

# **The Challenges of Free Writing Skills in EFL Classrooms**

2021

– Rajeev Khadka

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The Challenges of Free Writing Skills in EFL Classrooms

**A Thesis Submitted to the Department of English Education  
In Partial Fulfilment for the Masters of Education in English**

**Submitted by:  
Rajeev Khadka**

**Faculty of Education, Tribhuvan University,  
Kirtipur, Kathmandu, Nepal**

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## Declaration

I hereby declare that to the best of my knowledge, this thesis is original; no part of it was earlier submitted for the candidature of research degree to any university.

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### **Recommendation for Acceptance**

This is to certify that **Mr. Rajeev Khadka** has worked and completed this thesis entitled **The Challenges of Free Writing Skills in EFL Classrooms** under my guidance and supervision.

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## **Dedication**

Dedicated to my parents;  
for the exceptional love, endless support and sacrifices.

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**Rajeev Khadka**

## Abstract

The present study entitled ‘The Challenges of Free Writing Skills in EFL Classroom’ was carried to explore the proficiency of secondary level students in free writing activities and to identify the challenges faced by secondary level students in free writing activities. I used survey research design to accomplish this study. In order to carry out this study, I collected the data from forty secondary level students studying in Tamakoshi Rural Municipality through non random sampling procedure. A set of questionnaire and a test item were used as the main tools for data collection. The findings of the study showed that the students seemed to feel difficult in applying correct grammar, choice of word, and writing mechanics such as: punctuation and capitalization in free writing. The data showed that they are good in organizational part where as poor in grammar. The findings showed that 83.33% of the students felt paragraph writing as the easiest area of writing while 80% of the students felt dialogue writing and 53.33 % of the students felt letter writing as the easiest area of the writing. On the contrary, 80% of the students felt essay writing as the toughest area of writing whereas 66.66 % of the students felt movie writing as the toughest area of the writing. Hence, the role of teacher in solving the problems such as giving suitable activities in teaching English writing and correcting in mechanic, organization, grammar, vocabulary, and content writing plays a vital role in solving the challenges faced by secondary level students in free writing activities.

This thesis has been divided into five chapters. The first chapter deals with background of the study, statement of the problem, objective of the study, research questions, significance of the study, delimitations of the study and operational definitions of the key terms. Whereas, second chapter incorporates the review of related literature, implication of the review of the study and conceptual framework. On the other hand, the third chapter deals with the methods and procedure of this study. Similarly, fourth chapter encompasses analysis and interpretation of data. Finally, fifth chapter deals with findings, summary, conclusion and recommendations of the study. And, in the final section, references and appendices are included.

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## **Chapter 1**

### **Introduction**

This study is entitled *The Challenges of Free Writing Skills in EFL Classrooms*. This chapter consists of background of the study, statement of the problem, objectives of the study, research questions, significance of the study, delimitations of the study, and operational definitions of the key terms.

### **Background of the Study**

Writing is one of the four skills in English that is necessary to be taught. Many students say that writing is the most difficult one. It is caused by their ignorance about what and how to write. Terry (2009, p.2) argues that the reason most people never write is concerned with mistakes. Graves (1994, p.59) assumes such mistakes are the result of their little understanding of the pre-requisite knowledge for writing, such as grammar. Writing does not merely mean applying grammatical rules; it is more students' learning to communicate their written forms without worrying in making mistakes. Indeed, they also experience problem in getting ideas, organizing ideas and developing details, choosing correct sentences, as well as maintaining paragraph unity.

Writing as defined by Odell (1981 as cited in Khaniya 2005, p. 137) is a good activity to improve our understanding of any subject.' The assumption is that the knowledge or ideas in a crude form may be refined by trying to put them on the paper. The argument is that writing is an activity which involves the writer in the process of formulating ideas, then testing and confirming them. Writing is such a skill which keeps us active as we communicate with one another and transmit our culture, ideas and thoughts from one generation to another, it provides us chances to acquire others' ideas, feelings and thoughts in 'a good way. Altogether there are four skills of language learning: listening, speaking, reading and writing. In conclusion, writing skill is considered as the output of listening, speaking and reading. Besides, writing is the second manifestation of language, speech being the primary one.

Richards (1997, p .54) says, “written language is primarily transactional or message oriented. The goal of written language is to convey information accurately, effectively and appropriately”. The main purpose of writing is to enable the learners for free composition and creative writing. The students’ language competence is better if they can write well. Hence, writing is a powerful and permanent means of communication through which human beings express their ideas, thought and feelings in orthographic forms. Whereas, Nunan (2002) believes that writing is an extremely complex cognitive activity since the writer is required to demonstrate control of a number of variables simultaneously; at the sentence level, these include control of content, format, sentence structure, vocabulary, punctuation and letter for action, and beyond the sentence, the writer must be able to structure and integrate information into cohesive and coherent paragraph and texts. This could be the reasons why in learning writing, students will have a number of problems.

Raimes (1983, p .13) agrees that when students complain about how difficult it is to write in a second/foreign language, they are talking not only about the difficulty of finding the right words and using the correct grammar but also about the difficulty of finding and expressing ideas in a new language. However, apart from the problems that writing is difficult, the skill can be learned. Gardner (2008, p .10) states that everyone has capacity to write, writing can be taught, and everyone has an opportunity to become a professional writer if he learns to write because ability to write belongs to all people. Schneider (2011) asserts that anyone who is motivated to learn writing and always practice writing seriously will be able to write well because the difficulties in writing are due to lack of exercise.

I believe students’ success in learning to write is directly related to the support and guidance given in the exercise and assignment. Understanding the different issues and going thoroughly the various studies on writing proficiency, I realized writing as a very complex process that requires many composite skills. It is a skill that improves with constant practice. Hence, my study explores the competence of secondary level students in free writing activities and also investigates the effective measures through which the students can develop their free writing skills.

## **Statement of the Problem**

Free writing skills is a form of writing that expresses feelings, thoughts and ideas in an imaginative way. It provides the learners new ways to play with the language. Creative writing enhances not only the writing skills of the learners but also helps them to improve all the language skills. Many students are able to understand the language, however, they face problem to write them their ideas effectively. The problem is due to lack of the adequate stock of English vocabulary and creativity in writing. If the learners get the opportunity to develop the language through creative writing, the more they learn about the language, the more they feel confident express their views.

Regarding students' problems in writing, students of secondary level in Nepal experience the same i.e. lack of the adequate stock of vocabulary and practice of creativity in writing. Even though the students have had some courses focused on writing, their writing is still unsatisfied. The writings they produce are difficult to understand since the works are lack of proper structure, logics and coherence and cohesion. Therefore, I am interested to identify the competence and explore the difficulties secondary level students face in free writing activities.

## **Objectives of the Study**

- a. To explore the proficiency of secondary level students in free writing activities.
- b. To identify the challenges faced by secondary level students in free writing activities.
- c. To suggest some pedagogical implications.

## **Research Questions**

- a. What is the proficiency of secondary level students in free writing activities?
- b. What are the areas in free writing where students mostly face the difficulties?

### **Significance of the Study**

The study, “The Challenges of Free Writing Skills in EFL Classrooms” is a significant work as it attempts to find out the effective strategies through which the students can develop their creative writing skills

The study will be significant for the teachers as it helps them to develop their understanding on creative writing skills. Since the researcher can review the empirical literature and also can take the reference for the related researches, it will also be significant for them. The findings may also be beneficial for material developers, textbook writers and publishers in developing textbooks and teaching materials which are more practical and suitable for actual teaching and learning situations. Moreover, the findings of the study may provide important information to policy makers and teacher educators.

