Chapter-I

Introduction

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1.1 Introduction

The transformation of India from pre-industrial society to knowledge-based society has been spectacular since 1990s. India is emerging as a global leading player in science, technology, space, business, and corporate sectors as well as in education. Critics have started seeing India as superpower or the next dominating country after the United States of America. It has reported its presence in all type worldly communication. India has seen its own growth from jugglers and snake charmers to technocrats, engineers, doctors, and so on. In this changing periphery, the knowledge of English language is essential, as we have to communicate in English with the rest of the world. English has been chosen as a medium of conversation among the fast growing countries. As per the opinion of the first Prime Minister of India, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru that English is a mirror or a window to peep in to the affairs of world.

The present study is an attempt to develop undergraduate students’ writing skill in English from North Gujarat region. The study consists of five chapter i.e. introduction, review of related literature, theoretical framework of the title, models to develop writing skill in English, and conclusion. This is an introductory chapter of the study which comprises sub topics like the research problem statement, definitions of the terms used in the title of the research, objectives of the study, research questions, relevance of present study, delimitation or shortcoming of the research, teaching of English language in India specifically in North Gujarat, communication skill and its importance, and the brief description of chapters written in this research work. The chapter ends with the summary of successive chapter.
1.2 Research Problem Statement

The problem statement for this research is “Developing Writing Skills in English of Undergraduate Students in North Gujarat”.

1.3 Definition of Terms Employed in the Research Statement

Developing: The term can be defined as the gradual advancement or growth through series of progressive changes. It is a process to achieve certain goals.

Writing: Writing is the representation of language in a textual medium using a set of signs or symbols. It is a complex process of giving a word frame to our mental thoughts.

Skill: An ability and capacity acquired through deliberate, systematic, and sustained efforts to carryout complex activities smoothly and adaptively. It can be hard as well as soft.

1.4 Objectives

- To contribute in the present domain of teaching writing skills in general.
- To develop writing skills among the students in order to make them efficient and fluent communicators in English.
- To investigate the present pedagogies of teaching and developing writing skills in English.
- To check the effectiveness of teaching methodologies in learning of writing skills in English.
- To present effective ways for teaching of writing skills in English.

1.5 Research Questions

1. What is the contribution of North Gujarat in Education?
2. What is the significance of writing skill in English?

3. Which areas of writing skill should be taken care?

4. Why is the writing skill believed to be difficult for learning?

5. What is the role of grammar in writing skills?

6. What problems do teachers face in teaching of writing skills in English?

7. What problems do students face in learning of writing skills in English?

8. Which methods of teaching writing skills are effective?

9. Which methods of teaching writing skills are ineffective?

10. How can this research be helpful in present domain of knowledge?

1.6 Relevance of the Proposed Research

Research is lifelong activity. Any research work is the contribution in knowledge domain. The proposed research is above the teaching – learning conditions of North Gujarat’s Colleges. Especially, the research is meant to suggest effective techniques and methods for developing writing skills in English. The researcher hopes that this research would contribute to knowledge and help benefit students by:

1. Helping the teachers to teach writing skills effectively.

2. Developing the learners’ writing skills, which are useful for making communication meaningful.

3. Paving the way for other research scholars in the North Gujarat to take such work.

1.7 Delimitation of the Study

Many constraints bound the researcher to limit the research. Therefore, the research study is limited to writing skill of the students of undergraduate level studying in north Gujarat region.
1.8 Importance of English language

Education is a process of enlightenment and empowerment by which the individuals are able to secure better quality life. Today, education is global and a multiple social services, which must rewarded human resources fullness, commitment and freedom. The present day education is aimed at the growth of body, mind, intellectuality, and soul. Children are humanity’s greatest wealth. Many students go out of our country in pursuing of higher education. Hence we should welcome modern knowledge system based on old culture. It is widely accepted fact that knowledge must be acquired and supplemented by a lifelong learning and retaining system.

