

**WRITING PROFICIENCY OF THE STUDENTS OF  
HIGHER SECONDARY LEVEL**

**A Thesis Submitted to the Department of English Education  
In Partial Fulfilment for the Master's Degree in Education**

**Submitted by  
Chandu Sharma**

**Faculty of Education  
Tribhuvan University, Kirtipur  
Kathmandu, Nepal  
2009**

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## RECOMMENDATION FOR ACCEPTANCE

This to certify that **Mrs. Chandu Sharma** has prepared this thesis entitled **A Study on Writing Proficiency of the Students of Higher Secondary Level** under my guidance and supervision.

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## **DECLARATION**

I declare that this thesis is original; no part of it was earlier submitted to the Department of English Education by any researcher.

.....  
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Date: 2065-12-2

## **DEDICATION**

**Dedicated to**

*My Parents*

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## **ABSTRACT**

This research study entitled “A Study on Writing Proficiency of the Students of Higher Secondary Level” attempts to find out the actual writing proficiency of the twelfth graders in the use of Punctuation, Article, S-V agreement and Preposition. To carry out the study the researcher selected four Higher Secondary Schools of Kathmandu district through judgmental sampling and forty students, ten from each school, were selected randomly. The researcher used both primary and secondary sources of data. A set of test items consisting two guided and two free writing was the tool for data collection. The data were analyzed and interpreted on the basis of the tabulated data in accordance with the set objectives. The findings showed that the students’ performance was satisfactory. The students of ED-Mark College and Manamohan Memorial College performed better than the students of Janamaitri and Pashupati Multiple Campus.

This thesis comprises four chapters. The first chapter deals with introduction which consists of general background, literature review, objectives of the study and significance of the study. The second chapter deals with the methodology used in the study: the sources of data, (both primary and secondary), sampling population and procedure, tools for data collection, process of data collection and limitations of the study. The third chapter consists of analysis and interpretation of the data to find out actual writing proficiency in the use of punctuation, article, s-v agreement and preposition. The collected data were analyzed and interpreted by using simple statistical tools like average, percentage and descriptive approach. The fourth chapter presents the findings derived from the analysis and the interpretation of the data. It also suggests some recommendations on the basis of the findings. The final section of the study includes the bibliography and appendices.

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND SYMBOLS

%	:	Percentage
2 <sup>nd</sup>	:	Second
A.D.	:	After the Death of Christ
B.S.	:	Bikram Sambat
CUP	:	Cambridge University Press
e.g.	:	For example
ELT	:	English Language Teaching
etc.	:	etcetera
F.M.	:	Full Mark
hrs.	:	hours
i.e.	:	that is
M.Ed.	:	Master in Education
NELTA	:	Nepal English Language Teachers' Association
OUP	:	Oxford University Press
S.L.C.	:	School Leaving Certificate
SLA	:	Second Language Acquisition
T.U.	:	Tribhuvan University
UNO	:	United Nations' Organization
Viz	:	That is to say, namely
Vol.	:	Volume

# CHAPTER ONE

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 General Background

We simply say that language is a “means of communication” but it is very complicated task to give its more plausible definition. Human beings, animals as well as birds can communicate with each other within their group by using sounds or signs or both. Human beings are distinguishable from animals and birds by language. Through the medium of language our ideas feelings and thoughts are revealed. It is specially a human possession. Chomsky (1965:15) claimed the existence of innate properties of language to explain the child’s mastery of his native language in such a short period of time despite the highly abstract nature of rules of language. It is possible by the help of language acquisition device (LAD) which is in human mind. Lenneberg (1967:21) says “language is species specific behavior and certain mode of perception categorizing abilities and other languages related mechanisms are biologically determined.”

Language is generally considered to be the standard variety of linguistic code because it differs from other varieties of linguistic code, such as dialect, register and idiolect. Being a standard variety language has its own script, grammar, large number of population, it is more prestigious than the other varieties and it is also taken as a social phenomenon which is used to regulate our academic, social and artistic activities.

Language is defined differently by different linguists. For Jespersen (1904:4) “Language is not an end itself... it is a way connecting souls a means of communication.” Crystal (1992: 212) also defines language as “The systematic conventional use of sound, signs or written symbols in the human society for communication and self expression”. This definition is broad one, which includes different forms of language like written language and sign language including the proper language speech. Wardhaugh (1998:1) defines “A language is what the members of a particular society speak”. Thus, language has been defined variously by various

linguists. No single definition of language is perfect in itself because none of the definition covers all aspects of language. But it is widely accepted that language is a complex phenomenon due to its abstract nature.

### **1.1.1 English Language and its Importance in Nepal**

The English language is a mostly spoken language in the world. It is spoken as a native language in most of the European Countries like Britain, America, Canada and Australia. And rest of the countries of the world use it as a second or foreign language. In our country, English is taught and learnt as a foreign language. The introduction of the English language in Nepal is closely related with the establishment of the British Colonial rule in India and the rise of Rana rule in Nepal. However, the existence of the English language can be found before Janga Bahadur's rule in Nepal. For example, Pratap Malla could speak 14 languages including English. After beginning of British rule, English was imposed to Indian people who directly affected Nepalese ruler. The British government opened Gorkha Bharti Kendra during Bhimsen Thapa's Prime ministership. Here, the people who came to Nepal for selecting army spoke English. This act also attracted the Nepalese people towards the English language. Later Janga Bahadur Rana established Durbar High School in 1854 A.D. After his visit to England, he was very much influenced by the English language. So, he realized that English language was important to establish good relationship with English people. Particularly, he established Durbar School for Rana and Royal families but only in 1910 B.S. it was opened for public also. After Janga Bahadur Rana, different Rana rulers had more or less contribution for the development of Tri- Chandra College in 1975 BS. English became the compulsory subject in higher education in Nepal.

Likewise, after the establishment of Democracy in 1951 A.D., a number of schools and colleges were established throughout the country. In those colleges and schools English was continued to be taught a foreign language. Now a days, it is widely used in

different fields and a large number of students are learning the English language in different institutes formally as well as in formally.

The English language is the only one means to develop sound knowledge because the sound knowledge related to different disciplines is found in English. So, the importance of the English is increasing day by day in our country. Now the government of Nepal has prescribed English as a compulsory subject from primary to Bachelor's levels. Even after one's completion of Bachelor's level, he has to use English for various purposes, e.g. library study, communication. Apart from this, English is necessary to participate in different national and international seminars and conferences. Thus, the English language is necessary to have a sound knowledge in any discipline and to live properly in the land.

### **1.1.2 Language Learning**

Language learning means learning of a second or foreign language. While learning language, four language skills are integrated. The preliminary stage of language learning begins from the listening skill and the process makes the speaking, reading and writing skills respectively. A second language is entirely and basically learned in order to use it in a real life situation to communicate and grasp the pieces of information by listening to someone or reading some text. As regards the situation of Nepal, the English language is completely a foreign language. While learning a language, four language skills are considered.

