CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

2.0 INTRODUCTION

This chapter comprises three sections. The first section gives a brief review of the research done in the area of writing in India, mainly the designing of a writing course on the basis of research. The second section analyses in brief a few classroom experiments tried out by teachers of writing in countries where English is taught as a second/foreign language. Taking into account the specific needs of the students, they point to the increasing global view that English is fast becoming a utility language taught through communicative, process-oriented approach in real-life situations. The final section reviews some task-oriented course books from India and abroad, which provide materials adaptable to diverse teaching conditions and demands.

2.1. WRITING RESEARCH

2.1.1 Eapen (1979) begins her research by investigating briefly why writing skills need to be taught to an undergraduate class. She then emphasises the need for
courses to develop writing skills since specific objectives in relation to writing skills are rarely mentioned within the new as well as the old syllabuses. She adds that there is a paucity of course materials or texts designed for use in the contemporary Indian classroom.

She has prepared the materials based on certain notions and functions that: (a) would be most productive in terms of a variety of representation of subject-matter, (b) might suggest an adequate coverage of linguistic forms and structures, (c) might be most necessary and useful in the academic and professional lives of students, and (d) would be most necessary for developing writing materials.

The notions and functions selected for treatment were as follows:

Unit I  - Direct, Instruct;
Unit II - Suggest, Advise;
Unit III - Request, Question, Ask;
Unit IV  - Agreement;
Unit V   - Disagreement;
Unit VI  - Report, Information Asserted;
Unit VII - Rational Inquiry and Exposition.
It is suggested that the teacher can follow any unit without any chronological order except with Units IV and V, depending on the needs of the learners.

Model passages have been used to illustrate these notions and functions. In Unit I, for example, there are model dialogues in which vague as well as clear directions are given for locating a place in a town. The learners are required to study analytically the ways of giving clear instructions and directions. In the Unit on Request, Question, Ask, dialogues from life situations are given and the students are instructed to analyse ways of making requests - polite and authoritative.

Eapen purports to have prepared the set of materials with certain principles in mind:

(a) The aim of writing should be functional in nature, i.e., students should produce written forms that would be most useful to them later.

(b) Students should be given practice and introduced to rhetorical features, e.g., sequencing, focussing, and organization.

(c) Students should get practice in writing communicative pieces through use and exposure to appropriate linguistic forms within appropriate contexts.
Two units of the materials (I & III) were tried out on two sets of students and a definite improvement was reported in their use of linguistic forms and awareness of the need to communicate accurately. In the light of the feedback, Eapen felt the need to have a survey of the contexts used in the units, in addition to linguistic expressions. This was to ensure an adequate 'coverage' of possible contexts that the Indian student might need to write in functionally.

This research work has practical value for the classroom teacher, for in this one gets guidelines for preparing course materials based on notions and functions. The materials thus prepared are also life-oriented and the situations described are common, everyday occurrences within the level of experience of the students. The students have only to concentrate on the appropriate linguistic forms.

2.1.2 Besides linguistic forms and usage, organizational patterns and cognitive abilities are also crucial to students' writing. These have been taken up for study and a course has been designed by Singh (1985) with a view to making the students aware of the former and developing in them the latter.
His study undertakes to show empirically how the lack of such rhetorical features as unity, coherence, and completeness in students' writing can be attributed to their lack of clear thinking and argument generation. His design of the course centres predominantly on invention, development, and arrangement of ideas, which may be offered to the first year M.A. or the third year B.A. students to bring up the level of their writing competence.

The first section of the course is on "Effective Writing" and the teaching contents include three units on Unity, Coherence, and Clarity. The second section is on "Arguments: The Process of Subject-Exploration" and it includes units on Definition, Analysis, and Inference. The third section, "Unity: The Process of Subject-Control", includes units on Limiting the Topic, Stating the Thesis, and Selecting the Relevant Details. The fourth section, "Coherence: The Process of Subject-Arrangement" has units on Development of Sub-points, Arrangement of the Arguments, and Connections between Arguments. The fifth and last section deals with "Clarity: The Process of Subject-Presentation" and includes units on Clarity in Diction, Clarity in Order, and Clarity in Reasoning. All the five sections end with a note on the teaching purpose and sample teaching materials.
Each section provides (a) an explanation of the teaching contents (for example, in Section I, what unity, coherence, and clarity mean), (b) the purpose of teaching those features, (c) sample reading materials illustrating the three qualities as well as passages that lack them, and (d) exercises which the learners have to do carefully, to point out the lack of unity, if any, in different paragraphs and in the essay as a whole.

As in the case of Eapen, here too in the design of the course, model passages are given for the students to benefit from the features of good writing as well as to observe the lack of them. The exercises test the qualities that the section has illustrated.

