

# CHAPTER ONE

## INTRODUCTION

### 1. General Background

Language is the most widely used means of communication among people which is the universal medium for conveying facts including complex thoughts, emotions and feelings of every day life. It is especially human possession. Oxford-Advanced Learner's Dictionary (2005: 862) defines language as “the system of communication in speech and writing that is used by people of particular country or area.”

Similarly, Crystal (1992:212) 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 sign language and written language including the proper language. More precisely, “language is a voluntary vocal system of human communication" (Sthapit, 2002).

Bloch and Trager (1942:5) define language as “a system of arbitrary vocal symbols by means of which a social group co-operates.”

In every language vocal sounds are organized systematically and languages have their own system of arrangements. It is customary to take speech as the only skill of language used for communication. In fact, writing skill is equally important for communication purpose.

Brown (1994:5) has identified the following composite definitions of language:

1. Language is systematic and generative.

2. Language is a set of arbitrary symbols.
3. Those symbols are primarily vocal, but may also be visual.
4. The symbols have conventional meanings to which they refer.
5. Language is used for communication.
6. Language is essentially human although possibility not limited to humans.
7. Language is acquired by all people in much the same way-language and language learning both have universal characteristics.

From the above definitions, language can be defined as a set of conventional signals which are used for communicating thoughts, feelings and ideas as well. Writing can be looked at two levels. In its simplest form writing can be the act of putting down something which has been spoken in conventional graphic forms. In this sense, it is nothing more than the correct association of conventional graphic symbols with sounds which have no significant importance for the writer. Writing, thus, is clearly much more than the production of graphic symbols. The symbols have to be arranged to form sentences. So, in its highly developed form writing refers to the expression of ideas in consecutive way according to the graphic conventions of the language. In other words, writing involves encoding of a message of some kind or translating our thoughts into language in graphic forms.

While defining language Hockett (1985:181) says, "man is the only living species with this power (to speak) and that no other living species can reasonably be presumed to have and the power of some earlier time and have lost its conscience. The appearance of language on this universe at least in our planet- is, thus, exactly as recent as the appearance of man itself". Language has mainly two aspects. They are speech and writing. The former is primary and the latter is secondary. People speak when

they want to express their ideas, opinions, desires and establish social relationships and friendship. It does not generally take place in isolation. On the other hand, writing is different from speech. It is secondary manifestation of language. It is finished product and involves manipulation, structuring and communicating. Writing conveys meaning through the use of symbols that represent a language. Language is used in terms of different skills. A skill means to do something well and expertly. Writing is one of the most important skills for learning a language.

## **1.1 Writing**

Writing is one of the most important skills of language which is also known as the productive skill of language.

According to White and Arndt (1993:3) "writing is far from a simple matter of transcribing language into written symbols. It is a thinking process in its own."

This definition asserts that writing is a very complex process that requires heavy mental practice, not only transcribing language into written symbol but also the writer should be more comfortable to be fluent in putting his/her thoughts exactly on a paper.

Nunan (1989:36) says, "writing is an extremely complex cognitive activity in which 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, spelling and letter formation. Beyond the sentence, the writer must be able to structure and integrate information into cohesive and coherent paragraphs and texts."

This definition is a broad definition of writing that asserts writing as a very complex process which requires many composite skills; mental, rhetorical and critical and it is a skill that improves with constant practice.

Writing should be cohesive and coherent to make others understand. Beside this, the writer becomes more comfortable to be fluent in putting his/her thoughts exactly on paper.

Harmer (1997:78) says, "writing is an activity through which human beings communicate with one another and transmit their accumulated cultures from one generation to another generation. It equally provides us with possibilities to discover and articulate ideas in many ways."

In conclusion, writing is an act of transmitting thoughts, feelings and ideas from past to present and from present to future. That is why, it demands caution in using it. It is a transparent mirror which can present knowledge and experiences as well.

### **1.1.1 Components of Writing**

Writing is not merely an activity of encoding verbal thought in printed symbols. It consists of a number of other components. They are given below:

#### **I. Mechanics (Graphological System)**

The mechanics refer to the aspects of writing such as punctuation marks, capitalization, abbreviation and numbers. The mechanics of writing is a very basic concept in its process. So, the beginners should be guided through the mechanism a step at a time with individual attention.

#### **II. Coherence**

Crystal (2002:81) defines coherence as "the main principle of organization postulated to account for the underlying FUNCTIONAL connectedness or identity of a piece of spoken or written language (Text Discourse)". Coherence refers to the relationship between an utterance

and meaning conveyed. It is the semantic relationship of different sense units between and among the utterances.

