CHAPTER II

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CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

This chapter begins with a discussion about the nature of writing. Understanding what writing is, how it is different from speech and what factors affect written communication is necessary to devise effective techniques to teach and test writing. After this enquiry into the processes involved in written communication, a review of the teaching techniques is undertaken. This includes an analysis of the types of themes assigned to the learners and the procedures of instruction in writing from the time of Isocrates to the present. This analysis helps in drawing the implications for teaching writing. The next section of the chapter reviews the testing of writing. Essay tests are first analysed in detail and their drawbacks are pointed out. This is followed by an analysis of the interlinear tests, the objective tests and the pragmatic tests and a comparative study of these tests helps in drawing implications for testing writing. Finally, a review of a number of significant studies of writing research from 1900 to 1986 is undertaken and the overall implications for the present study are
2.1 The Nature of Writing

It is important to identify the skills involved in written communication to devise effective techniques to teach and test writing. To identify the skills we need to know what writing actually involves. Hence this section reviews the processes involved in writing, the difference between speech and writing and the factors that affect written communication.

2.1.1 What is writing?

What writing is and how it is developed has been a subject of discussion and debate for centuries, from the time of Aristotle, Cicero, Quintillian to the present. Though there are different viewpoints, it is commonly agreed that writing is much more than the mere production of graphic symbols. Given below are some of the views of various writers. They are presented in the following format for clarity of expression. It should be noted that the concepts of various writers overlap.

a. Writing - a complete 'text'

According to Donn Byrne (1979), writing is not the mere production of graphic symbols. In his book 'Teaching Writing Skills' he discusses the importance of producing a coherent 'text', by arranging the graphic
symbols to form words, that in turn are arranged to form sentences, which are arranged in a proper sequence and linked to form a coherent whole.

According to him writing involves a lot of mental effort because we have to keep the reader in mind when we write. The reader may not be present physically and in some cases the reader may not even be known to us. So we have to ensure that what we write is

"... as explicit as possible and complete in itself".

(Donn Byrne 1979: 1)

That is, the reader should be able to understand what we have written without any further help from us.

b. Writing - a communicative occurrence:

Liz Hamp-Lyons and Ben Heasley (1984) in their article 'Survey Review' in ELT Journal (Vol.38) define writing as,

"... a communicative occurrence between a writer and an intended reader in which the writer creates a discourse with the imagined reader and derives from this a text by which an actual reader may approximate to the original discourse."
Writing proceeds through a series of writing episodes, in which there is an interaction going on between an overall but general plan, a specific plan of sentence or paragraph and what is written on the page. There are periods of transcription, the actual writing of words and reflection, where what is written is reread and decisions are made for further writing. Infact, several operations will be going on simultaneously, with interaction taking place between thinking of what is going to be expressed, planning the text, composing a sentence and transcribing it.

d. Writing - a series of schemes

According to Bereiter (1980) a number of schemes must be put into operation by a writer when he writes. He mentions three major schemes and a number of sub-schemes under each head.

The main schemes are as follows:

i. A general executive scheme: a general scheme that selects the general structure of writing (a letter rather than an essay)

ii. A content processing scheme.

iii. A language processing scheme.
As the writer gains experience his repertoire expands. Bereiter has given a model of skill systems which represents integration in writing developments. This model (figure 1) shows the development of the individual as he moves from speech to writing and through various stages of writing. A new cognitive dimension is added to each of the stages and the development is traced through the process and product of writing.

e. Writing - knowledge & experience

Stein, Nancy L (1983), emphasises that there is a close relationship between the amount of knowledge an individual has about a topic and the ease with which a coherent piece of prose can be constructed. The generalisability of certain types of writing instruction may be severely constrained by the amount and type of knowledge that has been acquired about a particular content area.

According to Donald M Murray (1983) writing is concerned with ideas, the production and organisation of ideas and finding out what it is that one wants to express in a written message. Through the process of using language in writing we discover meaning in experience and try to communicate it to others.
### FIGURE 1

**A Model of Skill Systems Integration in Writing Development**

**Focus**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reader</th>
<th>Social Cognition</th>
<th>Communicative writing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Product**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Process</th>
<th>Rules of style and mechanics</th>
<th>Performative writing</th>
<th>Critical judgement writing</th>
<th>Unified Writing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Development in Writing (Bereiter C, 1980)**
f. Writing - social context

Florio-Ruane, Susan (1983) suggests that without attention to the social contexts of writing, both in the classroom activity and in the relation between audience and author, teachers cannot be certain that practising discrete skills will actually transfer to tasks elsewhere. Mosenthal Peter (1983) argues the need to consider the sociopolitical dimension of writing competency in addition to the conceptual and design criteria dimensions.

The above discussions emphasise the fact that a writer needs to employ a number of schemes to produce a coherent text which communicates effectively his message to the reader. A brief review of the difference between oral and written communication could be useful for a better understanding of the procedures involved in transcribing ideas into graphic symbols.

2.1.2 Speech and Writing

Cognitive psychologists treat writing and developments in writing as distinct from speech and general language development. Some of the reasons for this distinction between speech and writing are as follows:

a. Written language in most language systems has its own conventions and purposes separate from spoken
Written language posits a different relationship between the writer and reader than between the speaker and listener.

Written language may be supported by a kind of thought different from that associated with spoken language (Dillon, 1981). Donn Byrne (1979) also agrees with the view that writing is different from speech in a number of ways. Speech takes place against the background of a situation and much of what we say can be understood from the situation. Besides the listener is physically present and offers us constant feedback so that we can modify our message to make our meaning clear. We can also use a number of prosodic features like pitch, loudness, rhythm and pauses, as well as, facial expressions and gestures to help the listener understand what we want to convey. All these facilities are not available to us when we write.

"Writing by contrast, is the whole of the relevant activity and we create the context as we write ... there can be no interaction between the writer and reader. Although we may try to anticipate reactions and build them into
Though writing seems to be a very difficult activity, it has some definite advantages over speech. We can write at our own pace while writing whereas in speech we need to have adequate fluency so as not to test the listener's patience. We can also rewrite and revise our sentences and paragraphs till we are satisfied with the result. The reader can also read at his own pace and reread what we have written as often as he likes. These advantages of writing can be put to maximum use if we understand the factors that affect written communication.

2.1.3 Factors affecting written communication

A number of factors have to be kept in mind to communicate effectively through writing. The message we want to convey has less chances of being misunderstood if we have some background information about the intended reader, and his previous knowledge of whatever is related to our message. Some of the factors which play an important part in our selection of what to convey, how to convey and how much to convey are as follows:
The relationship between the writer and the reader—whether it is at a formal, or intimate level.

The purpose of the activity—whether the message is conveyed for giving information, seeking permission, soliciting advice and so on.

The previous knowledge of the reader—whether the message is new to him, partly known or known from a different angle.

The type of message—whether it is simple, complex, involves technical expressions or not.

Intended response—whether the writer wants to please the reader, persuade him, threaten him or enrage him.

The writer should keep all these factors in mind if he wants the reader to understand his message properly and react in the way he wants him to.

Having analysed the nature of writing, the problems involved in communicating through writing, and the factors that affect written communication, we need to undertake a study of how to teach writing. It could be useful to think of the place allotted to writing in Language instruction and go on to trace the development of instruction in writing from the ancient times to the
present.

2.2 Teaching writing

There has been considerable change and development in the teaching-learning process over the years. Along with it the importance given to the various skills of language has also been changing. The changes in the importance given to writing has affected the types of topics used and the teaching and testing of writing. Hence this discussion begins with an analysis of the importance given to writing in the past and present.

2.2.1 Place of Writing in Language Instruction

If we consider the importance given to writing in the objectives of a language class, we can observe three main stages of development.

These stages of developments are as follows:

a. In the first stage, before the 1930's, most of the class time was spent in writing. The writing assignments aimed at developing the learners' ability to answer comprehension questions based on texts, completing structure manipulation exercises, essay writing and working out translations.

b. During the second stage, when the structural approach was introduced writing was given only secondary importance, because the emphasis was on oral
skill. Writing was not included during the initial stages of learning. It was used in the later stages to reinforce and consolidate grammar and vocabulary items learnt orally.

c. The present day curriculum expresses language teaching objectives in terms of language use. Equal importance is given to speech and writing. Both speech and writing enable the learners use the language they are learning and hence both are emphasised.

But as far as India is concerned and particularly in Gujarat, the structural syllabuses are in use and writing skill has been given a secondary place. Though there has not been much change in the way writing is taught in Gujarat, we can see a considerable amount of change and development in the teaching of writing in different parts of the world. Tracing these developments could help us to build on the available source of knowledge.

2.2.2 Approaches to teaching writing

Broadly speaking the techniques of teaching writing fall under three categories.

a. A heritage model, using classical texts and imitation (See 2.2.3, a).
b. A Competence model, using analysis and emphasising correctness (See 2.2.3, b).
c. A process model, using free expression and emphasising growth (See 2.2.3, e).

(Mandel 1980).

Though a number of approaches have been proposed for each of these categories, five dominant approaches can be said to be important.

The five main approaches are as follows:

a. Fixed product: This approach aims at teaching a select number of specific types of writing, e.g. business letter or the academic essay, and it emphasises correct forms, structures and language. The composition work undertaken in our schools and colleges would fall under this category (See 2.2.3. a).

b. Variable product: This approach aims at teaching a variety of different forms and types of compositions dependent on the audience and tasks and it emphasises appropriate structural forms and language (See
2.2.3. e).

c. Phase Instruction: This approach emphasises the various stages of writing like pre-writing and revision and aims at developing security in the process (See 2.2.5).

d. Content Instruction: This approach aims at the writing skill indirectly. It emphasises the learning of appropriate discourse about a subject - e.g. literature or history.

e. Knowledge Instruction: This approach emphasises the teaching of information about language and writing. It aims at correct use of structures, forms and language through the acquisition of such knowledge.

Each approach bears implications for what would go on in class, the selection of topic and the type of feedback. In practice teachers do not use a single approach exclusively. Most teachers are eclectic or pragmatic but one or the other of these approaches tends to dominate the thinking of a particular teacher. Tracing the approaches used by different teachers from the past to the present and the themes they have used...
could help us decide which of these approaches is better suited to the learners in Gujarat.