#### **1.1.2.1 Language Skills**

In the process of learning a foreign language, four language skills, listening, speaking, reading, and writing are emphasized. Focusing in the importance of different language skills, Harmer (1991:16) expresses, "...we have said that our choice of language may depend upon the channel of communication. If we examine this concept more fully, we

can identify language skills that native speakers and competent language user's process. Literate people who use language have a number of different abilities. They will be able to speak on the telephone, write letters listen to the radio or read books. In other words they possess the four basic languages skills of writing, listening, and reading. Speaking and writing involve language production and are therefore often referred as receptive skills." To sum up, learning language skills is compulsory while learning and teaching a language. Though the above mentioned four language skills may be taught or learnt in isolation, they are interdependent and integrated. One skill of language helps to learn other language skills. Therefore, learning a language, ignoring language skills is like a body without soul because they all go side by side.

Since the presented study is limited only to writing skill, the same is presented in detail. Writing is one of the most important skills in learning a new language. Being a productive skill it needs proper handling of the mechanics of the writing to make sensible sentences and paragraphs. In other word, writing is an act of putting down the graphic symbols that represent the language in order to convey the message. So that a reader can grasp the information the writer has tried to impart. This skill is considered to be the last language skills among the four and powerful medium of expression. This is such activity by which human beings communicate with each other, transmit their culture, ideas and thoughts from one generation to another. Since, writing is a thinking process in its own right, it demands conscious intellectual efforts.

Each and every skill has its own specific significance; writing is the most demanding language skill. Both in educational field and future career, one will be judged in part by one's ability to put ideas down on paper. It is an art which gives one to be heard and to influence others. Moreover, writing is thought as a medium of expression of ideas and views. It is the fourth language skill equally necessary to be mastered by a language learner. It develops through various and continuous steps of progress and makes the students active in it. The main purpose of writing is to enable the learners for free

compositions and creativity. We cannot learn to speak without learning to hear and write unless we are able to read. That is why reading and writing are interrelated skills and are helpful in improving the competence level of learners. Besides, writing is a form of problem solving activity which involves different 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 has been written and searching for language with which to express exact meaning. Writing is an art which crosses time and space limitations. In conclusion, writing is the most important part of preparation for academic pursuits. It needs more attention.

In Rivers's (1968:243) words, “Writing refers to the expression of ideas in a consecutive way, according to the graphic convention of the language; the ultimate aim of the writer at this stage is to be able to express him in a polished literacy form which requires the utilization of a special vocabulary and certain refinements structures.”

Writing is the very complex process requiring many composite skills, like mental, psychological, rhetorical and critical. Describing its complexity, Nunan says “Writing is an extremely complex cognitive activity in which the writer is required to demonstrate a control of a number 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” (1992:36).

Writing can be looked at in two levels. In its simplest form writing can be the act of putting down something, which has been spoken, in conventional graphic form. In this sense, writing is nothing more than the correct association of conventional graphic symbols with sounds, which have no significance importance for the writer. Writing, thus, is clearly much more than production of graphic symbols. The symbols have to be arranged according to certain conventions to form words and the words have to be arranged to form sentences. So, in its highly developed form, writing refers to the

expression of ideas in a consecutive way according to the message of some kind or translating our thoughts into language in graphic form.

So far as writing exercises are concerned, we should be sensitive to the fact that writing has its own rules and conventions and we can expect course material to take them into account. Writing is not speech written down, and writing ability cannot be adequately taught by simply getting students to write down oral drills or do written grammar exercises. This may help them with their spelling but it will not equip them to produce coherent written text following the conventions of writing.

Rivers (1968:243) describes writing as “Writing becomes a more complicated process when it involves putting in graphic form, according to the system accepted by educated native speakers, combination of words, which might be spoken in specific circumstances (that is, which convey certain elements of meaning”.

### **a. Stages of Writing Skill**

There are three main stages of writing skill. The first stage is called ‘manipulation’ in which the learner simply manipulates the shapes of the graphic counterparts of the phonological items or a spoken word in its written form. The learner learns mechanics of writing, handwriting, and punctuation i.e. capitalization, punctuation, full stop and soon.

The second stage of writing is “Structuring”. In this stage the learner learns the spelling of words, syntactic rules of structuring words, sentences, paragraphs and forming a text.

The third stage or highest level of writing process is “Semantic stage” which the learner learns not only the mechanics of writing and structuring rules but also the significance of using a word, a phrase or a sentence in the overall context of the entire written script.

However, Rivers (1968:245) has suggested the five stages of writing which helps the learners to write in the foreign language. They are copying, reproduction, recommendation, guided writing and free composition.

#### *i) Copying*

This stage is also called the stage of transcription. In this stage the learner becomes familiar with many aspects of language. Discussing the significance of this stage of learning writing skills, River says “As the student is copying, he should repeat to himself what he is writing. In this way s/he deepens the impression on his mind of the sounds, the symbol represents and s/he has further repetition [practice of basic dialogue or pattern sentences, After s/he has some practice in copying accurately with correct diacritical and punctuation makes, s/he may continue to copy as an aid to memorization” (1968:246). When a learner continues the copying activities, s/he learns the scripts of the target language, the orthographic rules and syntactic rules thoroughly.

### *ii) Reproduction*

In the second reproduction stage, the student will attempt to write, without originality what he has learned orally and read in his textbook. The method of dictating to the learner is effective for reproducing sentences. Furthermore, the teacher emphasizes writing and describing a picture or showing something. For it the learner should understand the meaning of sentences.

### *iii) Recombination*

The third stage is recombination stage where the learner recombines learned skills in drills. It is a more appropriate way because learners rebuild on former experience and ideas writing. It is necessary to manipulate grammatical structure. The learners can substitute words, phrases or sentences expanding them more explicitly. The writing of drills not only gives valuable practices in accurate and correct construction of sentences but also consolidates what has been learned orally.

### *iv) Guided writing*

The stage guided writing is a more developed stage than the above ones. In this stage the learners are given some freedom in the selection of lexical items and structural pattern for their written exercise, but they have to follow the given suggestions regarding the content. At this stage the learners are given different types of exercises like summarizing or elaborating some topics. They can include the partially of modifying words and phrases, or the inclusion further information, can give practice in developing meaning within a framework. The skeleton of a story or dialect may be supplied for the development of writing. But students are not totally free because they have to follow the guided frame.

### *v) Free composition*

Writing composition is a complex activity, which requires a variety of skills. It involves the production and arrangement of written sentences in appropriate way. At this stage the learners know how to select the appropriate vocabulary and structure to express their ideas in the meaningful way. They can express their ideas freely at this stage. Keeping personal diary and paragraph writing are some common stages of composition writing. Thus, if learners are carefully guided through all these stages they can have mastery in the writing skills.

The last two stages, guided and free compositions are very useful for the students of higher secondary levels. They measure the proficiency of the English language writing. Before reaching the last stage every student must have the capacity of handling the sentences that the situation demands. The learners should have skills of contracting or spreading the sentences. The fourth stage is the most important to reach the ultimate goal of writing proficiency. Writing English sentences is like swimming in a deep ocean where there is no certainty of length, deep or width of structure and ideas.

### **b) The Essential Characteristics of Good Writing**

Writing is an art of using language but it is a very complex task to write clearly and explicitly. Correct, appropriate and effective writing in logical sentence structure is the most desired thing. Simplicity and directness are the most useful properties of good writing. But, making a simple and clear piece of writing is difficult from the syntactic and semantic point of views. It requires good imagination and logical sequence of thought. According to Richards (1986:36) some essential characteristics of good writing are introduced as follows.