1.9 English on the Global Frontier

According to David Crystal, English is the language ‘on which the sun never sets’. The demographic spread of English is indeed phenomenal today as English is being used in most of the countries in the world. It is playing a variety of roles in various parts of the world ranging from mother tongue to link language. The fields of science and technology, industry and commerce, travel, entertainment and globalization in different walks of human life have quickened the spread and use of English. If the twenty first century is dominated by technology, it is dominated by the English language. “The numbers of South Asian users of English now exceed the combined population of the inner Circle of English – the United States, the United Kingdom, Canada, Australia and New Zealand. The Asian continent, particularly South Asia and China, have altered the international profile of world Englishes” (Kachru et al 2008: 7).

The people all over the world have come to depend on English for their economic and social well-being. Accordingly, English Language Teaching and Learning has got more attention
than any other language learning. In this regard, Kachru mentions: Just a few centuries ago, English was spoken by just five to seven million people on one, relatively small island, and the language consisted of dialects spoken by monolinguals. Today there are more non-native users of English, and English has become the linguistic key used for opening borders: it is a global medium with local identities and messages (1996: 11).

The most important reason for the success of English, according to Kachru is naturally the historical role of England as a colonial power. He also lists some other reasons for the dominance of English around the world: it’s propensity for acquiring new identities, it’s power of assimilation, it’s adaptability to “decolonization” as a language, and it’s provision of a flexible medium for literary and other types of creativity across languages and cultures (1987:122).

In the contemporary computer age, English is an authorization for better career. It plays a very noteworthy role in international domains such as politics, media and communication, education, business, advertising, broadcasting, motion pictures and transport. It is the dominant world language of science and technology. No other languages such as Spanish, Chinese, French, and Russian can be compared to the position occupied by English as an international language. People all over the world depend on English for their wellbeing. English is learnt everywhere because people have found out that it is the entry card for better career, better pay package, and advanced knowledge and for communication with the entire world.

With the growing impact of globalization and privatization, English has become a window to the world, as it is creating more and more opportunities in every field of life. English is the global lingua franca as it is connecting different people from all over the world, different cultures, languages and political and economic issues in our day-to-day lives.
In this age of information and technology, as we are constantly barraging by information, English as the major medium which gives access to update information. It plays important role in all parts of the world, as all in their lives are feeling its necessity. Therefore, there is a massive growing in the number of people learning English.

According to Graddol (2006), the number of people, learning English is likely to reach a peak of around two billion in the next 10-15 years. As the internet is growing explosively, English is instrumental in keeping us on par with it. It is emerging as a first rank language as it has affected all aspects of human society.

1.10 English in Indian Scenario

Keeping in mind the worldwide acknowledgment being given to English, the Indian Government has been formulating various policies to promote the use and spread of English. Despite the fact that Hindi is the national language of India, English ruins as a national interlanguage to a greater degree. India has had a longer exposure to English than any other country in the world. English has a definite place in the curriculum of Indian educational institutions like in schools, colleges and universities.

In fact, the teaching of English in India is considered a second or third language. Moreover, it has been accepted widely. English serves as a linguistic tool for administrative communication in the country, affecting people who speak different languages to become uniformed and thus it serves as a medium of wider communication. The English language is a bind that helps to connect the many constituent parts of the society together. It is also a linguistic bridge among the major countries of the world and India.
English has a special national status in India, because it has been placed in the parliamentary, judiciary, broadcasting, and journalism in the education system. In the field of education, English functions as a language for propagation of knowledge. Information in every field, whether is humanities, science, commerce or technology, is readily accessible in English. Therefore, English language learning has become necessary for all Indians including rural learners. The importance of speaking and writing in English has recently increased considerably because English has become popular for business, commerce and cultural transaction and especially for internet communications throughout the world. With the growing technology and outsourcing, proficiency in English has indeed become the essential criterion for acquiring a job. The prevailing view in India seems to be that unless students learn English, they can only work in limited job sectors. Those who do not have basic knowledge of English cannot obtain good fetching jobs. Men and women, who cannot understand and interpret English, are unemployed even if they are well educated. It cannot be ignored the fact that for those who realize that learning English is the necessity have plenty of job opportunities today.