2.2.3 Types of themes used - past and present

As the teaching methods of general education have been undergoing changes and as the objectives of a language curriculum have been looked at from fresh points of view, the types of themes used and the way writing is taught also have changed. The change that we can see here is a gradual evolution and not a sudden change. An overall view of the teaching processes reveal four obvious times of change. They are the Italian Renaissance with Guarino and Vittorino, the 17th century scientific movement with Comenius, the romantic reconstructive period of the late 18th and early 19th century of Pestalozzi, Herbart and Froebal and the early 20th century of the Progressive educators in the communist countries. These changes and developments are worked out in some detail in the following sections.

a. Early developments up to the 16th century

From the time of Isocrates through the following 800 years in the general design of the European literary pattern of education there were three areas of study: Grammar, Style, and Eloquence. In Grammar the
focus was on usage. Learners were supposed to memorise the rules and work out exercises. Style was meant for developing oral and written expression. The teaching methods aimed at leading the learners from appreciation of written works to production of compositions. In the beginning learners were asked to appreciate the works of great writers. Textual analysis was the main focus of this approach. The teacher provided the pupils with all possible examples of rhetorical compositions. First the teacher commented on these works. Learners analysed them carefully. They looked into the purpose of each composition. They sought out the general structure of each passage. They studied the manner in which various rhetorical devises were used and the desired effects produced. For teachers such as Isocrates and Quintillian it was a search for excellence in expression and the study of the way in which the intended effect was produced. This analysis later led to production of compositions of similar kind.

Eloquence, the third area of study in the European literary pattern of education, was meant for giving practice in public speaking. But here writing preceded speech. Whatever was to be spoken was first written down, memorised and then presented. In preliminary exercises learners wrote on topics such as:
Stories based on fables
biographies of famous men
comparison of good and bad characters
arguments for and against well-known divisions in history, and
carefully structured discussions of well-known sayings and debatable propositions.

More advanced learners composed substantial orations on fictitious legal cases or on abstract themes. The topics were so selected that the learners would learn virtue while learning rhetoric.

Chinese literary education

Chinese literary education was based on more or less similar methods. Here also similar topics were used. The goal of literary education was a composition in prose or a poem well-structured, subtly expressed pure in language and attractive in calligraphy. Learners were closely involved in active participation with the teacher and other learners at all levels, culminating in the creative work of individual compositions and the delivery of major orations in the later stages of education.
b. Language teaching in the Renaissance

A distinctly Renaissance pattern was produced by the effective blending of the three educational traditions - the Chinese tradition, the later medieval education and the literary education. The main exponents of this method were Vittorino de Feltre, Guarino da Verona and Erasmus.

The composition work of this period was based on the model of Cicero. There were graded compositions which took into account the learner's age, ability and stage of learning. For the first time a number of sequentially organised large classes were formed. Play activities were introduced and the motivation of learners was emphasised. Competition, usually called emulation, developed as a useful and appropriate form of motivation. Learners were graded and promoted to the next classes by regular examinations.

c. The beginning of a science of teaching

Comenius (1592-1670) made the first comprehensive attempt to construct teaching methods on scientific principles. He tested a number of processes in many years of teaching and incorporated them in a series of graded textbooks. His two great works, the Great Didactic (1632) and the Analytical Didactic (1648)
emphasise the importance of sense experience and nature's contribution to education. According to Comenius

"nothing should be taught to the young, unless it is not only permitted but actually demanded by their age and mental strength".

Here is the beginning of the developmental view of educational psychology. In this age the spiral curriculum came into existence wherein the same things are taught in a different manner at successive levels. This was done with a view to utilising the knowledge of the stage of intellectual development reached by the learner in each case.

The topics selected for written work at the time of Comenius were quite different from the earlier ones. In Comenius' developmental and activity type approach, the nature of the learner, the relevance of the process to him and his reactions to the teaching methods were given importance. The Subject-oriented approach of the past changed into a learner-oriented approach.

According to Comenius, an educated human being did not accept truth merely on authority but examined and probed ideas for himself. Hence the teachers should encourage learners to seek and discover things by their own efforts. This was a move away from dependence on imitation, memorisation and observance of rules that
characterised much of the practice of traditional literary education.

d. Developments in the 18th and 19th century

Pestalozzi (1746-1827) wanted to make innovations in the field of education through experimentation. He wanted to psychologise education which means two things:

a. To develop methods in line with the developmental pattern of children's growth, and

b. To make the progress of perception the central element in his teaching method.

There was concrete and persistent effort to make the intellectual development of children the starting point of the teaching process. The teacher should follow a process which would turn initial sensory contact into clear and distinct ideas. A sense perception must be:

- Related to others already in mind,
- the essentials should be distinguished from the unessentials and
- the essentials should be described and possibly classified so that it becomes distinct and capable of use.

All these activities should be in accord with the
learners' intellectual development. The principle tools in the process were language, form and number. By associating language with sense impressions through the process of analysis, description and classification, he considered that ideas would be developed and classified into thought patterns. To facilitate the process, Pestalozzi developed object lessons, an elementary form of discovery learning. The procedure was to use the sense perceptions of objects such as a piece of mineral, classroom objects, or objects available in the environment. The sense perceptions of these objects were used as the basis for examination, classification, and development into ideas appropriate to the object. Pestalozzi puts more emphasis not on learners' sense impressions but on self activity. He had great concern for the learners' emotional and intellectual development. The teacher was to develop the individual creative force, keeping in mind how to relate it to other individuals and to the world they live in. Here for the first time, the concept of looking at the written work from the readers' point of view was introduced.

Herbart (1776-1841) developed Pestalozzi's embryonic ideas into a substantial theory of cognition centering on the process of apperception. This is the process of fusing with an acceptable group and being related to
The ideas within the group. The instructional steps were - preparation, presentation, association, assimilation and application.

The first step was to stir up in the learners' mind the ideas upon which the teacher wished to graft the new material. The second was to present his material clearly, succinctly and attractively. The third was to associate it with ideas previously in the learners' mind, knitting it skilfully into the existing pattern. Then the fourth step was to examine the fresh pattern formed out of the association mass that had been formed. The final step was for fixing the new material in the learners' mind by applying it in a variety of ways, in tests, classroom exercises and assignments for homework.

The instructional sequence was associated with what the Herbartians referred to as the "doctrine of interest". The use of interest meant that the material should be within the range of learners' apperception. There should be scope for self activity through stimulation of curiosity, inquiry, imagination and reflection. There should be a constant drive towards the mastery and permanent acquisition of what was being learnt.

e. Progressive education - 20th century
Progressive educators merged in several European countries and in the US about the turn of the 20th century and remained an important influence on educational theory and practice until about 1950. The essential element in the methods of all progressive educators was activity based learning.

The activity method emphasises the following:

* Learners' needs and interests as perceived from current social conditions and aspirations as well as individual's own expectations are important.
* Learners should acquire functional knowledge through purposive work and problem solving. Learners should be given practice in gathering and evaluating data and putting forward and testing hypotheses; reaching appropriate conclusions and presenting them effectively.
* Appropriate opportunity for expression is very important because expression makes understanding of knowledge and experience better. Teachers' task is to emphasise not elegance but sincerity, that is, to teach learners to express their experience aptly and accurately in whatever was the appropriate medium.
Involvement of the learners in cooperative experiences should be given importance. The course was neither teacher centred nor learner centred but was evolved with a cooperative effort between the teacher and the learner.

In early 20th century in England the prevailing method of teaching English was criticised because it was based on the teaching of classics and not on the teaching of modern languages and it suppressed personal expression and spontaneity. Hence the progressives argued for more activity and individual expression.

Some of the improvements brought about by the progressive educators of the 20th century are as follows:

$ Grady produced a textbook on composition which omitted grammar and encouraged learners into the art of writing through experimentation with various styles.

$ Caldwell Cook inspired his learners with a play-way approach which stimulated their imagination and gave them constant practice in writing spontaneous compositions on activities in which they were
In the 1930's emotional and intellectual growth were linked with language development and the study of English literature was given importance. Linguistic theories supported the movement away from traditional methods by directing attention to language as was currently used and by looking for a grammatical structure that fitted the usage of the living language.

The Bullock report

The Bullock report entitled 'A language for life' written for the British Government in 1975 integrated a number of 20th century trends. It tried to fuse together the orderliness and quality of the traditional process with the thrust, relevance and freedom of a more recent approach.

The traditional boundaries of grammar, reading, dictation, composition and literature and to allot each separate time and place was not considered useful. The grammatical structure of language was taught as and when learners needed it, in the course of their own speech and writing. Learners learnt the language by using the four modes of
talking, listening, writing and reading in close relationship with one another. Interplay of these modes and the interactive process were emphasised.

In writing for example,

"... the first task for the teacher is one of encouraging vitality and fluency in the expressive writing that is nearest to speech. Children will move out into other modes in their own various ways and at various times that no one can predict in any detail. Their reading interests will be an influential factor, particularly in the early stages. To develop they must take in written forms of the language and articulate these with their own general language resources, built up by years of listening and speaking. And they must do this in such a way that the whole corpus is within call when they sit down to write"

(Bullock Report 1975)

Versatility and precision in written expression were encouraged by writing for various audiences. The teacher created conditions for fluent expression, helped the learners develop technical control of the process of expression and gain an understanding of a
range of communication styles and increasing control over the quality of their own speech and writing. Language experiences were related to learners' life and their further intellectual, emotional and linguistic development. The teachers ensured that the learners perceived this relationship.

The gradual change we see here from the time of Aristotle to the twentieth century progressive educators is a process of evolution. The changes in the teaching learning process of native speakers of English has changed the methods of teaching written English in TESOL (Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages) situations too. Tracing the changes in TESOL situations could help us draw useful conclusions for devising effective techniques and materials for teaching written English.

2.2.4 Writing in TESOL Situations

There are a number of differences between learning to write in mother tongue and learning to write in any other language. Donn Byrne (1979) discusses the problems involved and how they are related to the tasks we assign to the learners.
a. Types of Tasks

The learners when they learn to write in their mother-tongue, usually have a command of the spoken language. Though they have to learn to form the letters and so on and very few of them really become proficient in writing, they still have the advantage of having a fairly good knowledge of the language. They might also have been exposed to the written form through having been read to in their mother-tongue. In a foreign or second language classroom the learners have very little knowledge at their disposal. At the same time they are more mature than they were when they learnt to write in their mother-tongue. They are also conscious of the limitations which the language imposes on the expression of their ideas.

According to Donn Byrne (1979) it is important to consider the learners' problem of having more ideas than what they can successfully express.

"To resolve this problem it will be necessary to strike some sort of balance which prevents them from going beyond their linguistic attainment in the foreign language and provides them with writing activities which satisfy them on an intellectual level."
The main activities suggested by Donn Byrne for the early stages are dialogue writing and letter-writing. According to him letter-writing has many advantages and it fulfills a main purpose of teaching writing. He also discusses a number of meaningful copying activities and free writing activities which can be easily carried out in class so as to make the learners understand that

"... effective communication can take place through the medium of writing." (Donn Byrne, 79:49)

It is important to select suitable tasks which create a need to communicate through the medium of writing. But selecting the tasks alone is not enough to develop the writing skill of the learners. It is also necessary to think of effective procedures which help the learners to attempt the tasks with confidence and learn to write to the best of their ability. Especially the variety of procedures that can be used effectively in TESOL situations need to be discussed.

b. Variety of Procedures

Different approaches employ various procedures to teach writing. For example, sentence practice, grammar, punctuation and spelling or vocabulary may be taught in some instructions. Some others may involve the
learning of rules and the correction of incorrect sentence. According to D'Hare (1973) practice in sentence combining with or without grammar instruction increases the stylistic maturity of many learners and also increases the scores they receive in tests of composition. But according to Elley (1976) instruction in grammar separated from the actual writing, revision and editing of learner's compositions has little effect on writing performance.