#### *i) Economy*

A good writer must express his ideas briefly and effectively. There should be economy of words to express meaning clearly and quickly. A short but effective writing can be popular for every reader because it saves time, energy and materials. Economy of words

without losing the meaning is one of the best qualities of good writing. If there is more economy in writing, the less chances of occurring fault. Good writing is like a gold coin, small in size but precious one.

#### *ii) Simplicity*

The second quality of good writing is reducing complexities and expressing ideas or thoughts in a natural way. It avoids the extra stylistic words, ambiguities and so on. Simplicity and smoothness make writing understandable and readable which never disturb the readers to understand the gift of writing.

#### *iii) Clarity*

A good writer should not add complications or should be plausible in his writing. The writing must be free from ambiguity and should be explicit. The writer should have the idea of what to say and how to sequence the expressed thoughts. Good writing should avoid exaggeration and self contradictory statements.

#### *iv) Continuity*

Continuity of thought is another important factor of a good writing. There should be continuity of thought from one word to another, from one phrase to another, from one sentence to another, from first to second paragraph and from first chapter to next chapter. The concept of continuity of thought is based on the natural linkage of ideas. It should maintain standard from the beginning to the end.

#### *v) Free from errors*

The writer can't use a whole range of facial expression, gestures and general bodily language to convey the message. As writing is a permanent cord of ones thought or

ideas, it must be accurate. Every written piece has to be free from lexical, syntactic, semantic, and grammatical errors.

Furthermore, a good piece of writing requires examples and illustrations to explain abstract and difficult ideas. There should be appropriate facts, figures, depth of knowledge, specific and maximum objectivity in every piece of effective writing. Writing involves thinking, planning, assembling, clarifying and organizing processes. The art of writing is based upon one's own mental capacity which is very important for specific subject matter. The above characteristics of good writing play a vital role in the writing proficiency of the higher secondary school students. They should have the ability to write clear, economic, simple, continuous and error free sentences.

### **1.1.3 Error Analysis: A Brief Introduction**

An Error refers to the deviant form of the normal speech or writing committed by a native speaker or by other language learners in the use of linguistic items viz a word, a grammatical item, a speech act and so on. Corder (1973) defines an error as "breaches of code". His term is used to refer to learners' errors which they can not correct themselves. In course of learning a foreign language, the term errors and mistakes are referred as synonyms in a Layman sense, however, Errors occur in learners' spoken and written language and consist of deviations in phonology, grammar, local system or orthography of target language. The errors may occur at performance and competence level. Performance errors are the mistakes, like slips of the tongue, omissions and so forth. The learners mainly make such mistakes due to carelessness, tiredness, haste, lack of attention, such mistakes are unsystematic but the errors, which are made at competence level are systematic. Such errors are mostly consistent. They are made due to linguistic reasons. Such errors are mostly committed by non-native speakers. Such errors which are sessions and systematic are done frequently because of incomplete knowledge.

Sometimes mistake is used as a cover term for both error and slip. Errors are considered to be more serious. They are consistently and regularly made by they learners because they are ignorant of the rules of the language. The errors can not be corrected by the doers. Slips, ion the other hand are considered to be trival. They can be corrected by the doers themselves because they are committed due to lack of attention, tiredness or any other non- linguistic reason.

Richerds et. al. (1989:96) has said, “Error analysis is done for the study and analysis of the error made my second and foreign language learners. Error analysis may be carried out in order to:

- a) Find out how well someone knows a language;
- b) Find out how a person learns a language and
- c) Obtain information of common difficulties in language learning, as an aid in teaching or in the preparation of teaching materials;

Form the statement it can be inferred that the study of learners’ error and their analysis is significant in different ways. One of such significances is for teachers. If a teacher undertakes a systematic analysis of the errors committed by his systematic analysis of the errors committed by his students, it becomes clear to his now for the learners have progressed and then what remains to be taught.

### **1.1.3.1 Error in Writing Guided and Free Composition**

Writing is a complex process for language learners. He may commit errors in writing guided or free composition. He may commit errors in spelling, punctuation, grammar, and organization style. Spelling plays a very important role in addition, omission, replacement of one letter with another to change the entire meaning or the word and of the whole message. Punctuation helps to clarify meaning and understand a text. Under the grammatical errors he may commit errors in agreement, preposition, article etc. The writing should be grammatically correct to be meaningful.

### **1.1.4 Language Testing: A Brief Introduction**

A test is a measuring device which we use when, we want to compare an individual with other individual who belongs to the same group. In other words, test or testing is the means of assessment, evaluation, a measuring rod to evaluate the student's ability or achievement. It is a part of evaluation which includes the judgment of total activities involved in teaching and learning. A test is generally administered in formal situation to grade the students in language education. Thus, a test can be defined as any formal procedure for measuring ability, knowledge and performance of the student.

Van et al (1984:313) say. "In the context of teaching tests do not only have the purpose of measuring the language behavior or individual, but they are also useful instruments of an entire group of students."

Khaniya (2005:1) describes, "Testing is used as a process of scrutinizing how far learners have learned what the teacher wishes them to learn." He further says "It is widely accepted that testing offers useful inputs to the teacher to be aware of the effect of his teaching, and also some insights on whether he should continue the way he teaches or change it in order to make his teaching more effective."

#### **1.1.4.1 Testing of Writing**

The writing skill in general has various sub skills. Heaton (1975) has attempted to group the many and varied skills necessary for writing good prose into five main areas.

##### **a) Grammatical Skill**

It is the ability to write correct sentences.

##### **b) Mechanical Skill**

It is the ability to use correctly those conventions peculiar to the written languages e.g. Punctuation, Spelling.

**c) Treatment of content**

It is the ability to think creatively and develop thoughts, excluding all irrelevant information.

**d) Stylistic Skill**

It is the ability to manipulate sentences and paragraphs and use language effectively.

**e) Judgment Skill**

It is the ability to write in an appropriate manner for a particular purpose with a particular audience.

Therefore, testing writing indicates the skills mentioned above. The writing ability is tested usually in the form of essays, letters and reports. The general technique of testing varies according to whether they deal separate factors such as punctuation, spelling, structure or vocabulary.

Khaniya (2005:141) defines “The best way to test people’s writing is to get the learners professional testing institutions are unable to construct indirect tests. Our assessment systems depend on the writer expression for the scoring of the student. “Writing is a process, not product and the process of writing can be studied and understood.”(Murray, 1978). Writing is a productive skill of language. It requires the students to be elicited for the production.

Testing of writing largely depends upon the purpose and context of testing. In this connection, Khaniya (2005) cited from Bachman and Palmer (1996). For them, the

primary purpose and abilities of the learners and the secondary purpose is to make decision on the basis of those inferences.