The design of the course, as the author himself has stated,

(a) is conceived as a series of logical and rhetorical sub-tasks which characterize the writing process;
(b) has been planned as a blend of both product and process techniques, though it tends to emphasize the process more than the product;
(c) does not form any chronology of sub-skills but only tries to build them up in the adult learners; and
(d) does not synthesize the sub-tasks because the course is meant for post-graduate students and is construed as an in-depth exercise in the re-writing/revision stage of writing.

2.1.3. In addition to the design of a writing course and suitable reading materials, there is a need for effective and motivating classroom techniques to be used by the teacher to impart the skills of writing to the learners. In their absence, even the most interesting texts and materials would not bring about the desired results. Dubey (1991) aims to evolve, and experiment with, a critical strategy for teaching written composition at the tertiary level.

She rightly asserts that the topics for composition must generate interest and enthusiasm among the students while they attempt the writing tasks in the classroom. Any composition requires a certain amount of originality, creativity, and a critical outlook in dealing with the 'subject' or the 'topic'. Composition should be 'production-based', not 'reproduction-based'. The latter requires nothing but a mechanical 'reproduction' of the subject-matter from some 'sources', whereas the former requires originality in the treatment of the 'topic', wherein the students are required to react, think, and innovate in order to produce a piece of writing. With this
in mind, she has attempted to try out a few strategies making use of the prescribed anthologies of prose and poetry in three city colleges of Hyderabad.

The students were asked to read a particular text - a poem, an essay, a photo-strip, or a comic-strip, as the case might be - and tell the class what they felt about it. They were then asked to 'abandon' the text and explore ways in which they could compose 'something' on a particular topic/theme. Thus the role of the text was limited to triggering off the students' feelings and reactions towards what they had read just a while ago.

The students were allowed to choose from any of the genres of composition - dialogue, letter, report, paragraph, etc. - for the topic they had decided to write on. For example, the text from Pride and Prejudice (an extract of the first chapter of the novel by Jane Austen) gave the students ideas to write dialogues between a mother and her daughter over the 'bride-seeing occasion' or a telephonic conversation between two girls over the same topic. The popular one-act play Refund by Fritz Karinthy gave rise to letters to the Minister for Education on the system of education, unemployment, etc.
The two photo-strips - one depicting a small boy repairing a two-wheeler and the other a shoe-shine engaged in work - elicited some creative and informative pieces of writing from the students.

The feedback from the students proved the effectiveness of the techniques and strategies employed. The students found the class helpful in improving their language proficiency through imaginative writing. It was found to be different from other classes because they were made to think and imagine, which was not usually done in composition classes.

In view of such encouraging responses from the students, changes have to be effected in two spheres: a) classroom approach - an effective and proper approach to the teaching of writing, and b) teacher education - proper training to the teachers of English in the theories and techniques of teaching.

2.1.4 These aspects have been brought out by Nair (1971) in his study of the writing component of the course in English at the Pre-degree level in the University of Calicut. He observes that the instruction in English as a Second Language (ESL) in general, and in writing in particular, is not satisfactory in spite of good learner motivation and the students' favourable attitude towards
English. Hence he tries to find the causes for failure elsewhere.

His hypothesis is that a need-based, learner-centred, and communication-oriented approach to the teaching of ESL writing assisted by authentic and task-oriented instructional materials will result in better classroom instruction, which in turn will lead to effective, communicative student writing.

He makes the following suggestions:

1) There should be a workshop for paper-setters, who should be made aware of the new trends in communicative teaching as well as testing.

2) The University should undertake the task of preparing course books (if not printing and publishing as well) with the help of experts, preferably in a workshop, where the writers can consult and exchange their views with one another.

3) There should be short-term and long-term teacher training programmes to orient the teachers in communicative language teaching.

4) There should be a clear statement of objectives in the syllabus.
5) There is a need for a change of outlook on ELT. Instructional materials available must impart the necessary communicative skills to the learners. Either a changed outlook on ESL writing would bring in better books on writing, or need-based, task-oriented course books would bring about a new perspective.

2.1.5 Nair, in another work of his (1991), also attempts to study the nature of writing in a second or foreign language and the problems related to its teaching and learning in relation to second language acquisition.

He argues for an approach to writing in a second language that is different from the one in the first language. Though he does not come out with any theory of writing in second language learning (no such claim is also made), he wants the factors making first language acquisition effective to be incorporated in the teaching of writing in the formal set-up, i.e., the factors that are inherent in the first language situation are to be built into the teaching of, or the formal instruction in the second language.
He makes the following pertinent points in his work:

1) The first and second languages should not be treated as separate entities. Instead, they must be viewed as two (or more, in the case of a third language) points on a continuum - a continuum of language acquisition. The statement is made in the light of Vygotskian theories of the development of the mind and language, and studies in the field of bilingualism and cognitive development by Jim Cummings.

2) Writing is a potential means to provide an optimal repertoire of the functional units of the second language, which is to be internalized by the learner for functioning effectively in that language. Meaning is the core of the functional units of the native language. It should be so in second language and in the teaching of writing as well.