According to Donn Byrne (1979) the graphalogical resources orthography, punctuation and other devices used to convey patterns of meaning—should be assessed in terms of their value as part of the resources of the written form of the language and their relative importance in a writing programme. He emphasises on the communicative value of the written text and hence is against adopting a normative attitude towards these features. Even punctuation should not be taught mechanically, as something to be added after the writing task is completed. Learners should realise the importance of the punctuation mark as an essential part of the written system. Hence instead of giving the learners rigid rules it would be better to encourage them to consider the effect on the reader if, for example, sentence or paragraph boundaries are not mark-
Another procedure of writing instruction emphasises the practice of paragraph structures or essay structures following a particular format. The format could be, cause effect, classification, narration etc. Recent approaches suggest that learners should study the rhetorical devices which are essential to produce a text in which the sentences are organised into a coherent whole, in such a way that they fulfil the writers' communicative purpose. The devices may be logical, grammatical or lexical. Logical devices include words or phrases which indicate meaning relationships between or within sentences. The rhetorical devices help the writer organise his ideas properly so that the reader is able to follow him from one sentence to another. Even if the learners are familiar with these devices they will still have to learn to use them in writing. Therefore the writing programme requires an extensive understanding of these resources and considerable practice in using them in appropriate forms of written expression.

To familiarise the learners with the devices which are needed for effective communication, adequate exposure to the language through the medium of writing is
necessary. True understanding of a text depends on an appreciation of the devices which the writer has employed in order to convey his meaning through the medium of writing. Hence Donn Byrne (1979) suggests exposure to good models of written work as the first step to teach writing. According to him this exposure is as important as listening is to speech. He suggests that learners should be made to understand that writing has a communicative purpose. This understanding will come to them when they learn to find out the resources of the written language that are used to get the message across.

A similar analysis of written work used to be carried out with the help of classical texts as far back as 4th century BC (See 2.2.3.a). But the type of analysis suggested by Donn Byrne is slightly different. The classical analysis looked into the various rhetorical effects which went into the making of an excellent oratory. The modern analysis tries to find out what is the message conveyed, to whom is it addressed, and how the contact with the reader is established and maintained.

2.2.5 Stages of Instruction
Though there has been a lot of controversy about how writing should be taught, instructions in writing include four stages, generally.

a. Pre-writing
b. Composition
c. Revising
d. Editing

Pre-writing includes all the activities which precede the actual writing of the first draft of a composition. Composing includes all the activities related to the production of the draft. Revising includes the activities involved in reordering or modifying a composition between the first and the final draft. Editing includes the activities concerned with the production of a final copy.

a. Pre-writing

Pre-writing is more or less synonymous with invention, being the act of discovery of at least two things:

- What is to be said and
- the ways by which it might be organised and displayed.

Pre-writing generally refers to mental activities but
it may also refer to a number of things like discussion, outlining and note-taking.

Teaching pre-writing

A number of pedagogical approaches have been advanced for the teaching of pre-writing. The most classical is the discussion of arguments and strategies of argument as well as logical analysis of the topic. Alternative models of topic analysis include problem solving, dramatism and tagmemics (Young, 1976).

All the approaches to teaching pre-writing agree on one point - learners (together with the teacher or separately) should analyse the assignments in terms of three main points: (a) Content, (b) purpose, and (c) the intended or target reader of the composition. Approaches differ in the importance they give to one of these three aspects of an assignment. For example, problem solving approaches stress originality over conventional or appropriate ways of handling the assignments. (See 2.2.3 e). Some other approaches emphasise the role and the personal involvement of the writer in the assignment as opposed to the analysis of the audience and what will interest the reader (See 2.2.3.d).

Most of these approaches agree on the point that much work should be done before writing begins.
But recent approaches suggest that invention occurs within the act of writing. For example, Macrorie (1970) discusses an approach wherein learners are allowed to put the pen to paper and let the ideas flow freely. So their first draft is filled with ideas in the order in which it comes to their mind. Later it is analysed and revised in order to produce a finished product.

Britten, (1975) also supports the importance of "expressive" writing particularly for younger learners. Expressive writing is defined as writing in which the writer seeks to explore his or her own ideas about a topic with little regard to others as audience. These approaches have their own merit, but learners with limited knowledge of the language, who have little experience in free writing, find it difficult to express their ideas freely. Hence a number of attempts have been made to gradually lead the learner from guided compositions to free writing. These approaches think it important to isolate various difficulties involved in the production of a text and present them gradually in a systematic way, in the pre-writing stage.

Alexander (1971) devised a scheme where the learners were gradually led to write free compositions in six
stages. He started with the organisation of compound sentences and complex sentences and followed it up with connecting notes and then finally writing notes for free composition. Moody (1974) discusses the types of writing tasks assigned by teachers who followed the 'grammar translation method' or the 'direct method'. Here the learners were assigned a task like, 'My Family'. They were made to write guided compositions in the beginning. Later the control was reduced by forcing the learners to make meaningful choices.

The learners contribution in these approaches are very slight.

Arapoff (1968) and Lawrence (1975) considered writing as a thinking process. They attempted to construct rhetorical frames for guided writing. For the most part all these writing activities were very much on the level of exercises, focussing on the paragraph as the unit of expression. Spencer (1967) also suggests a number of exercises which gradually lead the learner to writing free compositions.

In Gujarat learners are used to being assigned topics like 'The Postman' or 'My friend' (See Chapter 1). Any programme designed for them need to be based on what they are actually doing now, so that the new techniques and materials help them proceed from known to unknown gradually.
Having discussed the first stage of writing instruction, in some detail, we need to look into the other stages like composition, revising and editing.

b. Composition

A number of studies have been carried out to understand the various factors involved in composing and their pedagogical implications. Emig (1971), Graves (1975), Britten (1975), Flower (1979), Hayes (1979) and Lindell (1974) have conducted studies involving learners of various ages as they are engaged in writing a composition. Most of these studies have either interrupted the composer in the act of writing or have transcribed the composer's comments while writing. The results of these studies are as follows:

- The composing process is complex.
- Pre-writing and revision are not necessarily separated in sequence from actual writing.
- The writer is simultaneously concerned with the content (what is said) and the form of style (how it is said) in the composition.
- Writing improves if there is feedback during the course of writing rather than after it.

(Zooliner 1969)
A number of factors of composition have been identified and the fact is established that feedback during writing is more effective than correcting the mistakes after the activity is completed. But the pedagogical means of providing feedback to learners have not been developed. It is still not clear how much intervention by the teacher is beneficial to learners. Donn Byrne (1979) also suggests that learners should be supported in their writing tasks. But too much intervention may curb their flow of ideas or spontaneity in free expression. Because of these problems in most cases instruction focuses on pre-writing and revision.

c & d Revising and Editing

PERC Communications, New York, a communications firm conducts in-house courses on effective writing and speaking for businesses and other associations.

Ms. Reimold, its President, provides guidelines and hints on writing for effective communication.


"As far as the West is from the East... so far should the act of writing be from that of editing. They are distinct, independent activities, performed, it seems, by different halves of the brain. Writing is putting your thought into words. Editing is making the verbal expression palatable and understandable to the people..."
who will read it." (The Hindu, Focus 'When you sit down to write' May 31 1987).

In his book 'Writing with Power' Peter Elbow says that the writer should write his first draft for at least ten minutes without stopping just to separate the producing from the revision process.

Much of the direct instruction in writing in classrooms takes place in revising and editing. The instruction usually focuses on the following two aspects:

1. Development and organisation of ideas
2. Style, form and mechanics

The first part deals with the content of the text while the second is concerned with the language aspect. The first aspect mainly takes into account what is written while the second aspect looks into how it is written.

Moira Chimombo (1986) in his article offers a number of suggestions for editing and revising learners' compositions. He suggests techniques for dealing with sentence, paragraph and composition level errors which he has tried out at the secondary school level at Africa.

The process of instruction could be of two types. In cases where the teacher is in control all the time,
whatever is written by the learners is checked by the teacher, suggestions are made for revising the written work. In some cases learners are asked to work in groups or pairs to discuss whatever is written. They discuss about development and organisation of ideas as well as style, form and mechanics like spelling and punctuation. They help each other in revising and editing the compositions.

The two types of approach for instructions in revising and editing could be fruitfully combined. Learners could be asked to work in groups to correct each others' mistakes and the teacher could offer help whenever necessary. This way the teacher stays in control but does not interfere too much. It is also better to make the learners aware of the mistakes and how they hinder communication.

Having discussed about the instructions in writing it would be useful to think about the implications that can be drawn for the present study.

2.2.6 Implications for the present study

The discussions about the types of themes used from the ancient days to the present, and the types of writing activities suitable to the learners who are non-native speakers of English are helpful in drawing implications for the types of tasks that can be tried out in the
The discussions on the various approaches to teaching writing and the variety of procedures that can be adopted in TESOL situations help us draw implications for the teaching of writing. The following are the implications drawn for material preparation as well as techniques of teaching writing:

1. $ Learners should be engaged in meaningful writing activities. They should not be asked to write anything mechanically.

2. $ Learners should be made aware of the communicative purpose of writing. They should be helped to think about the reader and the message they want to convey and choose their language appropriately.

3. $ A letter given in the textbook could be used as a model (appendix 5). Learners could work in groups, discuss and decide how to write a reply to this letter. As suggested by Donn Byrne the linking and sequencing devices could be introduced using this informal letter. Various other aspects like, the lay out of a letter, modes of address and certain opening and closing formulas could also be discussed.

4. $ Other writing activities could be selected keeping in mind the composition topics suggested by the
syllabuses presently in use in Gujarat (appendix 2)

5. $ In keeping with the discussions undertaken in this chapter, learners could be given a choice as to what they want to write about and how they want to write it. They need to be shown models of coherent pieces of writing and made aware of the need to have an introduction and conclusion and the need to properly organise their sentences and link them so as to write a unified paragraph.

6. $ An eclectic approach to the teaching of writing needs to be evolved keeping in mind the needs of the learners in Gujarat. The present approach used in most of the schools in Gujarat is the fixed product approach (See 2.2.2). This approach gives importance to specific types of writing (letter or essay) and emphasises the importance of grammatical accuracy and the mechanics of writing like handwriting, spelling and punctuation. To make the learners pay more attention to what is appropriate in a given situation, a combination of fixed product, variable product and phase instruction needs to be thought of (See 2.2.2).