Khaniya further considers three problems in testing writing as;

- i) Setting writing tasks properly representative of the population of tasks that student should be able to perform.
- ii) The task that elicits samples of writing (set as many as possible) which truly represent the student ability.
- iii) The writing should be scored reliably (Holistic – Impressionistic. Analytic and a combination of both)

#### **1.1.4.2 Punctuation**

Punctuation is an art or practice or system of inserting marks or points in writing or printing in order to make the meaning clear.”(Webster,1988). The proper use of Punctuation marks such as comma, colon, semi-colon, hyphen, full stop, dash, parenthesis, quotation marks, and apostrophe and so on help the writer organize written language and clarify relation between words and clauses. In this section, capital letters is a main part of mechanical skills English writing system. It helps the writer as well as readers to get the exact information or to clarify the relationship between word, clause and phrases.

There are different punctuation marks used for different purposes. Some are presented below with their use.

#### **1. Capitalization**

Appropriate capitalization is a matter of convention. Many of the conventions e.g. capitalizing the first letter of the first word of a sentence the pronoun I, the first letter in the first word of the quotation and so on are very familiar to us. Some capitalization

however is a matter of style rather than convention. When capitalizing for stylistic purposes, writers usually do so to emphasize key word or concept. Some basic rules of capitalization are as follows:

- )] Capitalization is used in the first word and all important words of the title of books, newspapers, periodicals, articles, reports, chapter titles and major divisions e.g. The Good Faith.
- )] It is used to begin all proper nouns, proper adjectives, historical events, periods, documents, days of the week, months name of organization, departments, political and social group, races and languages; e.g. Nepal, Nepali, Shakespeare, the Renaissance, Sunday, March, World Health Organization etc.
- )] It is used in honorary and official titles, specific school course, trade names and abbreviations; e.g. Prime Minister, Professor Bhattarai, UNO, Maruti Car etc.
- )] It is used to write the first letter inside the quotation marks and begin each line of poetry, etc.

## **2. Comma**

- )] Comma is used to separate items in a list of words phrases or clauses and question tags from the rest of the sentences; e.g. Ram bought a book, an exercise copy and pen yesterday.

Sita is a student, isn't it?

If you want to pass, work hard.

- )] It is used to separate an introductory or transitional word or phrase from the rest of the sentence; e.g., securing good marks in English is very difficult and one should, therefore, labor hard.

) It is used before and after a non-defining clause and a phrase in apposition;  
e.g. the woman, who is studying in the library, is my teacher.

### **3. Full stop**

It is used to mark end of a sentence; e.g. Honesty the best policy.

### **4. Question mark**

It is used at the end of an interrogative sentence and used in parenthesis to express doubt; e.g. what are you doing?

### **5. Exclamation mark**

It is used to express a high degree of happiness, sorrow, anger, surprises or other strong emotion;

E.g. Hurrah! We won the match

What a nice picture she made!

### **6. Colon**

) It is used after a principle clauses where the following statement illustrates or explains the content of the principle clause;

E.g. they left old house: it was ruined.

) It is used before a long visit, and often introduce by phrases such as for example as follows:

### **7. Semi colon**

It is used to join independent clauses that are not connected with the comma or co-ordinating conjunctions;

E.g. the sun is rising now; the shadows were long.

### **8. Dash**

It is used instead of a colon or a semi- colon to make the writing vivid or dramatic; e.g. you have been cheating me for years- how can I trust you again?

### **9. Parenthesis**

It is used to enclose cross references and to separate extra information, an after thought or a comment such as:

E.g. Francis Bacon (1561-1626) is known as the father of English essay and modern English prose.

## 10. Quotation marks

It is used to enclose direct quotation, dialogue, titles of shorter works such as poems, short stories etc. Bacon Said, “Study serves for delight, for ornament and ability”.

## 11. Hyphen

It is used to form a compound word from two other words, from prefix and a proper name and from two other words which are separated by two other words which are separated by prepositions such as; Kind- Hearted, Pre- Romantic, Sister-in- law.

## 12. Apostrophe

) It is used with “s” to indicate the possession such as; the authors, the student etc.

) It is used in contracted forms such as; I’m (I am), they’re (they are) etc.

### 1.1.4.3 Grammatical items

There are different areas of “grammatical items” which the researcher studied. The areas are article, preposition and subject- verb agreement in the sentences, the students wrote.

) The term article covers definite and indefinite article (i.e. a, an, the). An article is a quality of nouns and is placed before them. It is not used for other parts of speech e.g.

Pokhara can be said the Switzerland of Nepal.

The Kathmandu Post

He is a doctor.

I saw an insect yesterday.

) The term Subject-verb agreement covers the agreement of verbs with the number of subjects. The two main rules are:

) Singular subject takes singular verb.

) Plural subject takes plural verb.

e.g. Many girls are intelligent.

Everybody is writing.

Rabina, with her sister goes to school by bus.

According to Murphy (1994) there are some rules which are as follows:

- a. The singular subject (He, She, It, Ram, A girl...) takes singular verbs (is, was, has, does goes)
- b. The plural subject (We, You, They Girls) takes plural verbs (are, were, have, do go)
- c. Both subjects (singular and plural) come with-did, had, can, would, will, may etc.
- d. 'I' sometimes comes with singular verbs and sometimes with plural. (I + am, was, do, have)

#### 1. Singular subjects

- a. Somebody /Nobody/Everybody ... something/everything ..
- b. v-ing / To -inf as a subject (Reading .... / To read...)
- c. Every ... and ... (Every man and woman)
- d. No ... and ... (No boy and girls ...)
- e. Arithmetic sums (Two plus two ...)
- f. There + singular verb+ singular subject. (There ... a boy ...)

- g. The number of + plural noun (the number of boys ...)
- h. News, physical, Measles, politics, etc,
- i. Two nouns giving one meaning (Bread and butter...) (Time and tide ...)
- j. Certain amount, distance, measurement (Ten rupees is a small amount of money)
- k. Many a + singular subject + singular verb (many a boy ...)
- l. One of / Either of / Neither of / Each of, etc. (One of my friends ...)

## 2. Plural subjects

- a. Many/ both several/these/those (Many boys are intelligent)
- b. A few + plural noun (A few mangoes are ripe.)
- c. A + number of + plural noun )A number of boys are reading)
- d. Police/people/ cattle / Gentry, etc. (Police have caught the thief.)
- e. There+ plural verbs + plural nouns (There are ten children playing outside.)
- f. The + adjectives + plural verbs. (The intelligent are selected for the quiz contest.)

) The term preposition is a word that expresses the relationship between a noun or pronoun and another part of sentences. The preposition expresses the relation of place, time, manner, direction, motion, reason, purpose, etc. The use of preposition completely changes the meaning of any sentences.

) For example; “It was written to/by/with me.” In this situation, each preposition changes the whole meaning of the sentences.

### **1.1.5 Higher Secondary (10+2) Program in Nepal**

The Higher Secondary Education system does not have very old trend in the context of Nepal. The board of Higher Secondary Education was formed in 1990 A.D. with the minister of education as its chairperson. The board is involved in running the 10+2

system in Nepal. According to Newsletter for Higher Secondary Council (1997:3), “There are four faculties which are controlled and directed by Higher Secondary Education Council. This program is economically helped by foreign aids. It had very challenging years in the beginning. The number of Higher Secondary Schools and the students are increasing rapidly. Some of the schools are running as Public Secondary Schools and others as Private Schools, Institutions or Campuses. However, this system is contributing to produce the middle level manpower for the development of the country. The most significant aim of 10+2 program is to provide opportunities to the S.L.C. graduate to study in their own locality. The students of rural areas are highly benefited from this program. The major objectives of 10+2 program are:

- ) To prepare students for the world of work specially in meeting middle level manpower requirement in different fields.
- ) To prepare students for professional discipline.