3) Formal instruction plays an important role in writing as a means of promoting second language acquisition. Drawing from the findings of Carrol (1967), Chihara and Oller (1978), Briere (1978), and Michael Long (1983), Nair concludes that formal instruction does promote second language acquisition.

4) Writing tasks attempted in the classroom should serve as an introduction for the learners to carry out
writing tasks in real life, which are complex, varied, and unpredictable in nature.

5) Reading should be integrated with academic writing as the two parts of the same language task and both should form a compact structure of an instructional programme. Outside the composition class, a major chunk of college students' writing is related to, and based on, their reading.

The thesis is highly theoretical and is a valuable work on writing in that it gives an analysis of the theories of learning in the first language and relates them to factors that affect second language learning, especially with reference to writing.

Unless materials of the kind prepared by Eapen and Singh, and theories of writing advocated by Nair are tested in the classroom situation by the teachers, they may not have great validity. Classroom experiments serve to revalidate them and help one to modify them in the light of the feedback from the learners and the interest evinced by them in the methodology adopted and the materials used. Further, the success achieved by some teachers should encourage the others to break newer ground and explore uncharted areas.
2.2 CLASSROOM EXPERIMENTS

Viewed from this angle, it is necessary to mention some innovative classroom experiments conducted and strategies adopted by practising teachers to impart writing skills. They are reported from countries like Poland, Malawi, China and Hongkong, where English is taught as a second/foreign language. India, with a long tradition of teaching English, can certainly benefit from these experiments.

2.2.1 The first is a novel technique of finding a life-situation for writing. Vincent (1990), teaching at the Institute of Applied Linguistics, Warsaw University, Poland, found the opportunity presenting itself when the students expressed their desire to visit the Shell International Petroleum Company Ltd., Warsaw.

The teacher motivated the students to draft an official letter to the company. They discussed in groups the format of an official letter and an effective way of presenting the details. The final version of the letter was negotiated by the whole class and written up on the board.

On receipt of the Company's letter of permission, the class sat again in groups and prepared a letter giving the time and other details of the visit. Once the visit was
paid, other writing activities were attempted: an article on the visit for publication in a popular magazine in the country (published in English), the inventory given at the factory, a summary of the video film shown during the visit, a report on the question time with the factory personnel, and a blow-by-blow account of the time-table of events.

What the students attempted were not mere classroom activities but opportunities and learning experiences to try their writing skills in the wider world. The students had the most vital motivating factors behind writing: audience and purpose. There was a real audience when the letter was addressed to the company for permission to visit and there was a real purpose - the desire to visit the factory. Each of the writing activities that followed the visit also had these two elements.

Audience awareness and a sense of purpose go to make writing in the classroom a worthwhile and meaningful learning experience. It takes writing as close as possible to genuine functional use of language, as opposed to the traditional set-piece classroom composition for the eyes of the teacher only. The teacher may also explore suitable, uptodate materials to achieve this end. Since the mass media have come to play a pivotal role in the students' lives and the newspapers/magazines are everyday reading
materials, newspaper writings may sometimes act as effective props to generate discussion in the classroom. An experiment in this direction was attempted with success by a teacher of Malawi.

2.2.2 Chimombo (1987), preparing students for the Junior Certificate Examination in Malawi, Africa, tried using the letters to the editor of the local newspaper Malawi News as sources of stimulation to provide a genuine purpose and a genuine audience for writing in the class.

The students analysed in groups letters wherein some people have attributed poor results in the recently held public examination to the 'poor standard of teaching' and to the fact that 'teachers are relaxing these days'. They identified the opinions and the evidence to support the contention.

In the next step, the students, still in groups, collected and noted down evidence/opinions for and against the contention that 'teachers are relaxing'. The class as a whole discussed them and discarded statements that were mere opinions. This was to help the students to distinguish between facts and opinions, a distinction which they had great difficulty in making, most of all in their own writing.
In the final step, the students were required to write two letters to the Editors; one giving supporting opinions and evidence, and the other giving the opposite opinions and evidence. The learners must learn to discuss each side of the matter so that when they attempted an argumentative essay, taking the side they agreed with, they could argue logically and effectively.

Chimambo later attempted teaching the writing of an argumentative essay so that what the learners had learnt in the course of debating and writing of the letters was transferred to the writing of such an essay.

In the experiment just reported, it could be found that the students dealt with the topic with a sense of urgency and momentum. Further it was always in the rewriting stage that the draft took a form and shape. In fact, there was no writing, only rewriting. "Successful papers are not written; they are rewritten" (Moulton et al., in White 1988:19). Hence, techniques for improving on the hastily composed first draft, and dealing with the successive ones to produce the final draft are worth exploring in the classroom.

2.2.3 Lewitt's (1990) classroom experiment on this aspect of the writing process is novel and at the same time
predictable in any situation. His strategy was based on the following beliefs:

1) Error-correction and editing do not constitute rewriting and revision.