7. $ Learners could be asked to work in groups, discuss a topic, take notes of what points they
want to include in a write up, write individual compositions developing the points they have noted down and then work again in groups for revising and editing their written work.

2.3 Testing Writing

This section begins with an overview of the historical perspective of written examinations and then goes on to discuss different types of tests like the essay test, the interlinear test, the objective test and the pragmatic test. A comparison of the different types of tests helps in drawing implications for the testing of writing.

2.3.1. Historical Perspective

Written examinations have a long history. Kuo reports that the Great shun, a model emperor of antiquity whose reign ended in 2205 BC tested his officers through written examinations every third year and after three examinations either gave them a promotion or dismissed them from service. European universities from the beginning emphasised examinations as the basis for the awarding of degrees and honours. The Cambridge Tripos is a well-known example of such examinations. In the 19th century Horace Mann administered uniform written
examinations to a selected sample of learners from the Boston public schools. His arguments were influential in bringing about substitution of written for oral examinations. Horace Mann (1845) advocated the use of a large number of specific questions in place of fewer general questions and a search for more objective standards of educational achievement.

This search for objective evaluation of written work continues even today. While the teaching of writing emphasises the need for developing individuality, creativity and personal involvement, the testing of writing looks for the common factors which can be objectively evaluated so as to measure the learners' proficiency in written expression.

2.3.2 Essay Tests

Educators have realised the value of extended discourse for assessing learners' understanding and for interpreting their academic and personal experience, since the time of Aristotle. Essay examinations are widely used in school systems throughout the world. They are given during school terms to monitor the development of subject matter and writing skill, at the end of the courses and schooling levels to certify
achievement, and as entrance examinations to determine qualifications for admissions to a higher level.

Though many countries have now abandoned essay examinations in favour of more easily scored objective tests, in India we still use it to a large extent. Even in countries like the US where multiple choice testing has replaced essay examinations at all levels a lot of criticism is voiced. It is said that the learners' ability to engage in disciplined thought and the ability to express it in coherent, supported discourse is seriously deficient. The NAEP (National Assessment of Educational Progress, 1981) challenges the construct validity of multiple choice questions for measuring the subject matter and especially writing skill development. They think more emphasis should be placed on test formats which stimulate learners to use higher level reasoning processes as they formulate extended discourse, solve complex problems or apply subject matter concepts and principles. The ETS (Educational Testing Service, 1983) research report describes the attempt made to determine the extent to which the current version of TOEFL is a valid indicator of the English Writing skills' which mainly consists of multiple choice items. TOEFL (Test of English as Foreign Language) has conducted a survey research to
identify the writing skills required of beginning undergraduates and graduate learners. This would lead to designing "more valid direct measures of writing ability that could be related to scores on TOEFL in the future." (pg 10)

A number of aspects of essay tests needs to be studied in detail so as to understand their advantages and disadvantages.

a. Purpose of Essay Examinations

Essay tasks are intended to measure the quality or status of subject matter and writing ability. Since quality and status imply standards of judgement we need to compare it with something else. There are two types of comparisons:

1. Norm-referenced testing - comparing one individual to another.
2. Criterion or domain referenced testing - comparing individuals to standards of subject matter achievement.

Norm reference tests help us to identify the best learners within a particular group of learners. The criterion referenced tests give an indication of the subject level mastery. Current evaluation thinking
suggests that a well-constructed test can serve both the functions. The same test could help us evaluate the level and development of the learners as well as compare them normatively to the progress of other population of learners.

b. Components of Essay Examinations

Essay examinations have often been criticised for their lack of objectivity. Critical components of essay examination methodology need to be identified and analysed, if we want to make better use of essay examinations.

Some of the important components identified are as follows:

$ the skill to be assessed,
$ the essay problem assignment, and
$ the scoring criteria

The skill to be measured should be sufficiently defined if the test is to be reliable. The first step in formulating test specifications is to define the skills assessed. Skill specifications are generally considered to include definition of the content and behaviour. In subject matter essay examinations the
content would be facts, concepts and principles. The behaviour would not be just the observable behaviour "write", but the procedure, strategies and solution routines the learner was to apply to the content. In tests of writing ability the focus is not on content points covered but on the discourse features of the requested essay, for example, whether the composition is a well-formed example of narrative or expository writing.

c. Structures of assignment

In tests of writing ability the structures of assignments have varied considerably. At one end of the continuum essay tasks are described as topics. Topics could be a simple one word clue which might bring out different kinds of responses. At the other end of the continuum essay tasks direct learner's treatment of discourse, mode, topic and audience or the reader. The one word prompt implies the view that writing is a skill that can be equally demonstrated in response to any one of the myriad writing tasks. The kind of writing tasks presented in class is often criticised as they do not present full rhetorical contexts that sufficiently inform the learners about the writing purpose, topic, audience, writer's role and intended criteria for judging the essay (Britton 1975).
Recent rhetorical studies suggest that different rhetorical purposes (to express, persuade, inform) place different cognitive demands on the writer and consequently, learners write differently when writing for different rhetorical aims and audience. In a study conducted by Quellmalz, Capell and Chou (1982) writing competency profiles derived by tests differing in discourse mode and response mode were compared. Their findings establish the fact that levels of performance vary on tasks with different writing purposes. Measures of writing which demand different discourse modes, such as narrative or expository, tap different cognitive skills and hence it is important to clarify the demands that are required by different, specific writing tasks.

Tests of written assignments should also take into account the time alloted for planning, writing and at least reviewing, if not revising the written work. The amount of time scheduled for essay writing varies widely across countries. Time can support or constrain learners' chance to demonstrate their competence. The current test theory and research support the advisability of structuring essay examination prompts that clearly specify the aim, topic, audience, writers' role and evaluation criteria and that which permit sufficient time for learners to engage in all aspects
of the writing process.

d. Scoring criteria & Rating scale formats

The criteria used to judge the essay examination operationally define which content features and test structure constitute a "good" or at least a "competent" response. To be credible, criteria should not reflect the preferences of only a few individuals, but should represent standards endorsed by a community of professionals knowledgeable about the subject matter.

Secondly, the criteria should refer to these features of content and written expression which are amendable to instructional intervention. We cannot test what we do not teach in the classroom. For example, dimensions of "depth", "flavour", and "creativity" may enhance the quality of the essay but a growing number of educators contend that it is neither logical nor fair to hold the learners accountable for subject matter or writing expertise that the schools cannot demonstrate they can teach.

The criteria used to evaluate learners' content and written expression vary along a number of dimensions. The variation may be as follows:

$ From qualitative value judgements to quantitative
counts of information and test features;

$ from global reactions to analytical judgements;

$ from comprehensive attention to a range of concepts and text features to isolated focus on particular information or text feature;

$ from vague guidelines to replicable precise definitions.

Generally, readers' reactions to learners' essays involve three levels of judgement.

i. Subjective, global impressions of overall quality

ii. Analytic judgements about component test features

iii. A holistic quality judgement combining subjective impressions with judgements about the quality of the combinations of text elements.

i. Global judgement

In general impression scoring, a rater reads an essay once and assigns it a quality score. General impression ratings are global, heavily qualitative and are based upon vague guidelines that may not refer to component text features or their differential weighting or importance.

ii. Analytic judgement

The most quantitative, detailed and replicable
scales are analytic rating scales where readers assign several scores for various features of the essay. Analytic scores vary considerably in the range of content, rhetorical, structural and syntactic elements referenced and in the relative weights of these elements. The analytic scores differ in the importance they give to different features of written assignment.

S Mohanraj (1981) discusses analytical rating scales of Carroll (1961), Alan & Campbell (1965), Cooper (1972), Davies (1977) and Pilliner. He has prepared a model of his own which includes twelve features of writing. He has further simplified it and has arrived at a model suited to our situation where teachers cannot spend much time in correcting compositions. This model is quite practicable and easy to use. The following is the model suggested:
A similar model is suggested by Rita M. Deyoe (1980).

Her model gives more importance to grammatical aspects whereas Mohanraj's model attempts to concentrate on stylistic and discoursal features.

### iii. Holistic judgement

Holistic scales, where readers assign a single score, often combine characteristics of both general impression and analytic approaches. Holistic schemes vary widely in the range of text elements contributing to each score point and the specificity with which score levels are defined (Ingenkamp 1977, Quellmalz 1980).
Since the focus, specificity and objectivity of criteria informing impressionistic, holistic or analytic approaches vary considerably, an examination programme should weigh carefully the nature of the criteria selected and their underlying rationale. Otherwise the programme may find that the criteria do not match well with the aims of the assessment and instructional programme and do not provide a useful status report or diagnostic feedback. The need for explicit criteria is also apparent for scoring subject matter essay examinations. Learners commonly complain about the ambiguous subjective criteria used for subject matter essay examinations in the classroom assessments. When results of large-scale achievement exams have serious consequences for learners' explicit public and rational scoring keys are imperative.

e. Rating Procedures

When a large number of papers must be scored by a pool of readers, an assessment programme must ensure that evaluation criteria are uniformly interpreted and applied. Such standardization involves both the
formulation of explicit criteria and procedures for training raters. In the US rater training follows a fairly standard procedure. The following steps are employed to train raters:

$ There is a brief introduction to the rating scale.
$ Then the raters begin to practice applying criteria to a set of papers representing the test sample.
$ A trainer leads a discussion of the features of each paper that result in the classification of the paper to a particular grade.

Training time varies according to the number of separate scores recorded for each paper and according to the clarity of the criteria. The rigor of the procedures used to decide if acceptable rater agreement levels have been attained at the end of the training vary from a show of hands to pilot tests requiring independent scoring of essays.

In India though essay examinations are widely used, there is no programme to train raters. Failure to conduct any structured training or to check on prior agreement levels may increase the risk of unreliable scoring.

f. Reliability

The reliability of an examination programme depends on
the degree to which it eliminates measurement error.
Four potential sources of error or score fluctuations identified for examinations of writing ability (but applying as well to tests of subject matter skills) are as follows:

$ The writer-within-subject individual differences
$ The assignment variations in item or task content
$ Between-rater fluctuations
$ Within-rater instability

The writer within-subject error can be avoided if the learners are asked to write a series of essays instead of one single essay. Thus the reliability of learners' performance can be determined by gathering data on a pool of homogeneous items or assignments. Since essay writing requires at least twenty or thirty minutes it is often difficult to have them write many essays in examinations. But studies of the consistency of learners' performance across a series of essays often report low reliabilities for a single essay. According to Spencer (1979) analysis of the stability of learner writing performance across several essays is also not reliable because of the variability brought in by the differences in topics.
Some ways of overcoming the problem of reliability are as follows:

$ Essay tasks should be based on specific skills of writing. This would reduce error variance due to the assignment.