The English language is designed as a compulsory subject for grade 11 and 12. In addition, an extra course is taught and studied as an optional subject.

The course of class 12 is a continuation of class 11 English. It builds on the language skills and communicative competence introduced in the previous year. According to Higher Secondary School Curriculum Class XII (1999), the main features of the English course implanted in the 10+2 program are presented below.

#### **1.1.5.1 General Objectives**

- ) To provide students techniques in the use of English for academic and communicative purpose.
- ) To train them in the functional, national and grammatical areas of English language use.
- ) To make them see the relationship between structures and meaning.

) To teach them structures in the context.

### **1.1.5.2 Specific Objectives**

) To teach students language use and functions.

) To enable them to establish a link between structure and meaning.

) To provide them with more examples of language in context.

) To engage them in more fruitful reading.

The course content can be divided into two parts:

1. Core English
2. Extensive reading and writing.

### **1.1.5.3 Evaluation Scheme**

The compulsory English of Class XII carries 100 marks, which is divided as follows:

Core English: 60%

Extensive Reading and Writing: 40%

From the above skill wise point of view the weightage is as follows:

Reading: 40%

Writing: 40%

Grammar and language use: 20%

## **1.2 Review of Related Literature**

Every new task needs the knowledge of previous background which can help and direct to reach the new target for finding out new things or ideas. Many articles, reports, theses and books have been written on the area of writing skills. Here, the researcher

reviewed some of them so that she could deepen this study in consonance with the existing ones.

Odell (1981:43) argues that writing is the good activity to improve our understanding of any subject. The assumption is that the knowledge or ideas in 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.

According to Widdowson (1978:62), one way of describing writing is to say ... "the use of the visual medium to manifest the graphological and grammatical system of the language' and another 'that writing is the act of making up correct sentences and transmitting them through the visual medium as marks on paper". He further considers writing an activity of developing a discussion as transferring information of various kinds from the writer's world knowledge to that of the reader's and that linguistic rules facilitate the transference, though mere linguistic rules are not sufficient to do this, knowledge of use is needed.

Rivers (1968:244) says, "Writing is not, then a new skill which can be learn in a isolation, ... writing gives the students practice in manipulating structural variants adding the reinforcement of the kinesthetic image to the auditory and visual."

Verghes (1990:16) says "Learning a second language is an effective learning of the four skills viz., listening, speaking, reading and writing. Writing is the most demanding language skill."

Hockett (1972) says, "Though writing is not the linguist's primary concern, he is interested in it, as any educated member of our society of course is, and also for two special reasons. One is that our records of our past speech, until the extremely recent invention oh the phonograph, take the form exclusively of documents and inscriptions. The other is that writing is itself of tremendous importance in human life, and that the

natural and history of writing can only be clearly understood in terms of the working of language.”

There are several research works carried out on writing proficiency by former researchers in the Department of English Education. Some of them are as follows.

Karki (1996) did his research on “A Comparative Study on English Writing Proficiency between the Private and Public School of grade X in Lamjung District.” The finding is that the students of private schools were found far better in every aspect than the students of the government schools.

Similarly Poudyal (1999) carried out a study on “A Comparative Study of English Language Writing Proficiency in Higher Secondary School of Gulmi and Kathmandu.” He found that the students of Higher Secondary level of Kathmandu had better writing Proficiency than the students of Gulmi. They committed fewer errors in constructing sentences.

Barakoti (2001) studied “Errors Committed by PCL Second Year Students in Writing Free Composition.” It was found that the students had committed errors in sentence construction, spelling and organization of thought. It shows that the students do not give proper attention to writing comparing to other language skills.

Bhattarai (2002) also carried out the study on “A Comparative Study of the Writing Proficiency of the Bachelor’s Level Students.” He found that the students of institutes have greater proficiency in writing than the students of faculties.

Sah (2003) did his research work on “Writing Proficiency of Grade Nine Students”. He found that the students committed errors in the use of other specific punctuation marks i.e. capital letters, full stop, apostrophe, question marks and so on.

Ghimire(2006) Studied, " Errors Committed by Twelfth Graders in Writing Free Composition" He has analyzed the errors in terms of tense, agreement, article, preposition and spelling and found that the students were better in using article than in writing preposition.

Subedi (2008) did her research work on "Proficiency in Writing Skill: A Case of Letters". She found that the overall proficiency of grade nine students in letter writing was found to be satisfactory.

Although the research works mentioned above are related to writing proficiency and shows that none of the research has been carried out on writing proficiency of the students of Higher Secondary Schools in Kathmandu Valley. But this study is focused to investigate the writing proficiency of the twelfth graders of the Faculty of Education in Kathmandu Valley.

### **1.3 Objectives of the Study**

The objectives of the study were as follows:

1. To find out writing proficiency in punctuation, articles, subject-verb agreement and prepositions in the writing of twelfth graders of the Faculty of Education in the Kathmandu valley.
2. To suggest some pedagogical implications.

### **1.4 Significance of the Study**

Writing is the most fundamental and significant form of language. This study is a primary attempt to study about the English language writing proficiency of the students of Higher Secondary level of Faculty of Education in the Kathmandu valley. It mainly pointed out and determined the nature of difficulty faced by the students in the use of article, preposition, punctuation and subject-verb agreement. To be more specific this study will be useful for the students, teachers, textbook writers, syllabus designers and

other persons who are directly or indirectly involved in English language teaching learning activities.

## **1.5 Definitions of the Specific Terms**

Proficiency : Able to do something well because of training and practice

Skill : The ability to do something well

Composition : A short text that is written as a school exercise; a short essay

Mechanics : It is a statistical tool used in analysis and interpretation of data. It is the result of adding all amounts together and dividing the total by the number of students.

Score : Obtained marks by the students on the test conducted by the researcher.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **METHODOLOGY**

The researcher adopted the following methodology to complete the set of objectives.

#### **2.1 Sources of Data**

The study was based on both primary and secondary sources of data.

##### **2.1.1 Primary Sources**

The primary source of data for this study was the answers provided by the twelfth graders from each selected Higher Secondary Schools of Kathmandu valley.

##### **2.1.2 Secondary Sources**

The secondary data was taken from the related text books, such as Brine (1984), White and Arndt (1991), Heaton (1977), Harmer (1991), the theses approved in the Department of English Language Education, TU, different course books of Higher Secondary Level.

#### **2.2 Sampling Population**

The population of the study was the twelfth graders of the Faculty of Education in Kathmandu valley. The study was limited to forty informants to collect data.

#### **2.3 Sampling Procedure**

Four Higher Secondary Schools were selected through judgmental sampling, and numbers of students were selected randomly which were as follows:

**Table No. 1**  
**Sample Population**

<b>S.N.</b>	<b>Name of Colleges</b>	<b>No. of students</b>
1	Pashupati Multiple Campus, Chabhil	10
2	Janamaitri Multiple Campus, Kuleshwor	10
3	ED-Mark Academy, Kalanki	10
4	Manamohan Memorial College, Soharakhutte	10
	<b>Total</b>	<b>40</b>

## **2.4 Tools for Data Collection**

The main tools for data collection were test items. The test items were constructed on the basis of the course of compulsory English of Higher Secondary level. There were two types of test items:

- I. There were two guided composition test items, one of which was based on prescribed textbook materials, and the other was a non-text book material.
- II. There were two free composition test items. One of them was from the text-book, the other one was from outside the text book.