### **Delimitations of the Study**

The population of the study were students studying at secondary schools. The study was limited to the response obtained from forty students of grade 9 and 10 studying in four different government aided schools at Tamakoshi Rural Municipality. Questionnaire and test item were used as the tools to elicit the data on free writing skills.

### **Operational Definition of the Key Terms**

Some terminologies are used in this study to describe the study procedure and findings. The terminologies used in the context of this study give the following meaning.

***Free writing.*** The writing inspired by writer’s own imagination based on individual selection of vocabularies and structures.

***Difficulties.*** The challenges that exist during the process of writing.

***Writing proficiency.*** The level of competency in which an individual is able to use language for both basic communicative task and academic purpose in writing.

## Chapter 2

### Review of Related Literature and Conceptual Framework

The present chapter explains the existing literature and research related to the present study for finding out what have already been studied and what is the significance of those research works to the present study. The review of theoretical literature, implication of the review of the study and conceptual framework are included in this chapter.

#### Review of Theoretical Literature

The literature in this chapter gives a brief explanation about some theories that support this research. The theories are related to writing Skills, importance and the approaches to Writing. Additionally, creative writing, its importance and effectiveness for Learners are also reviewed.

**Language skills.** It is considered that there are four basic skills of each language. They are- listening, speaking, reading and writing. These skills can be further divided into two categories: productive (speaking and writing) and receptive (listening and reading), depending on whether students produce the language by themselves or not (Harmer, 2007, p.265). All these four skills are equally important and these are interrelated in a language learning environment.

Most students of English find it easier to master receptive skills, such as understanding grammar, reading English text, and listening to spoken English, than productive skills, speaking and writing. This does not mean that speaking and writing are more difficult to them. It is simply because in English Language classroom, students are mostly exposed to target language items through grammatical drills, reading comprehension, and listening to tapes or teachers without students being drilled in how to express their ideas both in writing and speaking (Tan and Miller, 2008). Therefore, often it seems that language learners face more difficulty to cope up writing skill than other three. Writing could be a difficult skill to be learnt or taught due to the fact that it is not a simple cognitive activity; rather it is believed that

writing is a complex mental production which requires “careful thought, discipline and concentration” (Graves, 1994, p. 9).

**Writing skills.** Writing is one of the most important skills in learning a new language. It is often regarded as the visual representation of speech which is also known as the productive skill of language. It is a productive skill in the sense that it is related to manipulation of the mechanics of writing, structuring them into sensible words, sentences and paragraphs in order to make the reader understand the meaning of such complex effort (Harmer, 2007, p.266). Moreover, writing is the act of placing the graphic symbols that present language in order to convey the meaning that the reader can grasp the information. It is the last language skill and it is also the most difficult skill of language (ibid). The skills involved in writing are highly complex. We are able to discover and articulate ideas in the way that only writing makes possible. Rivers (1968) states:

Writing refers to the expression of ideas in a consecutive way, according to the graphic connection of the language: the ultimate aim of a writer at this stage is to be able to express himself in a polished literary form which requires the utilization of a special vocabulary and certain refinement structures. (p. 243)

From this definition, I can state that writing is the way of expressing our ideas in a continuous process through the graphic symbols of the language. Writing requires different mechanisms and it also requires special skill from one type of writing to another type of writing.

Bell and Burnaby (1984, as cited in Nunan, 1998) point out that writing is extremely cognitive activity in which the writer is required to demonstrate control of variables simultaneously at the sentence level, these include control of content, format, sentence structure, vocabulary, spelling and letter formation. Beyond the sentence, the writer must be able to structure and integrate information into cohesive and coherent paragraphs and texts.

Similarly, White and Arndt (1993) say writing is far from a simple matter of transcribing language into written symbols: it is a thinking process in its own right. It demands conscious intellectual effort which usually has to be sustained over a

considerable period of time. Writing is a form of problem solving which involves such processes as generating ideas, discovering a 'voice' with which to write, planning, goal setting, monitoring and evaluating what is going to be written as well as what had been written and searching for language with which to express exact meaning. Moreover, writers rarely know the outset exactly, what they are going to write because many ideas are only revealed during the act of writing.

From these definitions, I can say that writing is a very complex process and requires mechanics of writing, coherence and cohesion to integrate information properly. Writing is an act of transmitting thoughts, feelings, and ideas from past to present and from present to future. It is a transparent mirror which can vividly present our knowledge as well as experiences.

Similarly, Harmer (1998, p. 78) says, "Writing is an activity through which human beings communicate with one another and transmit their ideas and check accommodate their culture from one generation to another. It equally provides with possibilities to discover and articulate the ideas in many ways". The definition states that writing is an activity through which human beings share their culture, religion, values, ideas and assumptions from generation to another.

In conclusion, writing is an act of rendering thoughts, feelings and ideas from past to present and from present to future in graphic form. It is a transparent mirror which can present knowledge and experiences as well.

**Importance of writing.** Writing is one of the most important and superior skill for learning a language because of its quality of being permanent. It is a productive skill. Writing helps to transmit thoughts, feelings and ideas from one to another in different time phases through graphic forms (Tan and Miller, 2008). Therefore, it is regarded as transparent of mirror, which can present our knowledge as well as experiences. Writing is the output of listening, speaking and reading skills.

Writing skill is the secondary and productive skill. In our examination system of all levels, the writing ability plays a vital role in securing good marks. If students are not trained in writing skill, they cannot give answers in a limited time of

examination (Khaniya, 2005). The students cannot be perfect in any language without the knowledge of writing skill.

Harmer (2007, p. 86) writes, “Writing as a co-operative activity, co-operative writing works well with both process and genre based approaches”. In the same way, he argues that the reasons for teaching writing to students of English as a foreign language include refinement, language development, learning style and most importantly, writing as a skill in its own right. So, we can say that the students who learn the English language cannot be perfect without the knowledge of writing skill. They can learn to express their ideas explicitly when they are efficient in writing. Writing helps students to learn second language, reinforces the grammatical structures, idioms and vocabulary that they have learnt in the class.

According to Richards (1997, p. 101). “Writing language is primarily language transactional or message oriented. The goal of written language is to convey information accurately, effectively and appropriately”. Writing skill provides variety in the classroom activities. Written documents can be preserved for long time. Writing has widely used to transmit experiences and knowledge related to science, literature, religion, technology, philosophy, politics, sociology and culture. Furthermore, the following points make the writing so important.

Thus, we can say that the students who learn the English language cannot be perfect without the knowledge of writing skill because language learning is the integration of four language skills viz. reading, listening, speaking and writing. So, the students’ competence is better if they can write well. So, writing is a powerful and permanent means of communication through which human beings express their ideas, thoughts and feelings in orthographic forms.

**Approaches to writing.** As for the history of teaching of writing is concerned, it was not given much attention to evident from scarcity of research studies related to this skill till the beginning of the last decade of the twentieth century (Krashen, 1984). Long and Richard (2003,p.15) reported that writing skills teaching was given importance during 1990s when English established its status as a language of international communication and consequently “English as L2 writing skills do not only- play an increasingly important role today in the lives of professionals in almost

every field and discipline” . As one of the four language skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing) writing has always formed part of the syllabus in the teaching of English.

There are different ways to approach writing in the classroom. The best practice in any situation will depend on many factors such as the type of students, the text type being studied, the school system etc. A closer look through the history of teaching of writing skills reveals that among the different approaches that have been experimented to teach writing effectively, three approaches have been the most influential which are product approach, process approach and genre approach. Much research has strongly suggested that all these approaches carry their own weaknesses and strengths but they are complementary to each other as well (Mackey & Gass, 2005).