$ Essays should be collected on at least two parallel assignments. This would reduce error associated with individual variability.

$ Scores on several essays should be combined to increase the reliability of subject matter essay examinations.

Inter-rater agreement is the most prevalent issue concerning reliability in essay examinations. Statistical indices of agreement levels include co-efficient alpha, generalisability co-efficients, point biserial correlations and simple percentages of agreement. The most effective method of reducing inter-rater variability is to provide training on clearly specified criteria. To reduce error due to within-rater score fluctuations over time (rater drift) due to reader fatigue and/or carelessness, some form of interspersed check procedure seems helpful, according to Quellmalz (1980). Although some studies report that readers tend to get more lenient or more harsh as rating progresses, few assessment programmes routinely
monitor this problem.

Mike Hayhoe (1983) in his article, 'A Historical Review of Essay Marking' discusses the problem of reliability in marking essays. According to him this problem has been persistent for a long time in the history of marking essays. If Rowntree was concerned about marker reliability in the 1880's, Raleigh (1980) is equally worried about the same problem. Mike Hayhoe says that an error of twenty-five percent in grading an essay may be a conservative estimate and it has been suggested that the problem of unreliability in marking essays exists in internal assessment as well as external.

Reliability is inextricably linked with validity. The reliability of an essay examination depends on how valid the examination is and how valid the markers are in their assessment. A brief consideration of the problems faced by examiners in designing valid examinations is necessary if one wants to integrate testing and instruction.

g. Validity

The validity of an examination derives from evidence that the test accurately and dependably measures the specified skills. Evidence for the validity of an examination may take several forms.
i. One form focuses on the test content, that is, the test items or essay assignments, and gathers judgement of subject matter experts regarding a number of things like -

$ the content validity, face validity or the descriptive validity of the items or essay tasks,

$ the objectives or skills defined to be important and representative of subject matter competencies, and

$ the way these skills are elicited in the items, problems or writing assignments.

ii. Other forms of validity focus on test performance to examine the following things:

$ Concurrent validity - whether the scores are comparable to scores on other tests of the same skills,

$ Predictive validity - if the score levels predict future success, and

$ Construct validity - if the performance pattern appears to measure the underlying trait.

The most common methods of attempting to establish the validity of essay examinations have been comparisons of scores to 'related' measures. In the case of tests of writing ability, the 'other' measures chosen as criterion variables are often reading tests, multiple-
choice tests or class grades.

The heart of the validity of a test is whether it measures the underlying skill construct, that is, whether it taps the hypothetical mental store of information and strategies. According to Raleigh (1980) the validity of an examination can be described in terms of the degree to which it 'measures well' what it is intended to measure. According to Mike Hayhoe (1983) there is a possibility to think of 'Markers' validity' that is the degree to which he 'measures well' what the assessment system sets out to measure.

h. Factors affecting marking

The marks awarded to an essay depends on a number of things. For example, Thorndike (1968) discusses the problem of 'uniqueness'. Uniqueness raises the issue of divergence, the individuality of the work, and convergence, notions of correctness and orderliness. How far a marker is affected by divergence and convergence will decide the marks he gives to a particular assignment. Wiseman and Wrigley (1958) identified two schools of thought as far as assessors' value base are concerned. One school values 'imponderables' of validity, freshness and fluency. The second school of thought sees the writer as 'a
craftsman able to show his skill whatever type of material he works in'.

Britton (1963) found some evidence to suggest that teachers may well group towards valuing one end or the other of the following two poles:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sophisticated, conventional</th>
<th>Work based on</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>written - based work</td>
<td>familiar speech</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work based on imagination</td>
<td>Observation of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>including fantasy/the un-</td>
<td>real life</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>real life</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A number of studies conducted in America suggest that teachers tend to cluster in favouring certain criteria - ideas, form, flavour, mechanics, wording - and that the cluster of criteria adopted by the teacher can affect grading.

Deale (1975) feels that 'adequacy' of writing rather than ideas affects the marks awarded. Soloff (1973) argues that lack of consonance between the writers' values and those of the assessor on a topic may affect the grade awarded. The London Association for the teaching of English shares his opinion. In its pamphlet, Assessing Compositions (1965) it expresses concern about how an assessor may react to experiences and attitudes in an essay which are unfamiliar to him and the potential for under or over assessing the work.
Marshall (1960) suggests that assessment in terms of the features of a piece of work which "float" to the examiner - his intuitions about the text - is the proper activity of an alert and sensitive marker. Markers can be affected by visual features at the expense of such aspects as organisation, fluency, appropriateness in terms of task, audience and so on. According to Mike Hayhoe (1983) this may be because the visual features are more immediately obvious, especially when they are flawed, and because there is a greater degree of consensus about them than there is about what "coherence" or "clarity" or other more global criteria may be.

Marshall (1967) and Scannell (1966) have found assessors particularly adversely affected by spelling errors, with errors of grammar and punctuation coming next. Handwriting also has a great impact on the assessors and many researchers like Chase (1968), Briggs (1970), and Soloff (1973) have demonstrated the power of this feature in affecting marking. In his more recent work Briggs (1980) goes further, suggesting that there may be borderline areas in grading in which this value aspect of a piece of writing may be the major factor in deciding what it is worth.

Yates and Pidgeon (1957) found that the setting of an
essay affected the markers' response. If an 'average' piece of work followed several fine pieces, it was likely to be marked hard; if it followed several poor ones it was likely to be upgraded.

The analysis of the present situation in Gujarat also reveals the fact that teachers are more concerned with spelling errors and punctuation. Next comes the grammatical errors. Though all the teachers marked a number of features in the questionnaire (appropriacy, organisation, overall writing ability etc.) as very important, all of them assign one single grade on the basis of the overall impression of the composition.

i) Drawbacks of Essay Examinations

Essay examinations are said to test learners' ability to engage in disciplined thought and the ability to express it in coherent, supported discourse. But a number of points need to be taken into account if essay examinations are used to measure writing ability.

Some of the problems involved in using essay type tests are as follows:

It is difficult for an average teacher to structure such prompts for essay tests that clearly specify the aim, topic, audience, writer's role and evaluation criteria. The problems of reliability, validity and
the factors that affect marking discussed in this section prove that it is very difficult to measure the skills of writing ability through essay examinations.

Teachers cannot spend a lot of time in checking essays using analytic or holistic rating scales. The general impression score usually assigned by teachers is not a reliable method of scoring.

The method of training of raters is expensive and time-consuming and is not practicable as far as the school teachers are concerned.

Since it is not easy to structure, administer and score essay examinations, we need to consider other types of tests which are easy to construct, are easy to evaluate and which give a reliable and valid indication of learners' proficiency to communicate through writing.

2.3.3 The Interlinear test

Findley and Warren (1953) made an attempt to overcome the defects of essay examinations arising from its unreliability of scoring, by the development of a 'semi-objective' test of writing ability termed the Interlinear Test. This test overcomes most of the objections to objective tests of writing ability. Objective tests usually present the learner with poorly written material and provide him with several options
regarding the corrections which should be made. According to Swinford, Frances (1956), the interlinear test structures the learner's response to such an extent that the reliability of scoring is of a very high order.

The interlinear test presents the candidate with a triple spaced copy of a badly garbled piece of writing. The learner is allowed thirty minutes to indicate the necessary co-relations and deletions but is instructed not to add his own ideas. The learner's paper is then 'scored' for his treatment of predetermined errors. The reliability of the interlinear test compares favourably with that obtained for objective tests of the same working time and length. The validity of the interlinear test also is as valid as that of the objective test.

It would be useful to analyse the objective test in detail so as to get a clear understanding of its advantages and disadvantages.

2.3.4 The Objective Test

The objective type test may be of the short answer type or the choice item type. A number of studies have considered the relative validities of short answers and choice items. Cook (1955) found that the correlation
between scores of knowledge of contemporary affairs for college students and a multiple-choice test over the same item of information was so high, when correlated for attenuation, that it was impossible to say that the two tests were measuring two different kinds of achievement. Hurlburt (1954) on the other hand, reported significant differences between completion and multiple-choice tests as measures of precise knowledge of word meaning.

a. Short answer Questions

The short answer items require the learner to write a word, phrase, number or symbol, while the choice items ask him to choose one of the many alternatives given in the test item itself. The short answer type questions may be of the recall of a word or number. The choice items often present new problem situations and suggest alternatives which the examinee has never seen before. So they call for more than recognition.

Short answer questions make a heavy demand on the test constructor because of two reasons:

i. He must concentrate on detailed and highly specific questions to which brief but quite unique verbal or numerical answers can be given.
ii. He must be prepared to deal with frequent and
difficult decisions as to whether a given answer is
just barely adequate or not quite adequate.

Choice items may be one of the following types:

$ Classification
$ matching
$ multiple-choice
$ true/false
$ rearrangement items.

The advantages of the choice items are as follows:

- Choice items can be made very difficult, without
  involving ambiguity and as searching of high levels
  of competence as items in any other form.
- To make wise choices it is necessary to perceive
  clearly the implications or consequences of choosing
  each alternative.

b. Multiple-choice items

A number of books discuss the construction and
administration of multiple choice items. 'Language
Testing' by Robert Lado (1961), 'Modern Language
Testing : A Handbook' by Rebecca Valette (1967),
'Testing English as a Second Language' by David Harris
(1969), Foreign Language Testing: Theory and Practice
by John Clark (1972), 'Testing and Experimental
are some of the important books which deal with the construction of discrete point tests.

Discrete point multiple-choice tests assess one skill at a time, listening, speaking, reading or writing. They assess only one aspect of the skill—i.e., productive versus receptive, oral versus visual, etc. They attempt to focus attention on one point of grammar at a time. Each test item is aimed at one element of a particular component of a grammar item. According to Lado (1961) within each skill, aspect and component, discrete items focus on precisely one and only one phoneme, morpheme, lexical item, grammatical rule or whatever the appropriate element may be.

Remmers and Adkins (1942) studied the reliability of multiple-choice tests as a function of the number of responses per item. They found that reduction in the number of distractors tended to lower the test reliability. Spearman–Brown formula gave reasonable good predictions of the reduced reliability when distractors were eliminated at random. Williams and Ebel (1957) started with four-response forms by systematically eliminating the least effective distractor. They found that in a test period of fixed
time limit, a greater number of two response items would produce more reliable scores than a smaller number of three or four response items. According to Weitzman and Ellis (1946) the essential characteristics of the distractors of multiple-choice items is that they should be plausible to those who lack the knowledge or ability for which item is testing. Hence a lot of care should be put into the selection of the distractors.

c. Drawbacks of discrete item tests

The construction of multiple-choice items is very difficult. Lot of care needs to be taken while preparing the "stem" or the main sentence and the different choices from which the learner has to select one. The main sentence or question should be unambiguous and explicit. All the choices should look plausible for those who lack the knowledge. At the same time there should not be more than one correct answer.