## **2.5 Process of Data Collection**

The researcher prepared a set of test items of both textbook and non-textbook materials. After preparing the tools, she visited the four selected schools and talked to the concerned authority for permission to administer the test. Then she consulted the students to make them taste for the research work. After that the test was administered among the selected population in the fixed time. The total time was one and half hours in every school. The test materials were the same for all the students.

Having the test administered, the researcher gathered all the answer sheets. Ten marks were given for each guided composition and fifteen marks for each free composition. In this way the full marks were fifty. Marks were assigned on the basis of correct use of article, preposition, punctuation and subject verb agreement.

## **2.6 Limitations of the Study**

1. The study was limited to Four Higher Secondary Schools of Kathmandu valley.
2. Ten students studying in the Faculty of Education from each school were taken.
3. The study was limited to a test consisting of four questions i.e. composition writing (Guided, Free).
4. The research work was limited to the following grammatical areas in the students' writing:
  - A. Punctuation
  - B. Article
  - C. Subject-Verb agreement and
  - D. Preposition

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION**

This is the focal part of the study. It deals with the presentation, analysis and interpretation of the data which are collected by the researcher from the four selected Higher Secondary Schools of Kathmandu Valley. There were test items (guided and free composition) which were based on the prescribed text-book and non-textbook materials. The researcher first studied and interpreted the data for findings and errors in different areas such as punctuation, article, preposition and subject-verb agreement to find out actual proficiency of the English language writing of the twelfth graders of Kathmandu Valley.

The analysis and interpretation of the data were done under the following headings:

1. Holistic Analysis of Proficiency
2. College- wise analysis of Proficiency in the use of Punctuation
3. College- wise analysis of Proficiency in the use of Grammatical Items (Article, Subject- verb agreement, and Preposition)
4. Evaluation of Writing

#### **3.1 Holistic Analysis of Proficiency**

The major areas of proficiency of writing were number of sentences, numbers of errors committed in the sentences they wrote and the evaluation of writing.

The table shows the holistic analysis of the proficiency of the students of four different colleges of Kathmandu valley in the use of Punctuation, Article, Subject-Verb agreement and Preposition.

**Table No. 2**  
**Holistic Analysis of Writing Proficiency**

<b>Name of Colleges</b>	<b>No. of Sentences</b>	<b>% of total sentences</b>	<b>No. of errors</b>	<b>% of total errors</b>	<b>Average marks</b>	<b>Percentages</b>
<b>Manamohanmohan Memorial College</b>	604	30.61	498	28.75	22	44.00
<b>Janamaitri Multiple Campus</b>	278	14.09	396	22.86	11.4	22.80
<b>Ed-Mark College</b>	636	32.23	413	23.84	29.6	59.20
<b>Pashupati Multiple Campus</b>	455	23.06	425	24.53	15.1	30.20
<b>Total</b>	<b>1973</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>1732</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>78.1</b>	<b>156.20</b>
<b>Average</b>	<b>493.25</b>	<b>25.00</b>	<b>433</b>	<b>25.00</b>	<b>19.52</b>	<b>39.05</b>

The above table shows the proficiency of the total sample students from the four different colleges on the test. Out of the total sentences the students of Ed-Mark College wrote 32.23%, the students of Manamohan College wrote 30.61% sentences, Pashupati Multiple Campus wrote 23.06% and the students of Janamaitri Campus wrote 14.09%. The students of Manamohan and Ed- Mark Colleges have greater proficiency than the students of other two colleges in terms of the highest percentage of sentences they wrote. Likewise the students of Manamohan College committed 28.75%, Pashupati Campus 24.53%, Ed- Mark College 23.84%, and Janamaitri Campus committed 22.86% of errors in their sentences. By this, the students of Manmohan College were above the average level of errors and students of other three colleges were below the average errors (i.e.25%).

In the area of marking of their writing, the students of Ed- Mark and Manmohan colleges secured 59.2% and 44% respectively out of 50% full marks. Their overall proficiency was found satisfactory. The students of Pashupati and Janamaitri Campus obtained 30.2% and 22.8% respectively. They got less marks than the average marks,

their overall proficiency was not found satisfactory. Hence total sample students got 78.1% out of total marks. Thus their overall proficiency was found satisfactory.

### **3.2 College -wise Analysis of Proficiency in the use of Punctuation**

College- wise analysis of proficiency in the use of punctuation is as follows:

#### **3.2.1 Manamohan Memorial College**

The analysis of proficiency of the students of Manamohan Memorial College in punctuation is as follows:

**Table No. 3**

#### **Total Proficiency of the Students of Manamohan College in Punctuation**

<b>Areas</b>	<b>No. of errors</b>	<b>Total no. of sentences</b>	<b>% of errors in total sentences</b>
Full Stop	51	604	8.44
Capital Letters	91	604	15.06
Comma	71	604	11.75
Others	12	604	1.98
<b>Total</b>	<b>225</b>	<b>604</b>	<b>37.25</b>

In the use of full stop, the students of Manamohan Memorial College committed 8.44% errors in the sentences they wrote. In the use of capital letters they committed 15.06% of errors. Likewise they committed 37.25% of errors when comparing with the total number of sentences they wrote. Their total proficiency was found to be satisfactory as they committed less errors in numbers sentences.

### 3.2.2 Janamaitri Multiple College

The analysis of proficiency of the students of Janamaitri Multiple Campus in punctuation is as follows:

**Table No. 4**

#### **Total Proficiency of the Students of Janamaitri Campus in Punctuation**

<b>Areas</b>	<b>No. of errors</b>	<b>Total no. of Sentences</b>	<b>% of error in total sentences</b>
Full Stop	33	278	11.87
Capital Letters	106	278	38.12
Comma	13	278	4.67
Others	33	278	11.87
<b>Total</b>	<b>185</b>	<b>278</b>	<b>66.54</b>

The data reveal the errors committed in the areas of punctuation by the students of the Faculty of Education in Janamaitri College in Kuleshor. Accordingly, the students committed 11.87% of errors in the use of full stop. Whereas they committed 38.12% of errors in the use of capital letters in their sentences. In the use of comma, they committed 4.67% of errors. Similarly they committed 11.87% of errors in the use of other punctuation marks. Thus, their total proficiency was not found to be satisfactory as they 66.54% of errors in total sentences.