2) In the revision of drafts, the editor-inside-the-student appears to focus on spelling, grammar points, punctuation and word/phrasal changes only in the final version.

3) Mere explanation to students of what rewriting really means makes not the slightest impression on them. They must be taken along the process.

Lewitt collected the first draft of the students assuring them that the papers would not be graded. During the next session, the students were instructed to write the second draft without being able to use or even glance at the first draft. They were then handed back their first draft and were asked to mark the features that they liked in both. Incorporating the best elements in both the drafts, they were instructed to attempt a third one.

The third draft was subjected to peer evaluation in groups, and all aspects of writing with the primary focus on content were discussed and analysed. The fourth draft was attempted in the light of the peer discussion and
teacher's comments. In the final and fifth draft, it was edited for spelling, punctuation, etc.

This experiment incorporated the following features:

1) The students wrote on the same topic on the two occasions. When they wrote the second time, the first draft stood behind their new work, informing their ideas, their style and their usage. The two drafts were vastly different but similar and connected in general. They learnt that there were different ways of presenting the same ideas.

2) The students were trained to see features that went to make writing effective and to know how to build them into their writing.

3) There was evaluation from three different angles—peer, teacher and self.

2.2.4 All these three—peer evaluation, teacher evaluation, and self evaluation—were built into the various correction techniques tried out by another teacher, Xiaochun (1990) in one of her writing experiments. She states that peer-correction and self-evaluation, ably assisted by the teacher, help students develop a self-critical attitude. She outlines six correction techniques based on her experience. They are:
1) **Model correction.** The teacher identifies the common mistakes by checking some five compositions thoroughly and anticipates other possible problems in the others. She deals with those encountered and the ones anticipated.

2) **Pair correction:** The students correct each other's composition, followed by the teacher.

3) **Group correction:** Groups of five students discuss and evaluate the compositions of other groups. Each group receives the instructions from the teacher to evaluate the task. The teacher participates in each group's discussion.

4) **Circle correction:** The teacher individually helps a student rewrite the composition commenting on its various aspects. It is a time-consuming but beneficial effort.

5) **Overhead Projector:** The teacher writes on an OHP transparency a draft incorporating the most common mistakes of the students and discusses them. Later when students write, they are aware of the mistakes and avoid them.

6) **Conference teaching:** Before a student starts writing, the teacher has an individual conference.
with the student and discusses in detail all the various stages of writing — topic, organization, sentence structure, etc. It is possible only in a small class.

In all these classroom experiments reported, there was teacher-student interaction and student-student interaction. The students were actively involved not only in the initial stages of the writing tasks, but through all the successive ones - rewriting, evaluating, editing, and final drafting. The teacher was a facilitator, guiding the students through all the steps.

2.2.5 Experiments on one or the other aspect of writing apart, the teacher can design a writing course spanning a few weeks or even months. A project can also be undertaken to test the efficacy of an approach in a particular environment or to illustrate an approach. Keh's (1990) six-week, thirty-hour, writing course was one such attempt.

The outline of the course was as follows:

1) **Input sessions**: Idea-generating activities like brainstorming, reading books and local newspapers, making a survey, etc., were used. The various activities were meant to show that there were several ways of getting ideas for writing.
2) **Write first draft** (outside class): The students were not to expect perfection but only to see it as a further means of discovering ideas.

3) **Peer-evaluation** (in pairs or trios): The students were given photocopied guidelines as a basis for responding to the written pieces. They were required to analyse only content.

4) **Writing Workshops**: They consisted of instructions on some elements of writing such as description, definition, or coherence. The instructions were always followed by some form of related writing activity. The teacher also indicated where the students were weak or strong through a rating scale.

5) **Student-teacher sessions**: The teacher spoke individually to the students about their papers. Remedial grammar lessons were based on the common errors of students and included some form of activity.

6) **Final draft**: It was done outside the class.

While evaluating the course, Keh recommends in-class timed writing to help students practise idea-generation under conditions of limited time. She admits that it would seem a contradiction of the relaxed process approach to writing, but timed writing would prepare the students
psychologically to face the pressure of the Hongkong examination-driven system. The students would know how to 'speed up' their writing by the process approach and get over the panic engendered by the examination context.

In India we face the same pressure of the examination system. The examination is usually for a duration of three hours and the performance of the students during that crucial session in the examination hall decides the grade. In the case of some students, this creates mental tension and their performance in the examination may not match with their competence. Hence, classroom teaching experiences must also prepare the students for the psychological impact of examinations.

2.2.6 Keeping in view the Indian situation in all its aspects, the Loyola College of Madras, Tamil Nadu, ventured into striking a new ground in language teaching. With twenty-eight college teachers in the task group, an experiment was undertaken to reform the English curricula, which shows that an innovation in language teaching/learning could also evolve from pedagogic experience rather than from imported theory.