Standardizing discrete item tests require pre-testing, statistical evaluation and rewriting techniques, which is quite time-consuming and require a lot of technical knowledge. Hence it is not practical for an ordinary classroom teacher who may not have the time or technical skill to prepare these discrete item multiple-choice
John W Oiler Jr. (1979) criticizes the discrete item tests. According to him discrete point tests view language as form and usage rather than of process and use. In actual language use, language is not used in bits and pieces. A proficient user of language is not overtly conscious of the isolated phonemes or graphemes or any such bits of language. Again proficiency in using isolated bits does not indicate that the learner can put together these bits and use the language for communication. To test language as communication we need to think of a different kind of test which tests the learners' ability to use the language.

2.3.5 Pragmatic Tests

John W Oiler Jr. (1979) discusses pragmatic tests and criticizes the discrete point tests at length and offers an alternative in the form of pragmatic tests and suggests ways of constructing, administering and scoring pragmatic tests. To understand his concepts it is necessary to get a clear picture of his views on language proficiency, expectancy grammar and pragmatics.

a. Pragmatic tests & Language Proficiency

According to Oiler there are two aspects of language
use:

1. Factive use - when language is used to convey information about people, things, events, ideas and states of affairs.

ii. Emotive use - When language is used to convey our attitude about the factual information we want to convey.

Every time we use language, we use both the aspects of language. It is quite possible for people to agree on the factual information conveyed but differ on the attitude towards those facts.

There are two major contexts of language use:

i. The linguistic context which refers to the verbal and gestural context of language; and

ii. the extralinguistic context which refers to the states of affairs constituted by things, events, people, ideas, relationships, feelings, perceptions, memories and so forth.

The objective aspect of extra linguistic context, the world of existing things, may be distinguished from the subjective aspect of extra linguistic context, the world of self - concept and inter-personal relationships. According to Oller there are systematic correspondences between linguistic and extralinguistic
contexts. Linguistic contexts are pragmatically mapped onto extralinguistic contexts, and vice versa.

b. Pragmatics

Pragmatics is concerned with the relationship between linguistic contexts and extralinguistic contexts.

"Pragmatics is about how people communicate information about facts and feelings to other people, or how they merely express themselves and their feelings through the use of language for no particular audience, except possibly an omniscient God." (Oller, 79: 19)

Quite often we know much more than what we actually express in words. We also leave a lot of it unsaid and we depend on the receiver to fill in what is unsaid and interpret our message.

"In normal use of language, no matter what level of language or mode of processing we think of, it is always possible to predict partially what will come next in any given sequence of elements. The elements may be sounds, syllables, words, phrases, sentences, paragraphs, or larger units of discourse. The mode of processing may be listening, speaking, reading, writing, or thinking, or some combination of these.
In the meaningful use of language, some sort of pragmatic expectancy grammar must function in all cases." (Oller, 1979:25)

c. Expectancy Grammar

According to Oller the notion of an expectancy grammar characterizes the psychologically real system that governs the use of a language in an individual who knows that language. The characteristics of such an expectancy system helps in two ways:
- To explain why certain kinds of language tests apparently work as well as they do; and
- to devise other effective testing procedures that take account of these salient characteristics of functional language proficiency.

A valid language test should press the learners' internalized expectancy system into action and must further challenge its limits of efficient functioning in order to discriminate among degrees of efficiency. According to Oller, a language test to be valid should meet the pragmatic naturalness criteria. A test is said to meet the pragmatic naturalness criteria when it invokes and challenges the efficiency of the learners' expectancy grammar by causing him to process temporal sequences in the language that can conform to normal
contextual constraints and by requiring him to understand the systematic correspondences of linguistic and extralinguistic contexts.

2.3.6 Tests which meet the pragmatic naturalness criteria

There are two closely interrelated criteria of construct validity which need to be imposed on language tests to find out if they meet the pragmatic naturalness criteria.

i. The test must cause the learner to process - either produce or comprehend or possibly to comprehend, store and recall, or some other combination - temporal sequences of elements in the language that conform to normal contextual constraints which may be linguistic constraints or extra linguistic constraints.

ii. The test must require the learner to understand the pragmatic interrelationship of linguistic contexts and extralinguistic contexts.

Some tests which meet the pragmatic naturalness criteria are as follows:

a. Dictation
b. Close
c. Combined Cloze and Dictation - A cloze passage is
prepared deleting single words, parts of words or sequences of words and given to the learner in the written form. The same passage, without any deletions, is heard by the learner either live or on tape. The learner is asked to complete the cloze passage with the help of what he hears.

d. Oral Close Procedure - A cloze passage with deletions is dictated for the learners to copy down and complete the deleted portions with appropriate words.

e. Dictation with interfering noise - Taped verbal material is super imposed with 'white noise'. If the linguistic context under the noise is fully meaningful and subject to the normal extralinguistic constraints, this procedure qualifies as a pragmatic testing technique. For example, if it is a telephone conversation with one party calling from a market place, the noise superimposed will have sounds of the market place.

f. Paraphrase recognition - Learners are asked to read a sentence, paragraph or longer passage and then select from several alternatives the one which best represent the central meaning or idea of the given piece.
g. Question answering - Four answers are given for each question. Learners listen to the question orally and select the best answer. There may be a short dialogue followed by a question. Four or five answers are given and learners select the best answer. This type of test is used in TOEFL examinations.

h. Bilingual syntax measure - A picture or cartoon is shown and learners are asked some questions based on the picture. Burt, Dulay and Hernandez (1975) made learners answer questions based on colourful cartoon style pictures.

i. Oral interview - where learners are asked questions as would happen in a normal interview for a job or admission to a course.

j. Composition or essay writing

k. Narration

l. Translation - which is similar to the one taking place in a real life context.

Having discussed the nature and types of pragmatic tests in general, it would be useful to consider dictation and close in more detail because they meet the criteria like validity, reliability and practicality, being easy to construct, administer and
score.

a. Dictation

Though dictation is not accepted as an efficient means of language testing by Lado (1961), Harris (1969), Anderson (1953), Somaratne (1957), J B Heaton (1975) and Davies (1977), according to Oller (1979) it meets the pragmatic naturalness criteria and is an efficient tool to measure language use.

Anderson (1953), considers dictation as a very indirect and inadequate test of auditory comprehension, while Somaratne (1957) and Ingram (1977) consider it as a test of spelling only. According to Lado (1961), dictation does not test word-order or vocabulary since they are given by the teacher and it measures very little of language. J B Heaton (1975) also thinks dictation is not effective in providing a means of assessing any one skill because it measures too many language features. Davies (1977) also suggests that dictation is too imprecise in diagnostic information.

But Oller (1979) while admitting the limitations of dictation, considers it to be a reliable means to test languages proficiency, if it is administered and scored properly. According to him, any proposed testing procedure which is to qualify as a pragmatic language
processing task must meet two naturalness criteria, viz.

i. It must require the processing of temporal sequences of elements in the language constrained by the normal meaningful relationships of such elements in discourse, and

ii. It must require the performer of the task to relate the sequences of elements to extralinguistic context via pragmatic mappings. In short, pragmatic tasks require time constrained processing of the meaning coded in discourse.

According to Oiler, dictation meets both the criteria of pragmatic tests, if the sequences of words or phrases to be dictated are selected from normal prose, dialogue or some other natural form of discourse, and if the presentation of the material challenges the short term memory of the learners.

"... a simple traditional dictation meets the naturalness requirements for pragmatic language tests. First, such a task requires the processing of temporally constrained sequences of material in the language and second, the task of dividing up the stream of speech and writing down what is heard requires understanding the meaning of the
material - i.e., relating the linguistic context (which in a sense is given) to the extralinguistic context (which must be inferred)." (Oller, 1979: 39)

i. Types of Dictation
There are different types of dictations. Some of them are as follows:

$ Standard dictation - The complete passage is read out and learners are asked to write down what they hear.

$ Partial dictation - Part of the passage is given in writing. Learners hear the complete passage and try to fill in the missing parts. This technique combines dictation with cloze.

$ Dictation with competing noise - The dictation passage is read out on tape. Some noise is superimposed on the taped version of the passage. The noise may be such as we find in real life situations. For example, talking to somebody in a factory while the machines operating are making a lot of noise.

$ Dictation-composition - Before starting to write, learners listen to a passage two or three times. Then they try to write from memory the passage as they heard.

$ Elicited imitation - Learners listen to a passage two or three times. Then they try to recount
orally the passage as they listened to.

ii. Selection of material & administration procedure

Once we decide the purpose of testing and the procedure which is most suitable to our learners, we can select the material. The material should be appropriate to the level of the learners. Once the material is selected the difficulty level can be decided. There are a number of ways of influencing the difficulty level of the task even after the difficulty level of the material has been set by the selection process.

Factors influencing the task difficulty are as follows:

- The conceptual difficulty of the word sequences themselves (other factors being held constant)
- The overall speed of presentation
- The length of sequences of material that are presented between pauses
- The signal to noise ratio - i.e. the amount of noise added to the material
- The number of times the text is presented
- The dialect and the enunciation of the speaker and the dialect the hearer is most familiar with
- A miscellany of other factors.

Since the purpose of the test is decidedly not to assess the speed with which examinees can write, the
pauses must be long enough to ensure that the task is not turned into a speed writing context. A rule of thumb suggested by Oller is for the examiner to subvocalize the spelling of each sequence of verbal material twice during the pause while the learners are writing it.

iii. Scoring Procedure

Standard dictation is usually scored by allowing one point for every word in the text. There are two methods of scoring.

- Error-counting method - Here the number of errors are counted and the sum is subtracted from the total number of words in the text.

- Correct words-in-sequence method - Here the number of correct words in sequence are counted and assigned one mark each. The total is given out of the total number of words in the original text.

These two methods are not perfectly equivalent if intrusions are counted as errors. For example, if two sentences are written as follows:

"This is a Ramanbhai. His is a good doctor."

As per the error counting method 'His' will be counted as an error. It should have been 'He is'. So the
learner will get two less than the total number of words - i.e. six out of eight.

As per the correct words-sequence method, if the errors of intrusion are counted, then the article 'a' in 'This is a Ramanbhai' will also be counted as an error. So the learner will get three less than the total number of words - i.e. five out of eight.

In word-for-word scoring errors counted could be of the following types:

- Errors of deletions - some words are left out by the learners
- Errors of distortions - of form or sequence - The wrong form of the word is written by the learner - 'gets' instead of 'get' - or the word order is not proper.
- Errors of intrusion - Some words are added by the learner in the written passage, though it was not read out as part of the original passage.

Spelling errors can be distinguished as a special category. Only those spelling mistakes which distort the form or meaning of the word can be counted as errors.

