This reveals that their language is poor and hence the fact cannot be simply ignored that it requires a serious effort on the part of the teachers to encourage and motivate the learners. It also needs an innovative method of teaching to motivate them towards learning and a regular and systematic practice on the part of the learners through tasks.

6.2.2 Outcome of the tasks

The outcome of the tasks is significantly interesting and worth mentioning. The tasks provided a new learning environment and opened up opportunities to engage learners in activities. Group work, language games enabled everyone to involve themselves and even induced peer learning, which is the best way of learning. It made demands on every learner to contribute to the task and there was an active participation. It led them to improve to a great extent. Though they were in a new learning situation, they focused on the tasks. Their fears and inferior feelings were all dispelled and it increased their confidence level. The socio, economic and cultural barriers are overcome to a certain extent.

6.2.3 Feedback

The feedback questionnaires collected from the students show that they are able to learn better through tasks rather than through audio lingual method. Majority of the students said replied in the affirmative when they were asked whether they had improvement in grammar. It also shows that tasks promote learning to a great extent.
Out of 80 students 63 have improved to a great extent. The responses show that the tasks are not difficult but moderate and easy except for a very few students (12) who responded saying that it was difficult. Among the total 80 students, only 15% found it difficult and 37.5% (30) found the tasks moderate and 47.5% (38) found it easy. 55% of the students were happy to admit that the tasks induced creativity and others found that it was to some extent creative. The students of rural areas are not exposed to such kind of creative activities and they might think that they are new to this kind of education situation. The tasks provided motivation and it is evident from the 87% of the students saying “yes” to the questions of whether the text provides adequate motivation to the learners or not. Almost most of them agreed that this method is interesting and they would like to have such tasks incorporated in their regular classrooms and they would be benefited from them.

6.2.4 Post test results

The post test results in verb and tense category show that the errors have reduced considerably. The rural female students show a remarkable improvement and their errors reduced to 60% and it is surprising to know that the rural female students improved and their learning capacity is significantly encouraging. Secondly, the urban male students’ performance is better and the errors are reduced to 58.8% and the next follows rural male (40%) and the last is the urban female students errors reduced to 32%. As they had already committed fewer errors in the pre test (65) their growth (21) cannot be observed as a higher one. Rather the vast difference is prominent in rural female students where their errors reduced from 80 to 48 (60%). The tasks gave them the right motivation to learn verb and tense usage.
The errors committed by the students in the category of conversion of positive into negative have also reduced considerably. The urban male, rural male, urban female and rural female students’ errors reduced from 313 to 41, 448 to 101, 95 to 30 and 131 to 36 respectively. In fact, the total errors in this category in Pre test is higher than all other categories (987) which is reduced to 208, one fourth of the errors are reduced. Among them the urban male students’ development is exceptionally higher. Their 86% of the errors are reduced from 313 to 41 and also rural male, urban female and rural female student’s errors are reduced to 77%, 68% and 72% respectively. It is evident that their comprehension and application of conversion of positive and negative has improved a lot through the tasks they have done.

The post test errors in prepositions when compared to the pre test are reduced to 78% and it is surprisingly higher in the category of rural male students leading to 82% and the rural female students, the errors are reduced to less 67%. The total errors are reduced from 985 to 214.

The post module end test result shows that the story writing errors are reduced to a great extent to an 80% from 264 to 52. Amazingly, both the rural male and rural female students’ errors are reduced to 77% and the urban male students’ errors are reduced to a higher percentage of 82% and the urban female students’ errors are reduced to the least 67%.

Among all the four categories in the post test, the story writing has remarkably improved and the total errors committed by all the students reduced from 264 to 52 and it is a significant percentage of 80%. Except verb and tense (53%) the errors are reduced from 987 to 208 (76%) in positive and negative and 978 to 204 in prepositions (79%). The overall analysis shows clearly that the students have
considerably improved in their learning through the adaptation of tasks methods in teaching.

6.3 Inferences

- Learners show a remarkable freedom in learning and they worked independently most of the time.

- The framework applied to enhance the writing skills of these group of 80 students is effective and it can be generalized and this can be applied to all second language learners.

- The post module end test shows a remarkable improvement. Out of 22 rural male students, 72.72% cleared it and out of 18 urban male students 77.7% cleared the test. Out of 24 rural female students 83.33% and out of 16 urban female students 87.5% cleared the test.

- The total errors in post test are 678 and it is reduced from the pre test errors is 2683.

- The total pass percentage is increased from 30.6% to 80.24%.

- In the post module end test, the total errors of writing a story decreased from 264 to 52 to 80% roughly. One fourth of the errors were reduced in their writing.

- Though the male students from both rural and urban areas showed an improvement of 72.72% and 77.77% it is less when compared to the female students whose pass percentage is 83.33% and 87.5% respectively.
The rural female students’ pass percentage moves from 29.15% to 83.33% and their improvement is higher when compared to all other categories of students.

The students learned the components of narrative writing skills easily through the Task Based Language Teaching without any inhibition.

The TBLT can be adopted to enhance the writing skill of students both urban and rural areas.

6.4 Suggestions to improve

Some of the suggestions to improve the writing skills of the undergraduate students are listed below:

1. Regular practice of writing
2. Group discussions
3. Visiting library
4. Improving the vocabulary
5. Watching writing skill video programmes.
6. Using the modern technology and learning writing through internet.
7. Attaining confidence to write effectively.
8. Strengthening the grammatical knowledge of English through tasks.

6.5 Scope for further study

i. This study was done in Salem district, but the findings could be extended to many Arts colleges in the whole district for further research.
ii. This study is limited to only narrative writing skills and this can be extended to other modes of writing skill such as expository, argumentative and creative writing.

iii. All the language skills are important for learners and hence other skills like listening, speaking and reading can be taken individually and studied regardless of whether task based teaching is applicable for other skills too.

iv. Comparative analysis can be done between the universities and the private universities by adopting the method regardless of whether it could improve their communicative competence in English or not.

v. The new syllabus and curriculum incorporating the tasks could be designed and tested as a further research point.

vi. The study could be done on what kind of tasks could be given to other level of learners like primary and secondary school level students.

6.6. Conclusion

Error Analysis helps one assess the standard of the students. More importantly, it helps the teacher modify the tasks in order to reach the goals. Task based language teaching helped the learners to apply knowledge to new situations. Adopting this innovative method in Indian classrooms resulted in transforming the mindsets of both rural and urban learners and thereby it enhanced their writing skills. The suggested tasks created strategies for developing the writing skills. It provided opportunities to the learners to realize their hidden abilities to learn and improve their standard of writing.