The Loyola Experiment in ELT, conducted over a period of about seven years from 1978 to 1985 was a historic step in evolving a student-centred, task-based, communication-
oriented curriculum in English. It was historic because India had a long tradition of literary-humanistic English curricula and the Loyola Experiment was a bold, innovative step in a new direction (Xavier, Ramani, and Joseph 1986).

The aim of the project was (a) to involve the students in a holistic experience where all the skills of speaking, listening, reading, and writing were employed in an inter-related and creative manner, and (b) to extend the classroom activity to real-life situations and problems.

In the Experiment, the students were divided into three streams - Advanced 'A' level, Intermediate 'B' level, and Basic 'C' level - on the basis of a placement test administered at the time of admission. The Written Communication component was aimed at training the students in different types of writing such as letters, paragraphs, essays, reports, etc.. The task-oriented materials and classroom strategies were designed to match the linguistic levels of the three streams. This was true of the other components of the curriculum too.

What was, however, innovative about the Experiment was the introduction of a "Written Communication Project" for the students of 'A' stream. They had to choose a topic from a given list of topics and write on it for about ten pages. The task involved the collection of relevant data or
material from reading, interviews, surveys, discussions, etc. The students had to use judiciously the materials thus collected for preparing the Project. The Project should not be a mere collection or compilation of materials.

Experiments on teaching writing of the kind reported so far influence our perspectives on language learning, materials, and methodology. Theories of writing get validated or modified in the light of such pedagogic experiences. Further, there is "the possibility of moving from practice to principle" (Ibid., p.14).

2.3 COURSE BOOKS ON WRITING

To the teachers who would like to design courses on writing, or undertake minor/major projects, or plan suitable classroom strategies, work-books and task-oriented text-books are of great value. In the colleges, in some cases, separate work-books for composition are prescribed by the Board of Studies of the University and at other times, the exercises in the prose text prescribed serve the purpose. If the text is not exhaustive on this score, the teacher can take recourse to the task-oriented work-books. In the following pages, there is a review of some of them, beginning with those that were at some time or other in use in the colleges of Pondicherry University.
2.3.1 Carroll's book (1971) was in use in the colleges of the Madras University during 1971-73. It is different from other books on English composition in that

a) it uses literary texts and prose lessons that are commonly prescribed for study in the U.G. classes as models in a profitable way, and

b) it attempts to make the traditional methods of employing literary texts, study of traditional grammar and practical work in functional English such as comprehension, precis and the like very effective in the teaching of English in colleges.

The book has four sections called 'Courses' with each one comprising five units:

Course A: Reading Skills
Course B: Writing Skills
Course C: Literary Appreciation
Course D: English Usage

The last Course is meant to give the students a mastery of modern English sentence structures.

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1. The colleges of the Union Territory of Pondicherry in Pondicherry and Karaikal were affiliated to Madras University until 1985.
All the four courses are linked with one another. Passages selected for Speeded Reading in Course A are analysed for making summaries, making notes, and explaining the various features of descriptive writing in Course B. Writing tasks too are based on the passages given for speed reading and comprehension. Hence the students can concentrate on clarity in expression and effective organization of ideas in their writing since the skills of searching for facts and their interpretation are already dealt with under Reading. Course A dealing with Reading skills may thus be done with a view to developing the nuances of writing. As researchers have pointed out, there is a positive correlation between reading and writing (Krashen 1984: 4-10), and the comprehension of content and the ability to see through the effective organization of ideas will go a long way in developing the writing skill.

The fifth unit of Course B on Writing Skills is on creative writing and the author suggests an approach to this "supremely difficult task". He advises the learners to master the language skills of reading, writing, appreciation, and usage contained in the other units before hoping for good results in this one. He enumerates the features of writing such as Impact, Theme, Imagination, Humour, Sympathy, Language, Appeal, Irony, etc. from the passages given in the other units. This section is a novel
attempt on the part of the author to focus on the literary features of writing in the general composition. The writing tasks given for the learners to attempt are the usual academic exercises but the learners are instructed to approach the themes to write with telling effect.

Models are extensively used to illustrate the concepts and the methods of presenting facts. They are not intended to encourage blind imitation but are meant to promote an analytical probe into the facts presented to attempt writing themselves. The unit on 'Letter-writing' has many models to bring out the tone and tenor of the style employed.

2.3.2 Subsequently, Carroll's course book was replaced by the book written by Bhasker and Prabhu (1975), which also served to teach writing. It had been prepared with the aim of imparting the skills of language and had well-thought out exercises on all the aspects of language study, especially on writing. There was thus no need for a separate task-oriented book. The book was used as the text material in the Loyola Experiment too.

Each of the ten reading passages/chapters in the book is followed by exercises in a) Comprehension, global and local, b) Vocabulary, c) Grammar, and d) Composition. All the language exercises are based on the reading passages.
The composition exercises are the last since the students are led to the writing assignments through an understanding of the text through the comprehension, vocabulary, and grammar exercises.