For example, if 'tree' is the word given in the
passage, and if the learner writes 'three' or 'try' it will be counted as an error. If the learner writes 'tre' or 'tiri' it will not be counted as an error.

Like dictation, close procedures are also considered as pragmatic tests because they require temporally constrained sequential processing and pragmatic mapping of linguistic elements on extralinguistic contexts.

b. Close

The Cloze procedure was first applied as a reliability measure with native speakers by Taylor (1953). It has since been demonstrated in many studies to have substantial concurrent validity as an integrative test of overall proficiency, in English as a second language. In the studies carried out by Oller & Conrad (1971), Oller (1972), Stubbs & Tucker (1974), Irvine, Atai & Oller (1974) Hinofotis (1980) and Edith Hannia & May Shikhani (1986) high correlations were obtained between cloze scores and corresponding scores on an established measure of language proficiency.

Cloze is considered an integrative rather than a discrete point test because it draws at once on the overall grammatical, semantic and rhetorical knowledge of the language.

To reconstruct the textual message, learners have to
understand key ideas and perceive inter-relationships within a stretch of continuous discourse and they have to produce, rather than simply recognize an appropriate word for each blank. The focus of the task involved is more communicative than formal in nature and it is therefore considered to reflect a person's ability to function in the language.

According to Moller (1981), both close procedure and paragraph writing are integrative in nature. They require the learner to draw upon several language skills simultaneously and involve complex processing of language while the focus is on content. Both require the production of language rather than mere recognition of correct items, although writing may be considered to include the communicative dimension more directly.

There is some disagreement among researchers about the suitability of close to test high-order language abilities. According to Alderson (1979) close provides a measure of core linguistic skills of a relatively low order. According to a number of other researchers like, Chihara, Oller, Weaver and Chavez (1977), Bachman (1982) and Brown (1983), close procedures can test not only lower-order linguistic skills, but also higher-level ability involving discourse constraints across sentences.
1. Types of Cloze

Some cloze use rational deletion procedure to ensure the inclusion of cohesive items. Bachman (1982) in his study used the rational deletion procedure. Some other studies use systematic deletion procedure where the blanks occur at regular intervals. In a study conducted by the American University of Beirut close passages were carefully selected so that blanks systematically include both syntactic and cohesive factors and therefore covered higher-order skills. Edith Hanania and May Shikani (1986) in their article in TESOL Quarterly (Vol.20) report a recent research carried out at the American University of Beirut where the inter-relationship of three types of measures - a standardize ESL test, a close and a written composition test - was studied. The results indicate that there is a high correlation between close and written composition test.

Oller (1979) gives detailed instructions for the selection of close passage and for scoring procedure.

ii. Selecting the material

The difficulty level of the passage should be suited to the level of the learners. The passage should be of some general topic which does not require technical
knowledge. The standard test construction technique known as the fixed ratio method involves deleting every \( n \)th word (where \( n \) usually varies from five to ten) and replacing each one with a standardized blank (usually about fifteen typed spaces). The standard length of cloze is fifty items—thus the passage length is approximately fifty times \( n \). Another procedure is to delete words on some variable ratio usually decided by a rational selection procedure—e.g., delete only content words. Taylor (1857) demonstrated that the every \( n \)th word deletion technique yielded cloze items of somewhat greater reliability and validity than deliberate selection of words to be deleted, i.e., deleting only function or content words.

iii. Scoring criteria

There are two methods of scoring a cloze passage.

\$ The exact word method—The word in the original passage is considered as the correct one and any other word which the testee might supply is not accepted.

\$ Contextual appropriateness—Any word supplied by the testee which is appropriate to the context is accepted.

General guidelines given by Oller for contextual
appropriateness are as follows:
- If it is the exact word as in the original passage it is marked correct.
- If not, it should be checked to see if it fits the immediate surrounding context; whether or not it violates any local constraints in the same sentence or surrounding phrases.
- It should also be checked to see if it is consistent with all of the preceding and subsequent text (this includes previous and subsequent responses in other blanks as filled in by the examinee).

If the response passes all these checks it is marked correct, otherwise it is considered incorrect.

Naccarate and Gilmore (1976) have shown that contextually appropriate scoring can be done either by a single rater working alone or by several raters, with equivalent results.

Having discussed in detail the pragmatic tests, it is time to compare them with discrete point and integrative tests.

2.3.7 Comparison- Discrete point/Integrative/Pragmatic Tests
John Carroll (1961) first proposed the distinction between discrete point and integrative language tests.
Though these two are not always different for practical purposes there are two basic differences.

- The theoretical bases of the two approaches contrast markedly.
- Predictions concerning the effects and relative validity of the two procedures differ.

Discrete tests take language skills apart and attempt to test the knowledge of language one bit at a time. Integrative tests put the skills back together and attempt to assess learner's capacity to use many bits all at the same time and possibly while exercising several presumed components of a grammatical system and perhaps more than one of the skills or aspects of skills.

Pragmatic tests go a little beyond the integrative tests. The pragmatic tests meet the pragmatic naturalness criteria while the integrative tests do not reach up to that point. So unlike the integrative tests, pragmatic tests invoke and challenge the developing grammatical system of the learner. This requires processing sequences of elements in the target language subject to temporal contextual constraints. In addition to this, pragmatic tests are such that learners need to relate the linguistic sequences to extralinguistic contexts in meaningful ways.
2.3.8 Implications for the present study

The above discussions indicate that pragmatic tests like dictation and close can be used effectively to test language proficiency. These two tests are valid and reliable measures of language use. They are practical because it is not very difficult to prepare the material, administer the test, score the test and interpret the results. They also have diagnostic value, and error analysis based on the results could offer suggestions for further instructional programmes.

Scoring of close passages could be based on contextual appropriateness and that of dictation could be of the correct word-in-sequence method.

(See 2.3.6 biii)

Since objective, multiple-choice items do have some advantages, some vocabulary and grammar items could be tested using this method.

To test their communicative efficiency, a letter could be given for which they are to write the reply. The reply could also be given in part thereby structuring the learners' response partly so as to make the evaluation more effective. This
could again be scored using both contextual appropriateness criteria and correct word-in-sequence method.

2.4 Review of Research Studies

Though not much work has been done in the area of writing at the school level in India and particularly in Gujarat, a number of studies carried out in other countries could help us identify the various problems involved and the probable solutions. A number of studies carried out from the early decades of the twentieth century reveal how our concern has been changing from what is written to how it is written and from how reliable the tests are to what aspect of language use do they test.

Before the 60's many of the studies were concerned with the reliability of the essay tests. After the 60's there were a number of studies which identified the features affecting marking. In the 70's our concern has been to find out what writing includes and how it can be taught. The recent researches of the 80's are concerned with teaching writing as communication and testing writing to see whether the message has been successfully communicated.

2.4.1 Studies upto the 60's
The majority of the studies made prior to 1940 were concerned with problems of reliability in essay tests. Huddleston (1921) presents a comprehensive and well-organised review of the literature on the reliability of essay tests covering a period from 1900 to 1940. This review points out the lack of any intensive and well-organised attack upon the problem of reliability up to that time. J M Rico was one of the forerunners of the scientific movement in education which during the early decades of the 20th century produced substantial accumulation of research studies on the statistical properties of all kinds.

Mainly these studies were of three kinds:

a. Those related to the construction, use and scoring of objective tests;

b. Those related to the construction, use and scoring of essay tests;

c. Those contrasting the merits of objective and essay tests in measurement evaluation, placement and prediction.

These comparative studies of subjective and essay tests were meant for finding out which of the two types of tests is easy to score, more objective, and more valid in predicting learners' achievement level.
The main problem of essay tests have been the lack of reader reliability - the extent to which different individuals can agree on the score which should be assigned to a particular question.

Some of the findings of significant studies are as follows:

$ \text{The experience or maturity of the reader can bring about variation in scores. Skilled readers tend to mark on more abstract qualities such as 'style' and thought content'. So unskilled readers are more reliable than skilled readers.} 
\text{(Vernon & Millican 1954)}$

$ \text{Highly trained readers are more reliable than untrained ones.} 
\text{(Diederich Paul 1957)}$

$ \text{Long responses are more reliable than short ones.} 
\text{(Vernon & Millican 1954)}$

$ \text{The more precise and detailed the marking criteria, the higher the reliability} 
\text{(Sharp Lawrence 1925)}$

$ \text{The greater the structuring of the question for the examinee, the higher the reliability.} 
\text{(Swinford 1956)}$

$ \text{If there are optional questions from which the candidate has to select one, some topics are more}$
reliable than others.  
(Seinford, Francis & Vernon 1956)

$ Marks of papers drawn from homogeneous population are much less reliable than marks of those from heterogeneous population. (Vernon, 1956)

$ Markers well acquainted with the work of the student are more reliable than those who do not know the students. (Vernon 1956)

If the research studies upto the 60's were concerned with the reliability of essay tests, the later studies were concerned with the mechanical aspects of the written work which affect marking.

2.4.2 Studies of the 60's and 70's

A number of mechanical aspects of written work affect marking, even if they have very little communicative value. This is provided by a number of studies. Some mechanical features which affect marking are as follows:

$ Spelling errors adversely affect marking, with errors of grammar and punctuation coming next.  
(Marshall, 1967 & Scannell 1966)

$ Handwriting has a great impact on the markers. This is provided by chase (1968), Briggs (1970 & 1980), and soloff (1973).
Some other general features which affect marking are as follows:

$\$ According to Marshall (1960) an alert and sensitive marker bases his assessment on the features of a piece of work which 'float' to him. That is, he relies on his intuitions about the text.

$\$ Soloff (1973) suggests that lack of consonance between the writer's values and those of the marker may affect the grade awarded. The London Association for the teaching of English (1965) shares his opinion.

In the 70's research studies looked into what writing includes and how it can be taught. The studies of Zoellner (1969), Macrorie (1970), Alexander (1971), Emig (1971), Lindo; (1974), Graves (1975), Britten (1975), Flower (1979) and Hayes (1979) looked into the factors involved in composing and their pedagogical implications. Cognitive research in writing has examined various aspects of writing.

- It has examined the aspects of pre-writing stage and the application of various heuristics.

- It has focussed on the revision and editing phases and the various strategies and demands that are involved.
Studies of the 80's have changed their focus to the communicative aspect of writing.

2.4.3 Studies of the 80's

As Humes Ann (1983) points out, writing researches of the present day have undergone a transformation. He discusses the methodologies employed in recent research concerned with the composing process. Studies of the 80's are more concerned with analysing the compositions of successful writers to find out ways of effective instructions for teaching communicative writing and devising reliable and valid tests which go beyond the mechanical aspects of writing.