### 3.2.3 Ed- Mark College

The analysis of proficiency of the students of Ed- Mark College in punctuation is as follows:

**Table No. 5**

#### **Total Proficiency of the Students of Ed- Mark College in Punctuation**

<b>Areas</b>	<b>No. of errors</b>	<b>Total no. of Sentences</b>	<b>% of error in total sentences</b>
Full Stop	34	636	5.34
Capital Letters	111	636	17.45
Comma	46	636	7.23
Others	19	636	2.98
<b>Total</b>	<b>210</b>	<b>636</b>	<b>33.00</b>

The data above shows that the students of the faculty of education from ED- mark College wrote 636 sentences. In the use of full stop they committed 5.34% of errors in their sentences. They committed 17.45% of errors in the use of capital letters. Similarly in the use of comma, they committed 7.23% of errors. In the use of other punctuation marks, they committed 2.98% of errors in the sentences they wrote. Thus, they committed 33.00% of errors in total sentences and their total proficiency was found satisfactory.

### **3.2.4 Pashupati Multiple College**

The analysis of proficiency of Pashupati Multipul Campus in punctuation is as follows:

**Table No. 6**

**Total Proficiency of the Students of Pashupati Campus in Punctuation**

<b>Areas</b>	<b>No. of errors</b>	<b>Total no. of Sentences</b>	<b>% of error in total sentences</b>
Full Stop	62	455	13.62
Capital Letters	127	455	27.91
Comma	25	455	5.49
Others	24	455	5.27
<b>Total</b>	<b>238</b>	<b>455</b>	<b>52.30</b>

The table above represents the errors committed in the areas of Punctuation marks by the Education Students of Pashupati Multiple College. Accordingly, they committed 13.62% of errors in the use of full stop. In the use of capital letters, they committed 27.91% of errors in their sentences. Similarly, they committed 5.49% of errors in the use of comma. In the use of 'others' they committed 5.27% of errors. Thus, they committed 52.30% of errors in total sentences and their total proficiency was not found to be satisfactory.

**3.3 College- wise Analysis of Proficiency in the use of Grammatical Items: Article, Subject-Verb agreement and Preposition**

College- wise analysis of writing proficiency in the use of grammatical items (article, sub- verb agreement and preposition) is as follows:

### 3.3.1 Manamohan Memorial College

The analysis of proficiency of the students of Manamohan Memorial College in the use of article, sub- verb agreement and preposition is as follows:

**Table No. 7**

#### **Total Proficiency of Students of Manamohan College in Grammatical Items**

<b>Areas</b>	<b>No. of errors</b>	<b>Total no. of sentences</b>	<b>% of errors in total sentences</b>
Article	41	604	6.78
Subject-verb agreement	201	604	33.27
Preposition	31	604	5.13
<b>Total</b>	<b>273</b>	<b>604</b>	<b>45.19</b>

The data above reveals that the students of the Faculty of the Education from Manamohan Memorial College committed 6.78% of errors in the area of article. They committed 33.27% errors in the area of subject - verb agreement. Likewise, they committed 5.13% of errors in the use of preposition in their own writing. In the total area of grammatical items, they committed 45.19% of errors. Their total proficiency was not found to be satisfactory.

### 3.3.2 Janamaitri Multiple College

The analysis of proficiency of the students of Janamaitri Multiple Campus in the use of grammatical items (article, sub-verb agreement and preposition) is as follows:

**Table No. 8**

#### **Total Proficiency of students of Janamaitri Campus in Grammatical Items**

<b>Areas</b>	<b>No. of errors</b>	<b>Total no. of sentences</b>	<b>% of in total sentences</b>
Article	24	278	8.63
Subject-verb agreement	166	278	59.71
Preposition	21	278	7.55
<b>Total</b>	<b>211</b>	<b>278</b>	<b>75.89</b>

The table above shows that the students of the Faculty of Education from Janamaitri Multiple College committed 8.63% of errors in article. They committed 59.71% of errors in subject verb agreement. In the area of preposition they committed 7.55% of errors in their writing. In the total area of grammatical items they committed 75.89% of errors and their total proficiency was not found to be satisfactory.

### **3.3.3 ED-Mark College**

The analysis of proficiency of the students of Ed-Mark College in the use of grammatical items (article, sub-verb agreement and preposition) is as follows:

**Table No. 9**

**Total Proficiency of students of Ed- Mark College in Grammatical Items**

<b>Areas</b>	<b>No. of errors</b>	<b>Total no. of sentences</b>	<b>% of in total sentences</b>
Article	24	636	3.77
Subject-verb agreement	144	636	22.64
Preposition	35	636	5.50
<b>Total</b>	<b>203</b>	<b>636</b>	<b>31.91</b>

According to the sentence wise errors, the Education students of Ed-mark College committed 3.77% of errors in the use of article. They committed 22.64% errors in the area of subject - verb agreement. Similarly, they committed 5.50% of errors in preposition. In the total errors of grammatical items, they committed 31.91% of errors. They were total proficiency was not found to be satisfactory.

**3.3.4 Pashupati Multiple College**

The analysis of proficiency of the students of Pashupati Multiple Campus in the use of grammatical items (article, sub-verb agreement and preposition) is as follows:

**Table No. 10**

**Total Proficiency of students of Pashupati Campus in Grammatical Items**

<b>Areas</b>	<b>No. of errors</b>	<b>Total no. of sentences</b>	<b>% of in total sentences</b>
Article	28	455	6.15
Subject-verb agreement	144	455	31.64
Preposition	15	455	3.29
<b>Total</b>	<b>177</b>	<b>455</b>	<b>38.90</b>

The data above reveal that the students of Education from Pashupati Multiple Campus committed 6.15% errors in the use of article. In the area of subject - verb agreement, they committed 31.64% of errors. Likewise, in the use of preposition, they committed 3.29 of errors. In the total areas of grammatical items, they committed 38.90% of errors. They committed less errors in preposition while comparing to others. Their proficiency was not found to be as the committed more errors in fewer number of sentences.

### **3.4 Evaluation of Writing**

The term “Evaluation of writing” means scoring or finding out the standard and range of English language writing proficiency of the students. Evaluation helps to find out the actual position or standard of the students. Marks were given on the basis of the students’ writing proficiency. Actually marking is the medium of grading or ranking. It is a kind of tool for the measurement of students’ writing proficiency in this study. The students’ writing was evaluated in terms of punctuation, article, subject - verb agreement, preposition, cohesion and organization.

Every student was allotted 50 full marks for his/ her writing materials. The researcher marked the writing to see the student’s actual individual performance in terms of

economy, clarity, continuity and free from errors. Ten students were selected from each college.

The table below shows the comparative study of the marking done in the writing of the students from four different colleges.

**Table No. 11**  
**Collage-wise Comparative Study on Marking**

Name of colleges	No. of Students	Average Marks	Percentages
Manamohan Memorial College	10	22	44.00
Janamaitri Multiple Campus	10	11.4	22.80
Ed- Mark College	10	29.6	59.20
Pashupati Multiple Campus	10	15.1	30.20
Total	40	78.1	156.20

The table above shows the table average marks of the students and total percentage of the marks gained by all the students. It shows that students of Ed-Mark college have highest proficiency as they secured 59.2%. Then the students of Manamohan College are in the second position scoring 44.00% out of fifty full marks. After that students of Pushupati Multiple Campus come on third position with 30.20% marks and the students of Janamaitri Campus have got 22.80% out of fifty full marks.