According to Harmer (2007), there are a number of different approaches to the practice of writing skills in the classroom but to choose the appropriate approach for the students, teachers have to decide whether they want the students to focus on the process of writing more than its product, whether they want them to study different written genres or whether they want to encourage writing using their creativity, (p, 87). Among different types of approaches, over the last 20 years the process and product approaches are more dominant of teaching writing in the ESL classroom. The product approach focuses on the construction of the end-product of writing rather than the process of writing itself. On the contrary, process approach of writing pays attention to the various stages that any piece of writing goes through. However, according to Tribble (1996, p. 37-57), in the last ten years, genre approaches have gained adherent (Badger & White 2000, p. 153). Another approach to writing that has been dominating in the ESL classroom for recent few years is creative writing. Creative writing suggests imaginative tasks such as writing poetry, stories and plays which promotes effective learning through self-discovery.

***Product- oriented approach.*** The product-based writing approach is a well-established means of education by which the learner is persuaded to mirror a section of example text, often given to them in the nascent stages of learning the language (Gabrielatos, 2002). According to Tahaineh, (2010), in an ordinary product approach-centered class, learners are given an ordinary example of writing, which they are then

required to follow and adapt in order to re-create a section of original text. The product-oriented approach is the most common and traditional approach used by EFL teachers. Brown (2002) proposed that in the case of product focused methods fruitful learning is determined by the extent to which the text is well-organized, as well as on its grammatical accuracy.

According to Gabrielatos (2002), a product approach is a traditional approach in which students are encouraged to mimic a model text which is usually presented and analyzed at an early stage. For instance, in a typical product approach-oriented classroom, students are supplied with a standard sample of text and they are expected to follow the standard to construct a new piece of writing. Pincas (1982) states that, product-oriented approach comprises of four stages: familiarization, controlled writing, guided writing and free writing. The first stage, familiarization, aims to make learners aware of certain features of a particular text. In the next two stages, controlled and guided writing, learner's practice of the highlighted features and learn how to organize the ideas until they are ready for the free writing section. The free writing stage is the end product of the learning process when students use their writing skills, structures and vocabulary that they have been taught to produce the product. Through this section they show that they can do as fluent and competent users of the language.

***Process-oriented approach.*** Process-oriented approaches concern the process of how ideas are developed and formulated in writing. Harmer states, "A process approach asks students to consider the procedure of putting together a good piece of work." In this approach writing is considered as a process through which meaning is created by following a number of stages. According to Tribble (1996), process approaches stress "...writing activates which move learners from the generation of ideas and the collection of data through to the 'publication' of a finished text" (Badger, 2000). In process approaches writing predominantly deals with linguistic skill, such as planning and drafting rather than linguistic knowledge, for instance, knowledge about grammar and text structure, etc.

A process-oriented approach can have any number of stages with different views that writers go through in producing a piece of writing, though a typical model is identified which include four stages: prewriting, composing or drafting, revising,

editing and finally producing a finished version (Tribble, 1996). In reality the writing process is more complex than this. These various stages of writing are done in a recursive way. It means that the writer loop backwards and move forwards between these various stages.

**Activities for writing skills in secondary level.** In regard to writing instruction at secondary level education (in grade nine and ten), the present curriculum has allocated 35 per cent weightage for teaching writing (listening 10%, speaking 15% and reading 40%) (CDC, 2014). For writing instruction, the curriculum has clearly recommended to implement writing process: planning, drafting, revising and producing the final draft (CDC, 2014). The activities applied for writing skills at secondary level curriculum in Nepal are;

***Controlled writing.*** Controlled writing activity is carried out under the direct supervision of the teacher-students and have no freedom to make errors. This type of writing is helpful for the beginners. It includes combining, reproducing and completing (Rivers 1968, p.252). Combining exercises can join words into sentences, sentences into paragraphs and paragraphs into essays. Such exercises are on the brink of production. In production exercises students write without originality, what they have learned orally or read in their textbooks. Reproducing a piece of writing may be exact reproduction of something read either by copying it or by rewriting it from memory. In completion exercise some parts of sentences are given and students are required to complete with words or phrase. The best known completion exercise is "filling the blank".

***Guided writing.*** In guided writing activities, students can be given some freedom in the selection of lexical items and structural patterns for their writing exercise (Pinacus 1993, p.110). Paragraphing, parallel writing and developing skeleton into a text type of activities can be done for guided writing. The guided writing activities included in secondary curriculum in Nepal are directions, instructions, obligations and prohibitions, posters, electronic text messages, post cards, advertisements, messages of condolence, messages of congratulations, menus, interpretation of (charts, graphs, tables, lists, pictures), short skeleton stories, news stories and invitation letters (CDC, 2014).

**Free writing.** According to Elbow and Belanoff (2000), freewriting is defined as writing any ideas or thoughts that come to mind in a given time period without stopping. Freewriting in the L1 was one of the popular methods used during late 1960s and early 1970s as a way of discovering new English instruction during the neo-progressive movement, which began by opposing the teacher centered traditional instruction which paid little attention to creativeness (Fox & Suhor, 1986). However, its popularity withered in the mid-1970s as the back-to-basics movement began because the advocates of this movement considered the English instructional methods used during the neo-progressive movement period, including freewriting, as shallow and permissive instruction with no discipline (Fox and Suhor (1986). In fact, free writing is the final stage on the development of the writing skill. Rivers (1968, p.252) says, "Free writing refers to the type of writing in any topic which gives complete freedom of expression. This type of writing is mainly characterized by the students' freedom selection of vocabulary and structure." It means student is independent to select words, organize ideas and able to express his /her thought freely. Writing free composition requires a careful planning and students should be helped in this stage too. Pinacus (1993, p.110) defines, " Free writing as the ability to write freely what has been taught", not "the ability to write anything at all". It means the writer should write any things beyond reading materials and given any topic as well. Free writing can be classified into four types: narrating, describing, replying and explaining. The free writing activities included in secondary curriculum in Nepal Letters and emails (personal/informal, official/formal), essays (descriptive, narrative, cause effect), newspaper articles, reviews of movies and books, brochures/ leaflets, Dialogue (with the situation given), paragraph on personal experiences, and short stories (CDC, 2014).

**Testing writing.** Testing, in a broad sense, has always been an inherent part of teaching. Testing is used as a process of scrutinizing how learners have learned what the teacher wishes them to learn (Harmer 2006, p.320). Writing is a complex activity and includes various skills. To produce effective piece of writing, the writer possesses the knowledge of mechanical skills, stylistic skills, and judgment skills. Under mechanism of writing the learners should learn the alphabet, the left and right direction of English writing script, upper and lower case letters, rules of capitalization, basic spelling patterns of English and rules for words and sentence

formation. It can be learnt by the learners by means of some writing practices. Mechanics mainly includes capitalization, spelling and punctuation.

According to Harmer (2006, p.321), there are four different tests at our disposal to assess writing skills: placement tests, diagnostic tests, achievement tests and proficiency tests. Placement tests show how good a student's English is in relation to a system of levels. Diagnostic tests expose learner's difficulties and gaps in their knowledge where achievement tests assess the assimilation level of a specific material and proficiency tests' aim is to find out proficiency of students in the subject matter. But, essay tests, like any other test, raise the issues of validity and reliability, which according to Harmer (2006, p.322) are two key concepts when judging test effectiveness.

*Validity:* A test is valid if it tests what it is supposed to test. Further explanation is that the validity of a test is measured on the basis of how for the information it provides is accurate, concrete and representative in light of the purpose for which it is administered.