The authors have judiciously selected the passages and devised the exercises to develop in the students the complex skills of reading and writing. The composition exercises proceed from 'controlled' to 'free expression' of the students' own ideas. The tasks are challenging and provide a good deal of practice in all aspects of writing, particularly in the organization and use of given data.

An important feature of the book is that the authors have carefully chosen the passages from modern English writings to help them to devise the various exercises. Since the writing tasks are based on the textual passages, students have to concentrate on effective presentation and organization of ideas rather than on exploring ideas.

2.3.3 When Pondicherry University came into existence in 1985, a worthwhile attempt at the preparation of text-books on writing with the classroom situation in mind was made. It was a sign of a new realization among the teachers about the role of teaching writing in the overall ELT curriculum. Two course books, Written Communication I (Xavier and Ramani 1986) and II (Xavier and Ramani 1987) were produced.
Written Communication I (1986) was meant for the first year Foundation Course of the undergraduates and deals with five topics: Description, Narration, Paragraph writing, and Letter-writing. Each section has many units ranging from two under 'Note-taking' to five under 'Narration'. The units take up the various features of the type of writing under question. The book ends with two revision units.

The book aims to develop in the students the following skills: a) Writing coherent texts using the information given, and b) Making and using notes and academic plans. Throughout the text, therefore, there is an attempt at weaning the students away from mechanical drills and sentence-level exercises to the use of English for communication and to write coherent texts. The models used are therefore intended only for this purpose. They represent the type of writing to be practised and are analysed through guided questions. The tasks given demand from the students an attempt similar in form and organization to the model but the content to be used is given through hints and situations.

What makes the book unique is the realism - all the units are situation-oriented and the situations are familiar classroom and life experiences. Grammar exercises
are made situation-oriented by being built into the content. Narrating an incident from different points of view and points of time and inserting dialogues in the short anecdotes written by the students themselves are some of the tasks which make grammar points relevant to content. There is scope for creativity too in the grammatical forays into the realm of otherwise insipid writing.

Written Communication II (1987) is intended for the students of the second year Foundation English. It deals with three topics—Essay writing, Writing notices and telegrams, and Writing reports. This book too ends with two units with revision exercises. Each topic has units dealing with various features/aspects of the topic.

Topics on essay writing, writing notices and telegrams, reporting events, dialogues, press conferences and technical reports given in this text are not mere language exercises but they encompass all aspects of a student's academic and day-to-day life. Even the topics chosen like pollution, reporting on accidents, study of newspaper reports, etc. have a touch of realistic day-to-day occurrences. They make the teaching of written communication purposive and wholesome.

Some teachers who had handled the two texts—Written Communication I and II—opined that there should be a
separate instruction book for the teachers. For example, Unit 4 in Written Communication II has instructions on how to organize the students into groups and on what the teacher should do to guide the students. Again, the section on 'Organizing the Essay' has an elaborate analysis of the model essay given. It was suggested that these explanations should be in a separate teacher's book. This would make the students attentive in the class.

However, it is no guarantee that a separate teacher's book would solve the problem. Some teachers might not consider it necessary and might like to bank exclusively on their own experiences. Publishers also might find it economically not profitable. Some teachers, no doubt, feel that instructions to do the exercises must be incorporated in the course book itself. The book then would be self-explanatory.

Whatever might be the arguments for or against a teacher's book, the fact remains that the teacher's handling of the class decides the success. If the teacher relies heavily on the course books without being resourceful, the writing tasks attempted in the class will again be examination-oriented with the students closely following the models, lacking in spontaneity and originality. Much depends on the way the teacher uses the book in the class.
2.3.4 The course book that replaced *Written Communication* I and II during 1993-94 was by Pillai *et al.* (1990). It has twelve chapters, each dealing with a particular genre of writing. Good models of writing are analysed in detail to drive home the features of the genre and every chapter ends with tasks for the students to attempt.

The chapter on 'Paragraph', for example, has 14 pages of which nine pages analyse in detail various aspects of a paragraph - What is a paragraph?, What makes a good paragraph?, What is a topic sentence?, How to achieve coherence?, etc. The chapter on 'Essays' also contains an elaborate analysis of the genre 'Essay'. It reproduces a complete essay and discusses it in the light of the instructions given on writing an essay.

Such an extensive analysis of writing has made the book 'a self-instructional manual', as the authors have stated in the Foreword, entitled 'To the Reader'. The teacher has not much to instruct the students before they perform the task of writing.

The book aims to develop competence in written communication. This competence, the authors assert, does not come with the mere ability to write grammatically correct sentences. Any writing to be effective must have a
purpose, a form, and an identifiable reader. Keeping this as the objective, the authors have selected the materials, given the guidelines, analysed the models, and devised the tasks.