### **III. Cohesion**

Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary (2000:288) defines cohesion as "the out or state of keeping together". Cohesion refers to the grammatical and lexical relationships between different elements of a text. It may be the relationship between different sentences or between different parts of sentences.

### **IV. Orthographic and Para Orthographic Text**

Orthography deals particularly with writing and spelling system. Different languages of the world use different types of writing systems. For example, logographic writing, syllabic writing and alphabetic writing. It is equally important to draw students' attention to the fact as to how Paraorthographic texts can convey the same meaning more clearly and more precisely. Examples of Paraorthographic texts include charts, tables, graphs, etc. Students should be trained to convert a prose text into paraorthographic display or vice versa.

#### **1.1.2 Process Writing**

According to White and Arndt (1991:11-77), process writing involves the following points:

##### **I. Glimpsing the Process**

The writer becomes ready to put his thoughts, feelings etc on the paper. White and Arndt (1991:11) says, "the writer stilled the waters of his mind to stabilize his thinking; he peered into his thoughts and one by one put them into words..."

## **II. Generating**

Since writing is primarily about organizing information and communicating meaning, generating ideas is clearly a crucial part of the writing process. Because actually getting started is one of the most difficult and inhibiting steps in writing, idea generating is particularly important as an initiating process.

## **III. Focusing**

Focusing includes discovering main ideas, considering purpose, considering audience and considering form.

## **IV. Structuring**

After this, the writer chooses from among the ideas and places them in order; he scrutinizes the expression and places, them where they belong. To be specific, structuring involves grouping ideas into frameworks, considering priorities, relating structure to focal idea and so on.

## **V. Drafting**

The writer being immersed in phrases painfully consenting, it was like darting fish with hooks in their gills, dragged from the depths of an unplumbed pool. Activities in this section mark the move from the so-called pre-writing stage to actually writing a first draft.

## **VI. Evaluating**

It is the assessment of the draft. It is essential that the language be understandable and reasoning well maintained.

## **VII. Reviewing**

One essential part of the process remains, though, namely to "re-view" the text, as if with a new pair of eyes. And often, even at this stage, a new look at what is on the page is quite-likely to give rise to get more ideas and thoughts which have to be worked into the original conception. Indeed, there is a sense in which a writing task never ends; instead, we simply have to decide that we have reached the point where we must abandon our text to its fate.

However, Rivers (1968:245) has suggested five stages of writing which help the learner to write in the foreign language. The stages of writing are as follows:

### **I. Copying**

The first stage, copying (sometimes called transcription) is often called by foreign- language teachers as an unworthy and unchallenging occupation for adolescent students. The work set for copying should consist of sections of work already learned orally and read with the teacher. As the student is copying, he should repeat himself what he is writing. After he has had some practices in copying accurately with correct diacritical and punctuation marks, he may continue to copy as an aid to memorization. At this stage, he repeats a sentence to himself as he copies it and then tries to say it over to him two or three times without referring to the script, copying activities may continue side by side with more advanced writing practice.

### **II. Reproduction**

This is the second stage of writing at which the student will attempt to write without originality what he has learned orally and read in his textbook. At first step, he will be asked to rewrite immediately each

sentence he has combined without reference to his copy or to the original text. He will then compare this version with the original one. Next, he will be asked to write down sentences he has memorized, read and copied as they are dictated to him. At this stage, the writing activity on the part of the student requires variation of learned phrases since the emphasis is entirely on accuracy of reproduction.

### **III. Recombination**

The third stage is the recombination stage where the students are required to reproduce learned work with minor adaptations. The writing of recombination of learned sentences requires not only the ability to manipulate grammatical structures, which is basic to the speaking skill but also a second knowledge of the intricacies of representing graphically what the student is required only to recognize in reading.

At this stage, writing practice may take a number of forms. Students will write out structure drills of various kinds: making substitution of words and phrases, transforming sentences, expanding them to include further information within the limits of learned phrases, contracting them by substituting pronouns for nouns or single words for groups of words. The recombination may take the form of variations of memorized dialogue which after correction may be acted out in the classroom.

### **IV. Guided Writing**

In this stage the student will be given some freedom in the selection of lexical items and structural patterns for his written exercise, but within a framework which restrains him from attempting to compose at a level beyond his state of knowledge.

At the guided writing stage, the student may begin with completion exercises where parts of sentences are given and structural pattern is thus established for him. At this stage the learners are given different types of exercises such as completion, replacement, expansion or summarizing on some topics. They can include their ideas partially. Likewise, the learners can expand simple sentences by adding or modifying words and phrases. The skeleton of a story or dialogue may be supplied for the development of writing. But students are not totally free because they have to follow the guide frame.