*Reliability:* Reliability of a test is its consistency." A good test should give consistent results" (Harmer, 2006, p.322). In other words, reliability means the consistency with which a test measures the same thing all the time. For example, the same group of students should get similar results each time, they take the same test over a short period of time. It means the result is constant or less differences between the result. On the other hand, marking in subjective test (essay test) is more problematical. Different people may score for the same piece of work differently. So, to make marking reliable and valid, subjective needs marking scale. For example, Harmer (2008, p.172) has given the scale of 0 1 2 3 4 for marking a student's presentation so that marking may avoid differences.

Hughes (2010, pp.101-2) has given the model for marking subjective test as (a) Grammar; sentence construction, subject verb agreement, person and tense in writing are checked under the grammar (b) Vocabulary: The use of vocabulary and idioms are checked under this part. Errors or mistakes in use and selection of the vocabulary are mainly checked under it (c) Mechanics: Spelling, punctuation, capitalization, word usage and required are measured under this topic and (d) Form

(organization): clear expression of ideas, use of ambiguous words, sentences, definitions, examples, illustrations and quotations.

### **Review of Empirical Literatures**

While reviewing the related literature, I have found different national and international researches, which have been carried out in connection with textbook analysis. The available literatures are summarized as follows:

Kafle (2008) carried out a study on “A Study on the Proficiency in Guided Writing”. The main objective of this study was to find out and compare the students’ proficiency in guided writing and to find out their weaknesses and strengths in writing skills. He used non-random sampling procedure to select 60 students from ten different schools in Kathmandu. He used a set of test items as the tool for the data collection. The finding of his study showed that the proficiency of the girl students was better than that of the boy students and institutional school students’ proficiency was better than that of community school students in writing skills.

Karki (2010) is carried out a research entitled “Grade Seven Students’ Competence in Guided Writing.” The main objective of his study was to find out grade seven students’ competence in guided writing and to compare the competence of girls and boys studying in government aided schools. It was a survey research where he used non-random sampling procedure to select 70 students from the government schools in Kavre district. He used a set of test items as the tool for the data collection. The finding of the study shows that only 37% of the students obtained above the average marks whereas remaining 63% of the students obtained below average marks. The research concluded with the note that boys were more competent in guided writing than the girls.

Khadka (2012) conducted the research entitled “Writing Proficiency of Higher Secondary Level Students”. The main objective of this research was to find out the writing proficiency of higher secondary level students and to find out the students’ proficiency in terms of stream and sex. He used non random non-random sampling procedure in order to select the required number of students. Sixty students of class

XII were selected from education and management streams and three different Higher Secondary Schools of Rauthat District. A set of test items was provided to collect required data. The finding of this study was that average proficiency of students was 24.11 out of 50. In case of sex wise comparison boys were found more proficient than girls. As there were two different streams in this research the students from management streams were found more proficient than the students from education streams.

Paudyal (2015) carried out a study on “Proficiency of Grade Eleven Students in Free Writing.” The main objective of this study was to find the free writing proficiency of grade eleven students. He used survey research design and selected 60 students from three different government schools in pyuthan by using non-random sampling procedure. A set of test items was used as a tool for data collection. The finding of this study presented that the writing skill of the students was not satisfactory and up to their level and it also showed that the boys were better than girls in free writing proficiency.

Pokhrel (2016) conducted a study entitled ‘Bachelor Level Students’ Proficiency on Free Writing’. The Study aimed at finding out the proficiency of students on free writing and identify the errors in their writing. The researcher collected data from the Bachelor first year students, studying in education and Management Faculties. To generate relevant data, the researcher used test items using the survey research. The total sample was 30 students; 15 students from Education Faculty and 15 from Management Faculty. The required data were gathered by using non random non random sampling procedure. This research study concludes that free writing proficiency of the students is not satisfactory. Students could not complete the target length. While writing, organization of knowledge, subject matter, presentation, illustrations, were poor. Most of the errors were found in capitalization and punctuation. Errors were also found in plural number in subject verb agreement, tense spelling and preposition.

Batala (2017) conducted the research, ‘Free Writing Proficiency of Grade Eight Students: A Comparative Study’ to find out the proficiency of grade eight students in free writing and to compare the free writing proficiency of institutional and community school students in Jajarkot district. The study was based on survey

research design in 40 participants (20 from community and 20 from institutional school) where a set of test items was used to collect data. She found that comparatively the students of institutional school are more proficient than the students of community school but there is no vast difference. It was found negligible difference between institutional and community school's students.

Neupane (2019) conducted a research on "A Comparative Study of Writing Proficiency in Secondary Schools of Gorkha and Kathmandu District". The main objective of this study was to investigate the writing proficiency of the tenth graders of Gorkha and Kathmandu district. He selected 10 participants by using the non-random sampling procedure in order to select the required number of students. The finding of his study showed that the students of urban areas were better than the students of the rural areas.

Shrestha (2020) carried out a study on "A Comparative Study on Free Writing Proficiency among the Secondary Level Students in Lalitpur District". The main objective of this study was to compare the writing proficiency of students of those schools. In this study class ten students from three institutional schools and three government school of Lalitpur District were selected. He used non-random sampling procedure to select the participants. There were altogether sixty students for the data collection. The finding of his study showed that writing skills of institutional school students were better than that of the community schools students.

Most of the researches related to writing comprehension in the university are carried out on writing Proficiency. Additionally, the researches are concerned to the vague ideas of free writing. But, a limited number of researches have been carried out on effectiveness and difficulties of creative writing in EFL classrooms. Therefore, this research is different and unique. Most importantly, my research is different in the sense that no any research in the university has been carried to find out the effective measures through which the students can develop their creative writing skills. Since its study area and sample size are too different, it is also different from other studies.

