AN ABSTRACT

There has been a considerable increase in the amount of effort put in to improve the teaching-learning process in different parts of the world. Teachers often find it difficult to keep in touch with the new developments which could be useful to them to improve their teaching. Though a lot of work is done by researchers to make the teaching and testing of English more effective, teachers find it difficult to select and use appropriate techniques and materials that are best suited to their needs. This study traces the historical perspectives of ELT in Gujarat and analyses the present-day learners' needs for developing their written expression. It is pointed out that most of the teaching in the regular classroom situation focuses on preparing the learners for examinations which are mainly written examinations. But hardly any special effort is put in to improve the learners' proficiency in writing. Having established the need for devising better techniques and materials to teach and test writing, an attempt is made to understand what writing actually involves, what factors affect written communication, how writing has been taught from ancient days to the present, what types of tests are available to test written communication, and which is
most suitable from the point of view of validity, reliability, practicality and instructional value. The review of related literature, which forms the second chapter covers the material in print, relevant to the above mentioned aspects. This helps in drawing the implications for the present study, for the teaching and testing of writing. With the help of the implications drawn, new techniques are devised which involve group and pair-work activities, materials are prepared using the language content suggested in the learners' coursebook.

To try-out these new techniques and materials, four representative schools in Gujarat are randomly selected. In each group two comparable groups are identified, out of which one is exposed to the new techniques. Tests are administered to both the controlled and experimental groups, in all the four schools, before and after the try out. The results are compared to find out the effectiveness of the new techniques and materials. The experiment is reported in detail in chapter three, while the analysis and interpretation of data are provided in chapter four. The experiment was tried out by the investigator at S D Desai High School in Bakrol, and to validate the results, the same experiment was repeated in three other schools. The results obtained from Bakrol prove
that the new techniques and materials are far more effective than the conventional techniques. The experimental group has obtained 4.92 in 't' test which is significant at .01 level of significance. The controlled group has got only .77 which is insignificant. On comparing the pretest scores of both the experimental and control groups, we get 5.59 (Z value) in the post test which is again highly significant. When the difference between the pre-test and post test values of the controlled group is compared with that of the experimental group, again we get the Z value as 3.29 which is significant at .01 level. These statistical analysis prove the effectiveness of the new techniques and materials.

The experiment was repeated in three other schools and the statistical analysis has provided evidence to reject the null hypotheses which state that there is no significant difference between the conventional and experimental techniques and the achievement level of the learners in the experimental groups will be no better than that of controlled group. Apart from statistical analysis, analysis of observation of classroom interactions reported in chapter three and four, further validate the effectiveness of the new techniques and materials to develop learners competence in written communication. A number of
implications are drawn for the teaching and testing of written English and some suggestions are offered to teachers, syllabus makers and others involved in ELT in chapter five. Suggestions for further research are also offered.