Taking in consideration all these factors, ELT in India is becoming a flourishing and profitable industry where private expensive English medium schools exist side by side with almost free regional medium schools maintained by the Government or local bodies. If the British taught English for administrative convenience to a minority, ELT is taught today in India as the language for social and economic upheaval towards global transformation. Sardonically, though Hindi is the national language there are more English schools than Hindi medium schools. The English medium schools may opt for the regional language as the second language in place of Hindi but in the Hindi medium schools, English is at least taught as a compulsory subject.
Therefore, the relevance of ELT to the Indian educational scenario cannot be declined. Since English is the most important language for education, many schools and institutions have developed various ELT programmes with many new institutions of ELT taking shapes every year. With its importance, research in ELT is expanding. ELT has thus become a powerful tool that can lead the country towards a highly developed state. The Indian society is developing multi-dimensionally; so it is important for every Indian to have some mastery in English. The impact of English is not only continuing but also increasing, because in the English-speaking world, India has a unique position. A decade ago, the United States of America was the country with the largest English speaking population. Today, India has overtaken it. Therefore, definitely, a change will be remarkable in the future. Thus, a positive attitude towards English as a national language is essential for the Indian society.

Owing this quantum increase in the number of schools and colleges and the enrollment of students, the number of students learning English has increased multifold. This has resulted in the problem of having incompetent teachers of English, which lowers the standard of learners.

1.11 English Language Teaching in India

English is introduced as a compulsory second language from primary level onwards for students of regional medium schools, which has contributed to Bilingual education. English medium education being costly is not within the reach of the most of the learners studying in Government schools in India and as a result, only the private educational institutions offer English medium education. So, learners from the lower class of the society are forced to go to Government schools, where regional medium education with English as a second or third language is the only option. Learners who come from regional medium schools lack required disclosure to English language. These learners do not have a motivating and supporting
environment to learn English. For these learners, the only opportunity to learn English is the classroom atmosphere. Various other factors such as poor economic background, illiterate parents, lack of resources, etc. contribute to the learners’ poor ESL environment in rural areas. With the various policies of the government, the situation seems improving, but still a lot has to be done to make possible the English learning environment in the schools, colleges, and universities of India. In order to become proficient in English, the four language skills (LSRW) are very important, so adequate help and guidance is inevitable to improve the language skills of learners of English as a second language.

1.12 Research Design- Chapterization

The present research dissertation is divided into five chapters which are as follows:

Chapter-1 Introduction
Chapter-2 Review of Related Literature
Chapter-3 Theoretical Framework of the Title
Chapter-4 Developing Writing Skill in English of UG students
Chapter-5 Conclusion

1.13 Research Methodology

The researcher followed survey method for data collection and data analysis to serve the purpose of this research problem. As the present research is based on the population of undergraduate courses of north Gujarat region. Researcher prepared open ended questions for teachers of English to know the current situation of teaching process of writing skill. Researcher also conducted informal interviews with teachers in their free time. Some conclusions are drawn from researcher’s teaching experiences. Researcher selected 100 teachers randomly from the different colleges of different undergraduate courses from the
north Gujarat area. Researcher approached 100 teachers of English and Communication skills for the data collection, who have been teaching undergraduate students in the colleges of technology, engineering, science, management, commerce, arts, pharmacy, education, agricultural and so on for several years. The questionnaires were administered among students and teachers of north Gujarat along with informal interview with teachers in their free time. Researcher also contributed in presenting problems in developing writing skill in English of north Gujarat, as he has also been a teacher of English and communication skill for many years and teaching many undergraduate programmes. Researcher visited colleges to collect the data, which he is going to analyze to reach the conclusion from where he can recommend remedies to develop the writing skill in English with the help of communicative approach. It teachers employ the communicative approach in their teaching process, the class would be turned in to the place where students never feel a kind of monotony rather fun.

1.14 Conclusion

In this chapter on introduction, researcher gives a brief review of entire research work. This chapter dealt with various aspects like research problem statement, objectives of the present research and its relevance in the knowledge domain, limitations of the research, definitions of the terms used for the research problem, importance English language, the role of English language at global front and its existence in India, research questions which are addressed at various chapters in the research work, and lastly researcher has outlined the principal chapters of this research. The next chapter is on review of related literature where researcher reviewed the relevant material such as articles, journals, dissertations, thesis, books, proposals, projects, reports, research papers, web-recourses related to the topic of developing writing skill in English of undergraduate students of north Gujarat.