### **Implications of the Review for the Study**

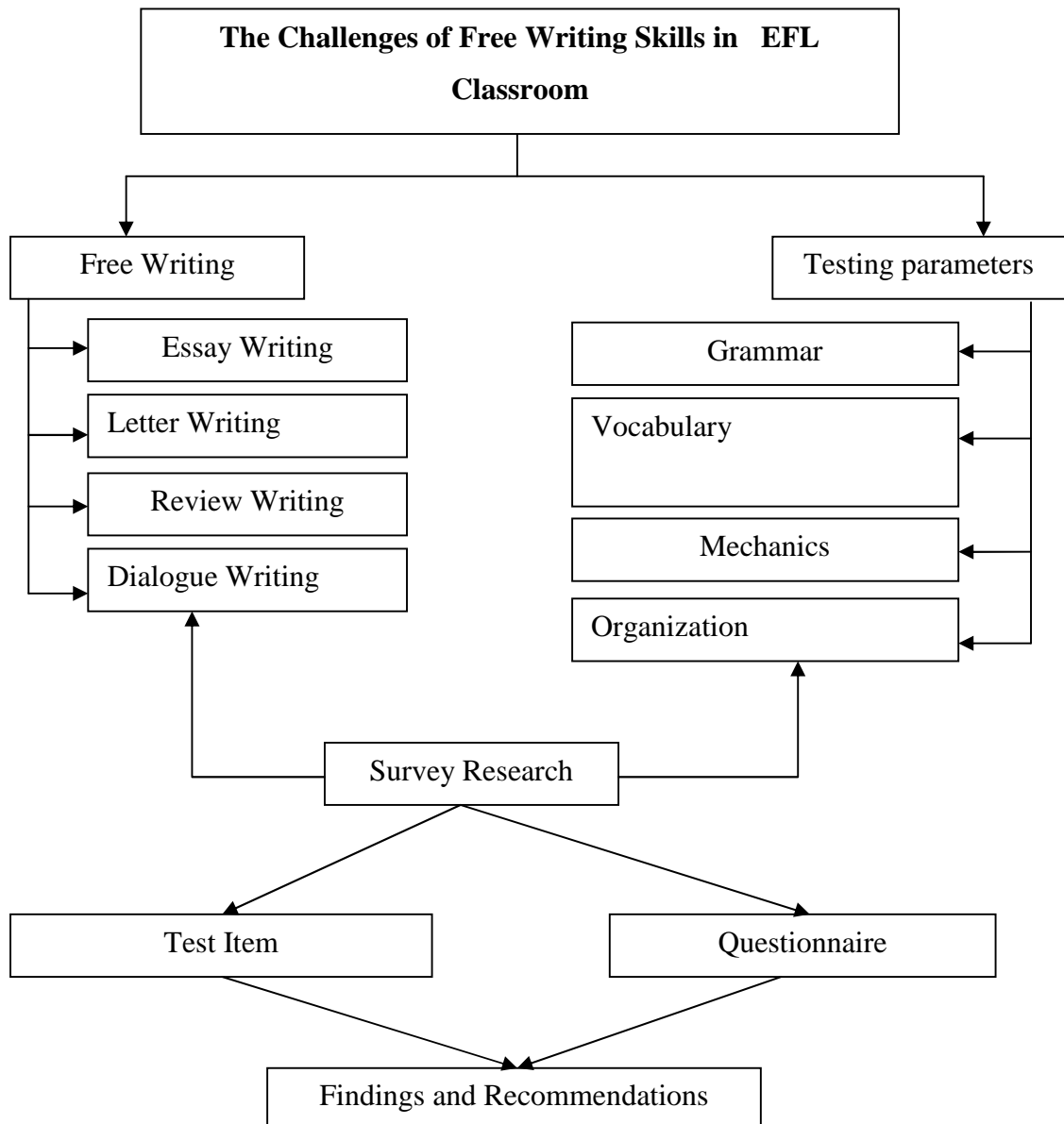
The review of the study obtains the information from the variety of sources including books, articles, journals, thesis and so on. Through the empirical and theoretical review, I got information about the various procedures needed to conduct my research study. Regarding sampling strategies, use of tools, and analysis and interpretation procedures, I gained valuable information from these works. I got required insights from empirical and theoretical review.

Keeping the importance of review of related literature in my mind I observed Brown (1988), Gardner, (2008), Harmer, (1998), Harmer, (2007), Krashen (1984), Nunan (2002), Richard (1997) and so on. These observations took in depth of the theoretical as well as practical aspects of conducting research. In the same way, I reviewed some empirical literatures with the objective of citing for the empirical literatures. To be specific, Neupane (2019)'s research assisted me in formulating objectives and constructing research questions. Likewise, Batala (2017) assisted in designing research tools and deciding for data collection and interpretation. In the similar way, the study of Khadka (2012) provided me guidelines to improve methodology. On the other hand, the study of Pokhrel (2016) provided me insight to design the conceptual framework and enabled to fit the findings into the existing body of knowledge.

In a single sentence the reviewed literature had significant value to make research scientific, systematic, relevant and consistent.

## Conceptual Framework

Conceptual framework is representation of the understanding of the theories by researchers and his conceptualization of the relationship between different variables. Therefore, conceptual framework of my research will be as follows:



## Chapter 3

### Methods and Procedure of the Study

A systematic study needs to follow a proper methodology to achieve the predetermined objectives. Therefore, I will be following the following methodology to obtain the objectives.

#### Design and Method of the Study

I adopted survey research design to complete my study. Survey is the most commonly used method of investigating in educational research. It is a superficial study of an issue or phenomena. Survey research in education can be carried out either by a group of research or by individual. Craeswell (2012, p. 376) writes, “Survey research design are procedures in quantitative research in which investigators administer a survey to a sample or the entire population of the people to describe the attitudes, opinions, behaviors, or characteristics of the populations.” It means to state that surveys research design is such a design which is quantitative in Nature and helps us to generalize the results to the entire population. Similarly, Nunan (2010, p. 140) says:

The main purpose of a survey is to obtain a snapshot of conditions, attitudes and events at a single point of time. Survey is most commonly used descriptive method in educational research, which is from large scale investigations to small scale attitudes.

From the above mentioned definitions, it can be said that data is collected at a single point of time aiming to obtain over view of a phenomenon, event, issue or a situation. Survey addresses the large group of population; sampling is the most to carry out the investigation. The sample should be representative of the study population as a whole. The findings of survey are generalizable and applicable to the whole group. In other words, surveys are used mostly in scale researches where a huge population in required to be include in research.

Survey research is a popular and widely used design in the field of education. Similarly, Bryman (1989 as cited in Sapkota, 2012, p. 138) writes, “Survey research

entails the collection of data on a number of units and usually at a single time, with a view of collecting systematically a body of quantifiable data in respect of a number which are when to discern pattern of association.” From the above discussion, we can conclude that survey is the important research design in the field of educational research. I strongly maintained the following eight step procedure suggested by Nunan (2010, p.141) while carrying out this research work.

Step 1: Define objectives

Step 2: Identification of the target population

Step 3: Literature review

Step 4: Determine sample

Step 5: Identifying survey instruments

Step 6: Design survey procedure

Step 7: Identify analytical procedure

Step 8: Determine reporting procedure

I implemented survey research as it is better suited to answer my research question, additionally, the survey could assist me to identify specific respondents and appropriate location from where I can collect the data. In conclusion, my study will be based on survey design because it includes the samples from a large population group and the finding of the result is generalized to the entire population.

### **Population, Sample and Sampling Strategy**

The population of the study included all the secondary level students studying in Tamakoshi Rural Municipality, however I selected forty students among them by using non random sampling strategy.

### **Research Tools**

I used a set of questionnaire and a test item to obtain data from the respondents.

### **Sources of Data**

I used both primary and secondary sources of data. To fulfill the objectives of the study, I used the following sources:

**Primary sources of data.** As a primary source, I collected data from forty students studying at secondary level in Tamakoshi Rural Municipality by administering questionnaire and a test item.

**Secondary sources of data.** The books such as Brown (1988), Gardner, (2008), Harmer, (1998 and 2007), Krashen (1984), Nunan (2002), and Richard (1997) whereas, the journals of NELTA and the researches of Khadka (2012), Paudyal (2015), Batala (2017) Neupane (2019) were used as the secondary source of data in the study.

### **Data Collection Procedures**

Firstly, I visited the specified high schools with the official letter from the department and asked for permission with the principal. Secondly, I built rapport with the respondents and clarified the objectives of the study. Then, I selected 40 secondary level students using non random sampling procedure. Then after, I took their test. Next to that, I administered a questionnaire to the teachers. Finally, I collected the responses of them.

### **Data Analysis Procedures**

The acquired data were analyzed and interpreted in a descriptive way as per the need of the study. I processed the received the data following simple statistical computation with the Microsoft excel application. Those processed data were explained to avoid uncertainty of presented data and to support the evidence clearly in the study.

### **Ethical Considerations**

In the research period, I was highly concerned on paying attention to different ethical aspects. The participation for the respondents was made entirely voluntary and they were not disadvantaged in any way in order to maintain research ethics. I strictly avoided plagiarism while processing the data.

## Chapter 4

### Analysis and Interpretation of Data

In this chapter, the systematically collected data are analyzed and interpreted using appropriate tools to fulfill the objectives.