Thus, comparing their marks the students of Ed-mark and Manamohan have the better proficiency than the students of Janamaitri and Pashupati Multiple Campus in their writing.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

This is the final chapter of the study which consists of the findings based on the analysis of data, some recommendations based on findings. The main concern of this study was to find out the actual proficiency of Higher Secondary level students of the Faculty of Education in Kathmandu Valley in English language writing. The researcher investigated their writing proficiency in Punctuation, article, subject verb agreement and preposition. The researcher realized that the students of Higher Secondary Level are the middle level manpower of the nation. Especially the students of the Faculty of Education are directly related with the language teaching and learning activities. Therefore, they should have required proficiency in the English language writing so that they can study at the Higher Level and be able to guide their junior level students in the proper way. Their proficiency and effective skills help the other students in their academic knowledge and activities.

The study was carried out in four Higher Secondary Schools in Kathmandu Valley. The researcher selected only 10 students from each school. Therefore, there were altogether 40 students. All the students were selected randomly. To fulfill the objective of this research, the researcher went to the field to administer the test. After that she used the tests in order to compare the English language writing of the education students of faculty of Education.

After the collection of the data, she examined them applying different correction techniques and methods.

#### **4.1 Findings**

On the basis of the analysis and interpretation the researcher came up with the following findings.

1. The overall proficiency of grade twelve students in the use of punctuation, article, preposition and s-v agreement was found to be satisfactory since in totality they secured 156.20% of the marks which was above 50% marks.
2. The total errors on punctuation, article, subject-verb agreement and preposition committed by the students of the faculty of Education from four different colleges were one thousand seven hundred thirty two. They committed eight hundred fifty eight errors in punctuation and eight hundred and seventy four errors in grammatical items (i.e. articles, subject- verb agreement and preposition).
3. The students were found better in the use of punctuation than in the use of article, subject verb agreement and preposition.
4. The overall proficiency of the students of ED- Mark and Manamohan College was found better in the use of punctuation by committing less numbers of errors than others.
5. The overall proficiency of the students of Janamaitri and Pashupati campus was not found to be satisfactory as they committed errors in the use of punctuation.
6. The overall proficiency of the students of ED- Mark College was found to be satisfactory in the use of grammatical items (i.e. article, s-v agreement and preposition) by getting fewer errors. (31.91%) than the students of other colleges.
7. The students of Manamohan and Ed- Mark was found more proficient than the students of Janamaitri and Pashupati Multiple Campus in constructing highest numbers of sentences.
8. The students committed mistakes in the use of comma than in the use of other specific punctuation marks, i.e capital, full stop and so on.
9. Most of the students have committed errors in the use of grammatical items than in punctuation.

10. In conclusion, due to the lack of very demanding properties of good writing - punctuation, article, preposition and subject-verb agreement, many sentences often become totally meaningless.

## **4.2 Recommendations**

On the basis of the findings of the current study the following recommendations have been made to the concerned authority.

1. The students should be given more practice of using punctuation, article and preposition in proper places.
2. Students should be motivated towards learning by using effective teaching materials such as flash cards, drawings, etc. in the classroom as far as possible for better performance.
3. The students should be offered adequate knowledge of singular and plural form of verbs. Subject-Verb agreement should be taught relating verbs with the subjects.
4. To avoid the errors of agreement, special attention should be paid in Subject-verb agreement and constant practice is offered in classroom.
5. The writing activities should be given to the students with regular correction (self- correction, peer correction and teacher correction).
6. Students are poor in English because most of the courses are taught in Nepali. So language of instruction should be English.
7. Teaching of writing skill should be started on the basis of the student's previous knowledge and capacity in writing.
8. Every college should provide the visual aids which help the students to develop their writing skill.
9. All the subject-teachers should be provided training programs, seminars and workshops at times.

10. The examination should also be systematic so that the learners can have a good intention of improving language skills.
11. The students should be encouraged for writing practice.

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**Appendix - A**  
**Questions for the Students**

**Test Item**

Dear informants,

This test item is prepared to collect the data for the purpose of a research work on the writing proficiency of higher secondary level students of Kathmandu Valley to fulfill the Master's Degree in Education. I promise that your creation will be confidential. Please, answer the questions in the following format.

Time: 1: 30 hrs

Full marks: 50

Pass marks: 16

Q.1. Develop the following notes into a text of about 150 words. (15)

Clever washer man ..... ass ..... put on tiger's skin ..... left the ass in crops ..... farmers afraid ..... ran away ..... surprise to look eating crops by tiger ..... cried like an ass ..... recognized soon ..... beat the ass ..... washer man too.

Q.2. Describe the disadvantages of having many children? (in about 100 words). (10)

Q.3. Being a responsible citizen, present your ideas in detail how we can make our country peaceful and prosperous. (In about 100 words). (15)

Q. 4. Write an essay on 'My School/Campus' using the following notes in about 150 words.

Introduction, establishment, location, physical facilities, staff, academic programmes.

(10)

## Appendix B

### Statistical Formula used on this Study

Formula of the average or Mean

$$\bar{X} = \frac{\sum X}{N}$$

Hence,  $\bar{X}$  = Average or mean

X : Students scores

$\sum$  : Sign of summation

N : Total no. of the students

Formula of grand average or mean

$$\bar{X} = \frac{\sum \bar{x}}{N}$$

Hence,  $\bar{X}$  = Grand average

$\bar{x}$  : Average scores

$\sum$  : Sign of summation

N : Total no. of average

## Appendix - C

### Marks obtained by the Individual Status

#### 1. Manmohan Memorial College

S.N.	Name	Total marks
1.	Sampurna Majarjan	36
2.	Sita Thapa Magar	14
3.	Reema Rai	36
4.	Komal Raj	20
5.	Anjita Shrestha	24
6.	Muktinath Sigel	16
7.	Prem Pd. Wosti	23
8.	Sita Thapa Magar	25
9.	Janak Bd. Dhani	22
10.	Yashoda Thapa	22

## 2. Janamaitri Multiple Campus

S.N.	Name	Total marks
1.	Bimala Pandey	15
2.	Binaya Basnet	9
3.	Bishnu Pd. Adhikari	17
4.	Radha Baral	8
5.	Mandira Lamichhane	14
6.	Sangita Tamang	5
7.	Binita Adhikari	12
8.	Bina Basnet	10
9.	Kabita Ghimire	12
10	Amita Maharjan	12

### 3. ED-Mark College

S.N.	Name	Total marks
1.	Subash Thapa	38
2.	Bishnu Neupane	35
3.	Surendra Thapa	22
4.	Anjana K.C.	25
5.	Madan Bhujel	32
6.	Samjhana K.C.	20
7.	Prakash K.C.	25
8.	Anita Maharjan	37
9.	Sushma Rupakheti	33
10.	Narayan Bd. Thapa	29

#### 4. Pashupati Multiple Campus

S.N.	Name	Total marks
1.	Shim K. Rai	14
2.	Ashish Shrestha	36
3.	Jaganath Lamichhane	15
4.	Kushiram Shrestha	16
5.	Ratna Gopal Shrestha	7
6.	Ramesh Acharya	13
7.	Subash Karki	6
8.	Indra Pun	12
9.	Rajan Adhikari	17
10	Bhawani Shrestha	15

**WRITING PROFICIENCY OF THE STUDENTS OF  
HIGHER SECONDARY LEVEL**

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**Submitted by  
Chandu Sharma**

**N.790**

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