2.3.5 Lawrence's task-book (1972), to quote from the Preface, "is the result of several years of experimentation on teaching composition to intermediate and advanced level foreign students at the English Language Institute, The University of Michigan". It is based on the following principles of writing:

1) Teaching composition should focus on writing as a means of communication.

2) Writing has to be treated not as an end-product to be evaluated and graded, but as an activity, a process, which the students can learn how to accomplish.

3) The writing tasks have to be designed to help the students develop an evergrowing competence in expository writing and the method of teaching should focus on active intellectualisation.

The book has exercises at four levels. (A) Explanatory and Preparatory, (B) Level One, (C) Level Two, and (D) Level Three. In each section, the relevant structures, vocabulary, and data are provided, processed,
and followed by the required instructions. The students manipulate the given information, which is "selected to provide useful vocabulary: words, phrases and sentences of patterns which will be of use to the students after the course is completed". This system of writing, the author asserts, maximises each student's intellectual participation in the writing process.

Three features set the book apart from others of the kind:

1) There are no model paragraphs and no model compositions. The students arrive at the concepts inductively.

2) Students are asked to formulate questions based on the data given. The practice in question-framing is intended to produce the habit of formulating logical questions, which can be used in attacking any expository writing assignment.

3) Vocabulary acquisition, vocabulary retention, and vocabulary utilisation are given great focus in the tasks. The exercises are sequenced to force the students to review and use again the vocabulary they had learnt in the earlier assignments.
2.3.6 *Writing with a Purpose* (1979), as the authors Tickoo and Sasikumar state in the Preface, is intended to serve the students' need to communicate effectively for academic and vocational purposes. It is an attempt to utilize the findings of recent works in applied linguistics and language pedagogy. It makes use of the insightful analysis of higher order writing skills that have of late become important. It is an attempt to provide opportunities for writing in realistic situations for life-like purposes. It ought to go a long way in producing writing abilities in the learners and developing in them independent study habits.

The authors have produced a book containing suitable models of passages and clear instructions to guide the learners through the various stages of writing. As the authors themselves have said in the Preface, "provision of models, their exploitation, and their use for setting guided writing tasks are the three main features of each unit in the book".

In the first chapter on 'Writing paragraphs', for example, through short model paragraphs, aspects of writing like indentation, topic sentences, main ideas, relevant and irrelevant supporting details, sequencing, unity of purpose, organization, etc., have been explained to the
The students are then given writing tasks to attempt - hints are given and the students have to expand them into paragraphs. The authors have followed a similar approach in all the other seven chapters. The chapters are on writing letters, describing, narrating: telling a story, arguing, reporting, note-making, and summarising.

Teachers feel comfortable if writing tasks are given with the techniques for imparting the skill built into the materials. Students too need to be provided with variety in their work to make writing enjoyable. The work-books by Saraswathi (1979), White (1980), Raimes (1985) and others would give the teacher a variety of tasks which could be of use as they are, or if adapted depending on the ability of the set of students or their needs.

2.3.7 Saraswathi (1979) provides a set of three books with materials prepared, based on two assumptions: 1) Students must develop abilities beyond those of constructing sets of sentences. 2) They can succeed in their writing if they have a clear view of what is to be said and have a suitable model to profit by.

Each unit of the book consists of a suitable model for that particular genre. The model is briefly analysed through questions to comprehend the content and draw the students' attention to its organizational and linguistic
features. A series of tasks are then devised expecting the students to benefit from the model given. The content is provided in the form of hints, points, or situation, and the students learn to manipulate them to give a proper organization in their writing.

2.3.8 White (1980) suggests certain classroom tasks based on diagrams, maps, charts, etc., which will be of great help to the teacher. For example, the students, from the given map sketches of Britain and Northern France, find or make up information on two similar journeys in which two travellers follow routes which share certain places in common, but which differ in other respects. One other exercise suggested by the author was used by the present researcher in his experimental course and it facilitated a lot of oral practice and subsequent writing (cf. Chapter V). In the unit on 'Comparing and Recommending', the author has given a table with details of average temperature, average hours of sunshine, rainfall in cms., hotels, beaches and other attractions for five tourist centres and instructing students to write about a particular place recommending it to the tourists. This would be a great guide to the teachers to devise similar classroom tasks. All the other tasks are similar in nature - giving cues and guidelines to the students on how to go about presenting the details.
2.3.9 In the same way, Raimes (1983) provides an invaluable guide to the teacher. Before proceeding to give the tasks, she stresses the need to plan suitable classroom techniques to benefit from the materials used. She offers some basic questions which the teacher should keep in mind to help him to decide on suitable techniques. The questions in the light of which the techniques have to be evolved are:

1) The problem of writing is communicating and not just writing. The classroom activities must help students to use the language in a meaningful way so that speaking it, listening to it, and reading it help them to write it with confidence.

2) The teacher must develop enough tasks from the good topics that are available. Finding enough topics means finding a few excellent topics of interest to the students and building a whole series of assignments around them.