#### Holistic Competence in Free Writing

The overall competence of the students of all selected schools has been analyzed and interpreted in details using mean and percentile calculation in free writing under this heading. The following table shows the overall competence of the students in free writing in terms of paragraph writing, dialogue writing, letter writing, review writing and essay writing:

**Table 1**

#### Holistic Competence of the Students in Free Writing

S.N.	No. of Students	Marks Obtained in Free Writing			Remarks
		High	Average	Low	
1	40	22	15.4	5	Satisfactory

The table displays that while carrying out a test to 40 sample respondents from four different schools of Tamakoshi Rural Municipality, the highest marks scored is 22 and the lowest is 5. The table also states that, the mean score obtained by the students in free writing is 15.4 (out of 30) which makes 51.33% in average. Over all, the result in total seems to be satisfactory.

#### Item-wise Proficiency in Free Writing

Under this heading, the competence of the students of all selected schools in each item has been analyzed and interpreted in detail with the help of mean and percentile calculation. The following table shows the competence of the students in paragraph writing:

Under this heading, the proficiency of the students in each item has been analyzed and interpreted in details with the help of percentile calculation. The

following table shows the competence of the students in writing skills based on essay, letter, paragraph, movie review and dialogue:

**Table 2**  
**Item-wise Competence in Free Writing**

S.N.	Items	Full marks	Marks Obtained		Remarks
			Average	Percentage	
1	Essay	8	3.5	43.75	
2	Letter	5	3	60	
3	Paragraph	5	3.5	70	
4	Movie review	6	3	50	
5	Dialogue	6	4	66.66	
Total		30			

The table presents the result of the students' performance on individual question. It displays that the performance of the students is best in paragraph writing whereas poor in essay writing. As seen in the table, students have scored 3.5 marks in essay writing, 3 in letter writing, 3.5 in paragraph writing, 3 in movie review writing and 4 in dialogue writing in average.

**Essay writing.** The table depicts the information that the students are found to be below average in terms of essay writing. When I examined the test items I found that students are poor in grammatical concepts. In fact, they are found to be unaware of cohesion and coherence. The students have written many of the words in roman language as they have less vocabulary storage. On the other hand, mechanics related issues such as errors in capitalization, punctuation and spelling was also observed more. Likewise, the problems were also observed in essay writing in terms of organization of chronological order, order of importance, compare and contrast, and cause and effect.

**Letter writing.** The table gives the information that the proficiency of students in letter writing is found to be good as the students have scored 60 % of total marks in average. While examining the test items I found that though the students are poor in grammatical concepts, vocabulary and, mechanics, they were found to be good in the organizational part of letter writing.

**Paragraph writing.** As displayed in the table, paragraph writing was found to be the easiest area of writing to the students. The students were found to be good in organizational part of letter writing, however, they had shown some errors in terms of mechanics such as, spelling and punctuation. In conclusion the errors were observed in terms of clarity of expression and appropriate grammar.

**Movie review writing.** The table shows that students are found to be average in movie review writing. As displayed in the table, the average score is 3 out of 6. When I investigated the writings I found that students are poor in grammar, vocabulary and mechanics. However, the organizational part of review was found somehow good may be because they are skillful in summarizing the story.

**Dialogue writing.** The table elucidates that students are good in dialogue writing. The proficiency of students in dialogue writing is found to be good as the students have scored 66.66% of total marks in average. The main reason behind the good performance in dialogue writing is due to their strength in organizational aspect. Similarly, as the dialogue writing is considered to be colloquial and some informal slangs are also accepted in it they have scored better in dialogue writing in comparison. While dealing with the testing parameters the students were found good in vocabulary and organization in comparison with grammar and mechanics.

Overall, students are found to be good in dialogue, letter and paragraph writing. Similarly, it indicates that they are average in movie review writing whereas, poor in essay writing. While analyzing the writing based on testing parameters the students are found good in vocabulary and organization in comparison with grammar and mechanics.

### **Errors Committed by the Students**

The following table shows the no of students committing errors and their percentage students on the free writing activities based on the testing parameters in the test item.

**Table 3**  
**Errors Committed by the Students**

Areas of Errors		Grammar	Vocabulary	Mechanics	Organization
S.N	Writing	Student No and%	Student No and%	Student No and%	Student No and%
1	Essay	30(75%)	35(87.5%)	30(75%)	25(62.5%)
2	Letter	20(50%)	25(62.5%)	30(75%)	25(62.5%)
3	Paragraph	15(37.5%)	15(37.5%)	22(55%)	24(60%)
4	Movie Review	20(50%)	35(87.5%)	25(62.5%)	25(62.5%)
5	Dialogue	10(25%)	20(50%)	25(62.5%)	20(50%)

The table presents the errors made by the students on five different writing categories based on error areas such as grammar, vocabulary, mechanics and organization.

As the table shows out 40, total 30 students made errors on grammar, 35 on vocabulary, 30 on mechanics and 25 on organization. Similarly, on letter writing, 20 students made errors on grammar, 25 on vocabulary, 30 on mechanics and 25 on organization. Likewise, on paragraph writing, 15 students made errors on grammar and vocabulary, 30 on mechanics and 25 on organization. Whereas, on movie review category, 20 students made errors on grammar, 35 on vocabulary and 25 on mechanics and organization. On the other hand, on dialogue writing, 10 students made errors on grammar, 20 on vocabulary, 25 on mechanics and 20 on organization. While analyzing the data, majority of the students made errors on vocabulary on essay writing, mechanics on letter writing, organization on paragraph writing, vocabulary on movie review writing and mechanics on dialogue writing.

On the whole, the highest number of students made error on mechanics whereas lowest on grammar.

### **Challenges Faced by Secondary Level Students in Free Writing Activities**

In the questionnaire, Appendix 1 total 21 questions were asked in order to identify the challenges faced by secondary level students in free writing activities. The opinions of the respondents are tabulated in table 1 below.

**Table 4****Challenges in Free Writing Skills in EFL Classrooms**

<b>Items</b>	<b>Always</b>	<b>Often</b>	<b>Sometimes</b>	<b>Never</b>	<b>Remarks</b>
1. Feeling confident to write.	-	5%	40%	55 %	
2. Effective planning for a large writing assignment.	25%	30%	45%	-	
3. Writing first draft and rethinking		5%	20%	75%	
4. Writing effective sentences		20%	40%	40%	
5. Using the well-defined structure	-	50%	30%	20%	
6. Revising the writing	-	-	60%	40%	
7. Giving credit for the source	-	-	5%	95%	
8. Feeling difficulty to paraphrase and summarise	90%	10%	-	-	
9. Feeling difficulty to transfer the ideas while writing	-	50%	50%	-	
10. Ability to generate information	-	-	10%	90%	
11. Ability to make sentences comprehensible in the first draft	-	-	12.5%	87.5%	
12. Ability to make sentences lively		-	-	100%	
13. Ability to get rid of the mistakes on writing	-	-		100%	
14. Thinking in mother L1 and translating in L2	90%	10%	-	-	
15. Do you notice problems in your writing and figure out what the causes are?				100%	
16. The easiest part of writing					OEQ
17. The toughest part of writing					OEQ
18. Generating ideas on writing					OEQ
19. Writing for pleasure in free time					OEQ
20. Strategies for improving free writing skills					OEQ
21. Pre writing, while writing and post writing activities					OEQ

The first item was asked to measure the confidence level of the students on the ability of their writing. The data reveals that only 5% of them feel confidence often while 40 % do sometimes and the remaining 55% are never confident about their ability to write.

