My interest in English Language Teaching began during the period of my study for the full-time Post-Graduate Diploma in the Teaching of English at the Central Institute of English and Foreign Languages, Hyderabad, in 1975-76. In the years that followed, my interest in the subject was sustained and developed by my participation in seminars and workshops organized by the British Council, Madras, as well as by the English Language Teachers Association of India, Madras. I found in all these years great scope for innovation and research in this field. Hence, I chose to work in this discipline, when an opportunity to do doctoral research presented itself to me.

Within the broad field of ELT, I chose the teaching of writing for my experiment. Students are evaluated almost exclusively on their written responses to questions in the final examinations, but, unfortunately, they are not given systematic instruction and training in the writing skill. Hence, the teaching of writing in schools and colleges should be made more effective in order to prepare students for their academic and career requirements.

My preliminary study on researches into writing in the third world countries showed that English teachers
could try out classroom experiments and design writing courses to meet the specific needs of their students. I too felt encouraged to attempt a similar study in our context.

Further, the teaching of English in India has of late become the concern of the politicians and the public in general. Several articles and letters to the editors appear periodically on this subject in the leading national newspapers all of which, besides voicing concern over the sordid state of affairs in English, stress the need to improve the standard of teaching English. Therefore, it becomes all the more important for the teachers of English to face this challenge and raise the standard of students in English. The process-oriented experimental course in writing reported in this thesis is an attempt made in this direction.

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