3) Writing needs a purpose to it other than just 'language practice'.

4) An audience focus gives purpose to the writing assignment.
5) Group work and group interaction go a long way in making writing fruitful.

6) The students must be given enough time for the various stages in the process of writing like planning, writing, and rewriting.

7) Finally, the teacher must see errors as pointers to the learning process at work.

The author suggests various techniques based on these principles. The techniques given are using pictures, using readings (i.e., how to make use of a given passage or text prescribed to devise classroom writing activities), using all language skills, teaching practical writing, using controlled writing, teaching organization, and responding to students' writing. The book is a valuable guide for teachers of writing to evolve their own suitable classroom techniques depending on the level and abilities of the students.

2.3.10 Writing Tasks by Jolly (1984) consists of seven chapters. They are: 1. Writing notes and memos. 2. Writing personal letters. 3. Writing telegrams, personal advertisements and instructions. 4. Writing descriptions. 5. Reporting experiences. 6. Writing to companies and officials. 7. Presenting facts, ideas and opinions.
The aim of the book is given in the Introduction - it has been written for foreign students of English who may need to write now or in the near future and have learnt enough English to be able to write complete texts fairly successfully.

Though there are seven sections in the book, the classroom teacher may choose only those sections which are relevant to his classroom situation and train the students in such things keeping in mind the immediate requirements of the examination too. Chapters Two, Three, Four, Five, and Seven are indeed very useful as, besides developing writing skills in the learners, the tasks dealt with are important from the examination point of view too. This book can serve as a very useful guide to teach the students writing skills in the hour allotted for composition work and the students can be made to realize the importance of writing skills in real-life situations as well as in passing the examinations.

2.3.11 Hedge (1988) emphasizes the process approach to writing, an approach which focuses on what writers actually do as they write. The book has been prepared on certain valid assumptions about writing. They are:
1) Classroom writing tasks should enable students to write whole texts rather than merely correct sentences.

2) Students must have opportunities to look at instances of writing and to analyse the various features of the texts.

3) Classroom tasks must be set up in ways that reflect the writing process in good writers. The students must be led through the various stages in the process of writing such as planning, writing, and rewriting.

4) The writing tasks must give the students a sense of purpose and audience focus.

5) The teacher must respond positively to the strengths in the students' writing and must involve the students in the process of revising.

6) Classroom time must be fruitfully utilised with the teacher guiding the students through the various stages in the process of writing. Writing is not an out-of-class activity. Rather, students would benefit much from the teacher's tasks in the class.
7) Group work and collaborative writing generate discussion and activities which encourage an effective process of writing.

The author has organized the book along these lines giving a series of activities which help in the process writers usually adopt when they write. The four sections of the book - 1) Composing, 2) Communicating, 3) Drafting, and 4) Improving - have writing activities that reflect the process of writing and the skills are described through a web of activities. The author has also given a questionnaire to help teachers reflect on their own approach to writing and classroom practice. They are valuable tips for teachers to profit by.

2.3.12 Lakshminarayana's course book (1993) is "a means to an end", as the title says, to cater to the needs and wishes of prospective engineers. It is the outcome of a survey questionnaire administered to the students of various engineering institutions in Tamil Nadu. The book has value for language teachers in general since the language needs of the professional students are not markedly different from those of others, as the book illustrates by the content.

The book focuses on the learning processes of the four skills of the language. Depending on the needs of the
students, the teacher can give added focus in the class on any section of the book, whether it is speaking, reading, listening, or writing. All the four skills are integrated, though separate chapters (called 'Sources' in the book) have also been devoted to a particular skill.

The 'Sources' on Writing deal with writing paragraphs, unity and coherence, essay writing, letter-writing and report writing. Every 'Source' ends with some tasks, called 'Learning Experiences'. The students are assisted in the performance of the Learning Experiences by an extensive analysis of the model passages. The analysis is done in a way to help the students comprehend the passages well and to prepare them to meet the demands of the Learning Experiences.

Three features of the book will be of interest to the classroom teacher: 1) In the 'Source' on 'Writing paragraphs', the features of the model paragraphs like the statement of topic, major and minor details are given in the form of tree diagrams. The diagrams point out the sentence or the sentences making up the major or the minor details. 2) Another 'Source', through hints, leads the students to understand the passage and follow the writer's
thoughts. 3) There is a 'Source' on 'Programme Writing' related to computer programming.

2.4 CONCLUSION

Course books of these kinds, research theses, and classroom experiments are complementary to one another in that they help to make the teaching of writing effective in fulfilling the learners' needs. With College Autonomy being favoured in many states and the teachers being given the responsibility in many institutions to design their own writing programmes to meet the academic demands, there is the necessity to integrate theories with classroom practices with suitable materials and a wider use of course books. A knowledge of what writing is and how writers write would give a better orientation to the teachers, thus ensuring a better academic performance by their students. The following chapter takes up for study these aspects of writing.