Similarly, second item was asked to identify the effective planning of the students for a large writing assignment. The data presented in the table shows 25 percentages of them plan always, 30 percentages practice it often and 45 percentage practice it sometimes only.

Likewise, in the third item, when the respondents were asked how often they write first draft and rethink about their writing, 92.5 percentage teachers said that they start teaching the story by introducing the author and his contemporary situation while rest 7.5 percentage responded that they never teach short stories introducing writer and his contemporary situation.

Whereas in item 4, the respondents were measured their skills on effective use of the sentences and paragraphs, using correct grammar, punctuation, and spelling. The responses show that 20% do it often and 40% do it sometimes while 20% never do it.

Furthermore, the fifth item was asked to know the frequency of the use of a well-defined structure (introduction, body, and conclusion) in their writing, as appropriate. The data depicted in the table show that 50 percentages of them practice it often and 30 percentages practice it sometimes however remaining 20% never practice it.

In item 6, the students were asked to respond the frequency of revising their writing to make it clear, correct, and consistent. In response to it 20% of the students said that they do it often, 40% sometimes whereas rest 40 % never practice it.

Similarly, in item 7, the question was asked to measure the frequency on how accurately do they give credit for ideas and facts from other people in their writing. The table shows that 95% of the respondents never do it while only 5% of them practice sometimes only.

Item 8 was asked to explore the difficulty level that the students face to paraphrase, summarise, and integrate information from different sources. In response to it, 90% of the teachers said that they find it difficult always while remaining 10% found difficult often.

On the other hand, in item 9, the respondents were asked about the frequency of facing difficulty to transfer their ideas into meaningful written text because of spelling, grammar, and lack of vocabulary. In response to it, 50% percentage of them said that they face it often while other 50 % said they suffer sometimes only.

Whereas as, in item 10 on generating lots of information fairly and quickly on the topic of interest 90% of the respondents responded that they feel difficulty always while rest 10% feel sometimes only.

Furthermore, item 11 was asked to measure the ability of the students on their skill of writing the sentences clear so that they are comprehensible to readers on first reading. The responses in the table has shown surprising results that 87.5 percentages said that they are never able to do so while a small number i.e. only 12.5 percentages are able to do it sometimes only.

While in item 12, none of the participants responded that they are able to make sentences lively in their writing.

Similarly, regarding item 13, all the students responded that they are never able to get rid of the mistakes on writing.

On the other hand, in item 14 the students were asked if they think and prepare the ideas in their language and then translate the thoughts into English. The responses of the students are shocking in the sense that almost all i.e. 90 percentages never practice it while only 10 % of them practice it often.

The final close ended question was asked to measure the frequency of noticing the problems in their writing and figuring out what the causes are. The responses of the teachers in the table show that none of them practice it.

## Open Ended Responses

Under Appendix II (B), the respondents were interrogated six open ended questions in order to explore their competence on free writing activities and to identify the challenges faced by them. The collective opinions of the respondents to the open ended questions are interpreted below.

**The easiest part of writing.** In item 16, the students were asked about the easiest part of writing for them. While analyzing the easiness on the areas of writing for the students, the following results were revealed.

**Table 5**  
**Easiest Areas of Writing**

S.N.	Items	Number of students	Percentage
1	Essay	8	26.66
2	Letter	16	53.33
3	Paragraph	25	83.33
4	Movie review	10	33.33
5	Dialogue	24	80

The table presents the result on ease felt on item wise writing as reported by the students. It is found from the data that the easiest areas of writings include paragraph writing, dialogue writing and letter writing. It is reflected on the data that 83.33% of the students feel paragraph writing as the easiest area of writing while 80% of the students feel dialogue writing as the easiest area of writing where as 53.33 % of the students feel letter writing as the easiest area of the writing.

The responses from open ended questions in item 16 revealed the fact that most of the respondents feel comfortable to write paragraph and dialogue on given topic which are being practiced in their class. Moreover, all of them feel easy to write when they are given some ideas on brain storming. In conclusion, seen topics and already

practiced topics are felt easier by the students. Thus, the easiest part of the writing process is inspiration. When it's there, the words flow like a raging river.

**The toughest part of writing.** Item 17 includes responses on the toughest part of writing. While analyzing the difficulty based on the areas of writing for the students, the following results were revealed.

**Table 6**

**Toughest Areas of Writing**

S.N.	Items	Number of students	Percentage
1	Essay	32	80
2	Letter	14	46.66
3	Paragraph	5	16.66
4	Movie review	20	66.66
5	Dialogue	6	20

The table displays the result on difficulty felt on item wise writing as responded by the students. It is seen on the table that the toughest areas of writings include essay writing and movie review writing. It is reflected on the data that 80% of the students feel essay writing as the toughest area of writing 66.66 % of the students feel movie writing as the toughest area of the writing.

To sum up, movie review writing and essay writing were found difficult by most of the students while reviewing the responses on item 17. The results found that, the main reasons on feeling essay writing as the toughest area on writing is; respondents were found to be ignorant about thesis statement and topic sentences. Most importantly, almost all the students find difficult to start up in essay writing. In conclusion, the part of writing where they have to think and come up with ideas seems very difficult to them.

**Generating the ideas on writing.** Regarding coming up with ideas for writing in item 18, mainly the students were found to develop their writing based on the samples given in book, ideas they get from teachers and surfing the related topic on the internet. The following table shows the responses collected from the students in the numeric form.

**Table 7**  
**Generating the Ideas on Writing**

S.N.	Ways	Number	%
1	Generating the ideas on writing based on samples given in book	15	50
2	Generating the ideas based on the instructions from the teachers	6	20
3	Generating the ideas on related topic by surfing the internet	9	30
Total		30	100

The table shows the responses collected from the students on generating the ideas on writing in item 18. The data presented in the table clarifies that, 50 % of the respondents generate their ideas on writing based on the samples given in book while 20% of the respondents generate their ideas on writing based on the instructions they get from their teachers and remaining 20% by surfing the related topic of writing on the internet.

In conclusion, all of students are somehow convinced about depending on some specific source for getting the ideas to generate on their writing. The ways such as discussion among the friends on topics and mind mapping tricks were found to be completely ignored by the students.

**Writing for pleasure in free time.** Item 19 was asked to collect the opinion on pleasure of writing in the free time. The collective opinions of the students reveal the fact that very less participants i.e. only 3.33 % of the students are habituated to write during their free time.

*Strategies for improving free writing skills.* On 20<sup>th</sup> question, the students were asked to suggest the possible ways to improve free writing skills. Some of the collective responses commented by the students are mentioned below;

Student A- “It is better to better to read the related content and get ideas from teachers.”

Student B- “It is necessary to write something every day so that we can review and improve ourselves.”

Student C- “It is better to search related content on internet.”

While summing up the response it seems that students are finding support via online resources however, they still feel much more confident when they get feedback from their teachers. Thus, the strategies suggested by the students include; writing something every day, surfing related content on internet, reading about the related topic in book and other reading materials and getting feedbacks from the teachers frequently.

*Pre writing, while writing and post writing activities.* Writing is not that easy. It takes study and practice to develop writing skills. For ESL/EFL students, it is important to note that writing is a process, not a product. Every student must be familiar with the three stages involved in writing: pre-writing, writing, and post-writing. Pre-writing refers to things, tasks, preparations carried out before actual composing. These tasks may include analyzing the writing tasks or topics, generating ideas, collecting data, and outlining. While Writing is the stage of actual composing papers. At this stage, one will write as you s/he has planned and make use of all data and ideas collected in pre-writing. Post-writing includes proofreading, editing, and revising the topic written.