Some of the significant studies of the 80's are summarised and discussed under different heads.

a. Research on writing and their application

Dominic, Joseph F (1983) examines the range of relationships between research on writing and its applications to classroom instructions. He discusses different approaches to the study of writing instruction, collaborative interactive research on instruction, the process approach to writing instruction and writing as a cognitive process. Human Ann (1983) also discusses different methodologies employed in a number of case studies of the composing process,
naturalistic studies, quasi product studies that interpret results in terms of the process, and studies that use unique procedures. The results are presented in terms of the processes and of the sub-processes of writing – planning, translating, reviewing and revising.

Stephen P Writte (1980) proposes a conceptual framework or model for conducting and evaluating research in written composition, a framework or model from which may be derived 'an adequate understanding of the term composition'. This conceptual framework attempts to do four things:

- It tries to accommodate the entire field of written composition and, at the same time, indicates the boundaries of that field.
- It can be used as a tool for classifying empirical research in written composition, research already completed and research yet to be completed.
- It provides a basis for testing or validating theories which attempt to explain all or part of the field of written composition.
- It is useful as a heuristic device for generating basic research questions. The model provided by Stephen Writte includes four components: (See fig. 2)
Figure 2

A Conceptual Model of Research in Written Composition

Toward a Model of Research in Written Composition
Stephen P. Wicke (1980)
- The production of written texts
- The written product
- The decoding of written texts
- Pedagogy

He suggests that for these four components a common denominator exists consisting of six rhetorical features of discourse: the writer, the audience, the purpose, the subject matter, the discourse mode and the discourse medium. The four kinds of questions that can be asked about these six shared concerns are the situational or cultural context, semantics, syntactics and supersentential operations or structures of the discourse.

b. Features of Written Expression

Bruce B, Collins A, & Rubin A D (1982) explore the process of writing from three perspectives: writing as a communicative act, writing as a taxonomy of communicative acts and writing as a decodable process whose product must still fulfil an overall communicative function. In the first perspective, the observation that to write is to communicate, has major implications for a theory of writing. It forces one to focus on the active role of the reader and leads to an emphasis on the audience in choosing tasks for beginning writers. In terms of the second perspective the difference between writing and participating in a
conversation and theoretical and practical implications of these differences are discussed. From the third perspective various sub-processes of writing – discovering, manipulating ideas, and generating text at different structural levels – are discussed.

Spikes W C & Spikes L A (1983) attempted to identify the skills necessary to write a successful essay. Learners preparing to take an essay test received instruction for sixteen to eighteen days in development, rhetoric, and mechanics of writing. The data imply that instruction in concepts, skills, and relationships in essay writing, considered in conjunction with learners' diagnosed needs can result in improvement.

Hull, Glynda (1983) tested the effects of interrupting visual feedback on writing in two groups of subjects by preventing them rereading as they produced written texts. They performed two tasks, one in visible and the other in invisible ink. Their texts were then analysed for error, syntax, overall quality and sentence connectedness by four raters. While both groups were able to produce relatively well-formed sentences when they could not reread, both were hindered at the level of discourse production.

c. Teaching writing
A number of studies deal with the actual teaching of writing, the various activities that can be carried out in class, and how much teacher intervention should be there to facilitate writing.

Cognitive psychologists conducted a number of research studies to find out what writing actually involves and how it can be taught. They have investigated the effects of teaching what Scardamalia and Bereiter (1981) called 'Procedural facilitators'. Procedural facilitators can range from such simple strategies as asking the writer to 'say more' to presenting the writer with complex models of syntactic patterns to imitate in the revision. The results of using these facilitators showed increase in length and quality of the writing. This research suggests that instruction focuses on two parts—the actual text, and the various mental representations of the text—from graphical presentation to plans for a whole text. This mental representation is meant to affect not only the immediate task but also the representation in the next task.

Bereiter and his associates have shown that young beginning writers, from age eleven onwards, can be helped to plan and evaluate their compositions if they are provided with procedural facilitation. Children are
given procedural cues without giving any hints as to
the context. They are helped in making rhetorical
decisions. In this way learners' potential is utilised.

According to Bereiter the two main problems of
composition are — relative shortness, and low judged
quality. These problems arise because of slower speed
and mechanical constraints associated with writing.
According to the Bereiter group when learners are
prompted to write more, they often can double or triple
the quantity of composition which tend to be judged
better than dictated texts.

This line of research suggests the efficacy of an
approach that combines phase instruction — which
stresses on the various stages of writing — and
variable product instruction which stresses on
appropriacy. This research also establishes that
instruction in general procedures rather strict rules
has an effect on learners’ performance.

The testing of efficacy of instruction in ‘general
procedures’ as opposed to other approaches needs
further study. At present efforts have been made only
to define the general procedures. The instructional
techniques are not yet fully developed.

Giordano Gerard (1983) discusses seven remedial
exercises that constitute a model communicative writing
The exercises are communicative because they embody the transmission of meaningful information to attentive readers. Each exercise emphasises a precise writing skill that can be complemented with one or more reading skill.

Grinnell P C & Burris N A (1983) uses the process of differentiation, negotiation and revision to trace the graphic communication process in young learners as it emerges spontaneously and through formal instruction. Even after they learn to write, drawings continue to contribute to the communicating process by helping the learners think about what they want to write and by expressing information too difficult to put into words. Sinatra, Richard (1983) employs a visual/spatial technique to teach writing which has three components: pictures, model sentence configurations, and function words. The first component suggests the ideas to be expressed in a new sentence; a visual pattern illustrates the required form or configuration of the new sentence; the third component function words and correct punctuation for each particular type of sentence are visibly displayed in the visual pattern. As learners compose new sentences that follow the model
patterns, they learn to comprehend meaning and construct new sentences on their own.

Shaw Robert (1983) presents guidelines for the planning of teacher's interventions during a writing lesson that enable the teacher to overcome the constraints that hamper efforts to teach writing – i.e. administrative procedures, standardised testing, commercial textbooks and the lack of resources for training teachers in writing instructions. In particular, four facilitative activities – reviewing, orienting, evaluating and writing – provide a framework for making practical decisions about responses to problems learners encounter as they write.

d. Integrating writing skill with other skills

A number of studies establish the fact that when writing skill is integrated with other skills there would be significant improvement in learners' ability to communicate through writing.

Noyce, Ruth M S (1983) research findings support S Stotsky's (1975) contention that experiences that integrate listening, speaking, reading and writing promote growth in reading and written composition.

Markham (1984) in his work 'Assisting speakers of Black English as they begin to write' says that the
strategies for facilitating the success of young black writers are the same as these appropriate for any beginning writers. A good deal of classroom time should be spent on oral activities to develop the ability to communicate ideas clearly. Reading to the learners provides models of syntax and form of the written language and also expands their knowledge of the world. In teaching writing, learners should be helped with both ideas and the mechanics nor should the teacher correct too frequently or without consideration to the learners feelings.

Barenbaum E M (1983) presents a survey of the relationship between writing to the content area of reading and oral language. He devises instructional strategies for promoting writing which include the establishment of a safe environment motivation, the provision of an audience and a purpose, conferences for revision and developing an oral language base.

e. Testing writing

The research studies of testing writing mainly deal with scoring systems for direct writing assessments or with comparing different types of tests.

the preparation of rating scales, while the studies of Hinofotis (1880), Bachman (1882), Brown (1983), Edith Hanania and May Shikani (1986) deal with the preparation and administration of cloze procedure. Quellmaiz (1884) discusses large-scale writing assessment with regard to features of successful writing assessments, what is being tested, developing writing prompts, rating criteria, training and scoring, and assessment validation and follow through.

Chapman, Fyans & Kerin (1984) describe a writing assessment programme in Illinois designed to annually assess the knowledge and skills of learners in developing convincing points of view, events or ideas in functional writing. The assessment uses and analytic scoring system, and a rating guide for functional writing and provides score categories that describe increasing levels of writing skill development. The guide measures five areas of functional writing: focus, support, organisation, mechanics and overall effectiveness.

Mullis (1984) describes three scoring systems for direct writing assessments that are based on score point values: holistic scoring, primary trait scoring, and analyticscoring. Holistic scoring provides information on overall writing quality, primary trait scoring focuses on whether the writing communicates
necessary information effectively, and analytic scoring rates prominent characteristics of writing according to quality. It is concluded that it is best to use several systems of scoring whenever possible due to the varying strengths and weaknesses of the individual systems.

Edith Hanania and May Shikani (1986) tested the 'Interrelationship among three tests of language proficiency: standardized ESL, close and writing' which is reported in the TESOL quarterly (Vol.No.20). They tried to find if cloze could be used as an alternative to a written composition test, as cloze combines the advantages of integrative testing and objective scoring. The research was carried out at the American University of Beirut (AUB). The main purpose of the work was to study the interrelationship among three types of measures:

1. A standardized ESL test of two hundred multiple-choice items distributed over four sections - structure, vocabulary, reading comprehension and miscellaneous abilities.

2. A Cloze test of carefully selected four passages dealing with a general theme that did not require specialized knowledge to comprehend, with fifty systematically spaced blanks, to be scored by exact word method.
A composition test of different topics that were related to the learners' general experience and interest, requiring the learners to write about 250 words choosing one of the two given topics. Each composition was graded by two experienced teachers, who using the general impression method considered grammar, mechanics and rhetorical aspects.

The results of the study were as follows:

- The close and composition writing provided additional information about proficiency beyond that provided by the ESL test.

- The combination of any two of the three tests improved the predictability of the third.

According to the authors the task involved in a Close test is integrative in nature, tapping overall abilities similar to those required in communicative language use. The incorporation of a close procedure can be expected to promote communicative language teaching in the classroom.

2.4.4 Overall Implications

Studies of the 80's are more helpful in enabling us to draw implications for the present study as they
are concerned with finding cut ways of imparting instructions for teaching communicative writing and devising reliable and valid tests which tap the overall abilities of the learner thereby going beyond the mechanical aspects of writing.

For the present study a series of tasks could be devised keeping in mind the level of the learners. These tasks should focus on the communicative act of writing which enable the learner to think of the intended message from the point of view of the reader. Learners could also be given practice in the 'Language content' needed for the completion of the tasks by means of activities where they transmit meaningful information to attentive readers.

Integrating writing with listening, speaking and reading should be thought of to improve the learners' ability to communicate through writing. The instructional strategies worked out by Baronbaum E M (1983) and Markham (1984) could be adapted to suit the learners involved in the present study. Thus ways of providing a safe environment, increasing learners' motivation, providing an audience, helping them with both ideas and mechanics of writing, as well as strategies of revising and editing their work could be thought of.
For testing writing the type of cloze-test tried by Edith Hanania & May Shikani (1986) could be used. A simple story suited to the level of the learners could be selected that does not require specialized knowledge of any kind. Fifteen to Eighteen systematically spaced blanks could be given to be scored by the method of contextual appropriateness.