The final open ended question was asked to evaluate some of the pre writing, while writing and post writing activities that had been frequently practiced by the teachers. The pre writing activities they practice often were reviewing the class notes, handouts, and assignment, similarly, consider the assignment carefully and notice vocabulary related to a topic. On the other hand, while writing activities often

practiced were edit for organization as they are writing, use a dictionary to check things that they are not sure about while writing. Some students also said that sometimes they write in their native language first and then translate it into English. Regarding post learning activities, the students reported that they discuss their work with other students to get feedback on how they can improve it. Similarly, they also discuss their work with their teacher to get feedback on how they can improve it. They also go back to their writing to edit the grammar, vocabulary, spelling, and punctuation frequently.

## Chapter 5

### Findings, Conclusions and Recommendations

This chapter deals with the major findings and conclusion of the study. It also deals with some recommendations in different levels made on the basis of the major findings.

#### Findings

The overall competence of the students in free writing in terms of paragraph writing, dialogue writing, letter writing, review writing and essay writing seems to be satisfactory as the mean score obtained by the students in free writing is 15.4 out of 30. It is also found that the students are good in dialogue, letter and paragraph writing, whereas, poor in movie review writing and essay writing. It is reflected on the data that 83.33% of the students feel paragraph writing as the easiest area of writing while 80% of the students feel dialogue writing and 53.33 % of the students feel letter writing as the easiest area of the writing. On the contrary, 80% of the students feel essay writing as the toughest area of writing whereas 66.66 % of the students feel movie writing as the toughest area of the writing.

The responses obtained from the questionnaire suggest that the students have lots of challenges in terms of free writing. The data show that majority of the students don't feel comfortable to write as they have responded that they are always afraid of making mistakes while writing. The students are not able to use well defined structure and frequently face problem to paraphrase, summarize, and integrate information from different sources. The students feel easy to write when they get seen topics and are given some ideas on brain storming but face difficulty to think and come up with ideas. However, the technology has been supportive tool for their writing. The students were found to develop their writing based on the samples given in book, ideas they get from teachers and surfing the related topic on the internet. The strategies suggested by the students include; writing something every day, surfing related content on internet, reading about the related topic in book and other reading materials and getting feedbacks from the teachers frequently.

## Conclusions

The present research work entitled " The Challenges of Free Writing Skills in EFL Classroom" is an attempt to explore the competence of secondary level students in free writing activities and to identify the challenges faced by secondary level students in free writing activities. I selected forty secondary level students studying in Tamakoshi Rural Municipality through non random sampling procedure. A set of questionnaire and a test item were used as the main tools for data collection. The findings of the study showed that proficiency of the students in paragraph writing, dialogue writing and letter writing was good whereas satisfactory in review writing and below average in essay writing. Based on the findings, it can be concluded that technology can be a very supportive tool for the free writing activities. While analyzing the writing based on testing parameters the students are found good in vocabulary and organization in comparison with grammar and mechanics. Grammar is the most error aspect that have made by students in composing writing work. On the top, they are seemed to feel difficult in applying correct grammar, choice of word, and writing mechanics such as: punctuation and capitalization. It is obvious from the findings that the students feel easy to write when they get seen topics but face difficulty to unseen topics. In summary, the students have low motivation to write an essay, and seldom do practice writing at leisure time. It is sad to state that very few participants i.e. only 3.33 % of the students are habituated to write during their free time. It is also found that the students feel easy to write when they get seen topics and are given some ideas but face difficulty to think and come up with ideas while engaging with free writing activities. Mainly the students are found to develop their writing based on the samples given in book, ideas they get from teachers and surfing the related topic on the internet. Some of the strategies suggested by the students are; writing something every day, surfing related content on internet, reading about the related topic in book and other reading materials and getting feedbacks from the teachers frequently. The students make a large number of errors.

## **Recommendations**

The following recommendations have been drawn on the basis of the findings of the study. The major recommendations at different levels have been presented as follows:

**Policy related.** The findings of this study suggest that students do not have adequate knowledge on the effective writing strategies, so it is necessary to equip them with a wide range of learning strategies from the policy level. Writing comprehension should be taken as an important part of overall language comprehension. So, the policy makers like experts, textbook writers and course developers should design the course and activities that help to enhance the writing comprehension of the students.

**Practice related.** The first, it is suggested to the teachers to make a spirit of giving guidance to the students in the classroom. It will make the students feel interested in learning English, especially in writing skill. The second, teacher should be able to select technique in teaching writing in order to increase the student's ability in writing for example instead of teaching deductively the students should be taught inductively. The third, students should be encouraged to write daily notes and the summary of each reading so that they will have practice of writing.

**Further research related.** The current study has been limited to secondary level learners, therefore, other levels should be further investigated in this field. Similarly, this study covered a small scale due to time and expense constraint, therefore the further researches can investigate in a large scale. Moreover, the further study can be conducted about other writing activities such as, guided writing, and controlled writing. In conclusion, further studies are required to overcome the limitations of the present study and to produce more convincing evidence of the challenges on freewriting activities in ESL or EFL contexts.

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## **Appendices**

### **Appendix – I**

#### **Test Item**

Name of the School: \_\_\_\_\_

Student's name: \_\_\_\_\_ (Optional)

Grade: \_\_\_\_\_

F.M: 30

1. Write an essay on tourism in Nepal in about 200 words. 8
2. Write a letter to your foreign friend describing your national festival. 5
3. Write a paragraph on childhood memories. 5
4. Write a review on the movie that you have recently watched. 6
5. Compose a dialogue of six exchanges in between two friends who are making their plans for their session break. 6

**Appendix – II**  
**Questionnaire**

Name of the School: \_\_\_\_\_

Student's name: \_\_\_\_\_ (Optional)

Grade: \_\_\_\_\_

Place a tick( ) beside the most appropriate response. Using a Likert scale from 0-4, rate the following with 0 indicating not at all, 1 indicating a little, 2 indicating rather, 3 indicating much and 4 indicating very strong.

S.N.	In the English writing class.....	Always (1)	Often(2)	Sometimes (2)	Occasional ly (4)	Never(5)
1.	I feel confident about my ability to write.					
2.	I can effectively plan a large writing assignment.					
3.	I write first draft and rethink my writing.					
4.	I write effective sentences and paragraphs, using correct grammar, punctuation, and spelling.					
5.	I use a well-defined structure (introduction, body, and conclusion) in my writing, as appropriate.					
6.	I revise my writing to make it clear, correct, and consistent.					
7.	When writing, I accurately give credit for ideas and facts from other people.					
8.	I feel difficult to paraphrase, summarise, and integrate information from different sources.					

9.	I feel difficult to transfer my ideas into meaningful written text because of spelling, grammar, and lack of vocabulary.					
10.	On a topic of interest to me, I can generate lots of information fairly and quickly.					
11.	Can you make your sentences clear--so they are comprehensible to readers on first reading?					
12.	Can you get your sentences lively?					
13.	Can you get rid of most mistakes in grammar, spelling, punctuation, and so on?					
14.	Do you think and prepare your ideas in your language and then translate my thoughts into English?					
15.	Do you notice problems in your writing and figure out what the causes are?					

**B. Open Ended Questions**

1) What is the easiest part of writing for you?

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2) What is the toughest part of writing for you?

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3) How do you come up with ideas for writing? What helps you the most to make your writing better?

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4) Do you write for pleasure in English in your free time?

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5) What do you think can be done to improve your free writing skills?

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6) Suggest some of the pre writing, while writing and post writing activities that you have been practicing frequently.

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*Thank You for taking time to respond.*