## **V. Composition**

The final stage of composition involves individual selection of vocabulary and structure for the expression of personal meaning. Composition is a compiled activity which requires a variety of skills. At this stage, the writer will be increasing his understanding of the differences between speaking and writing a foreign language. Exercise in composition will at first be closely linked with materials being read and discussed; the student will be asked merely to describe, narrate and expand, or to summarize. This composition may consist of a summary of the contents with a personal commentary, or the narration of the story assigned previously by the teacher.

The last two stages, guided composition and composition are very important for the eleven grade students. Both these compositions are highly emphasized in the course of higher education. Due to this fact, I studied proficiency in free writing of higher secondary level students studying in eleven grade of Kathmandu valley belonging to the streams of education, humanities and management.

### **1.1.3 Mechanics of Writing**

Writing is a complex activity, which includes various skills. To produce an effective piece of writing, the learners must possess the knowledge of mechanical skills, stylistic skills and judgement skills. Under mechanism of writing the learners should learn the alphabet, the left and right direction of English writing script, upper and lower case letter, rules of capitalization, basic spelling patterns of English and rules for word and sentence formations.

The alphabet, the left to right direction of English writing system and upper and lower case letters can be learnt by the learners by means of some writing practices. Mechanism mainly includes capitalization, spelling and punctuation. The beginners should be guided through the mechanism a step at a time with individual attention. The literate or educated learners will probably learn the mechanism at high speed. An attempt is made here to present the basic spelling patterns and words as well as sentence punctuation of the English language.

#### **1.1.3.1 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 Dictionary, 1988). The punctuation marks are used to mark boundaries and relationships between words or sentences. The proper use of punctuation marks such as comma, colons, semi-colon, hyphen, full stop, dash, parenthesis, quotation marks, exclamation marks, apostrophe and so on help the writer organize written language and clarify relation between words, phrases and clauses. Punctuations are used mainly to convey the meaning and to make the expressions explicit or unambiguous. The different punctuation marks are full stop, question mark, exclamation

mark, quotation mark, apostrophe, colon, semi colon, dash, hyphen and parenthesis.

### **1.1.3.2 Capitalization**

Capitalization is a matter of convention. Many of the conventions e.g. capitalization of the first letter of word or sentence, the pronoun 'I', and so on are very familiar to us. Capitalization, however, is a matter of style rather than convention. While capitalizing for stylistic purposes, writers usually do so to emphasize a key word or a concept.

### **1.1.3.3 Spelling**

Writing is achieved by correct spelling of individual words. Spelling errors are nuisance to the readers. Robert (1985:148) says "Spelling rules are frequently more concluding than the memorization of individual words." The phonological and orthographic form of the English language is different. So, the listener cannot write properly what the speaker says. It is a great problem for learners. Spelling is mainly a mastery of convention.

## **1.4 Writing Proficiency**

Language proficiency or linguistic proficiency is the ability of an individual to speak or perform in an acquired language. As the theories vary among pedagogues as to what constitutes proficiency, there is little consistency as to how different organizations classify it. Additionally, fluency and language competence are generally recognized as being related but as separate controversial subjects. In predominated framework of the United States, proficient speakers demonstrate both accuracy and fluency and use a variety of discourse strategies. Thus, a high number of

native speakers of a language can be fluent without being considered proficient (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/language>).

To be proficient in a language one should be proficient in all skills of language viz, listening, speaking, reading and writing.

Writing proficiency is the ability of an individual to write or perform in an acquired language. The writing proficiency plays a vital role in securing good marks in the examination and it can spread our knowledge and experience to others. It is concerned with specific skills and abilities rather than general abilities. It is useful for assuring employers or academic institutions to rely on potential employees. It helps to select people from different institutions and countries in fair manner.

Writing proficiency is one of the most important components of language proficiency. People have realized the critical importance of the search for excellence in developing writing assessment instruments that provide the best possible information about student proficiency which is quite difficult to realize, the direct topic approach has high validity but while quite typical, this method has a serious drawback. It will be accompanied into a smaller score range that may occur. If writers were able to find their own level by writing on to topic, then they feel comfortable with. The indirect objectives approach is not easily affected scores, but the validity of this method has been doubted ([www.google.com](http://www.google.com). Using English.com. ESL/forum /Learning English).

In order to be proficient in writing, one has to be able to express his or her ideas, feelings, emotions, and desires by using his or her own language. That is known as free writing or composition. Then, the question arises about how to test writing.

According to Hughes (1995:75), the best way to test people's writing ability is to get them to write. This is not an unreasonable assumption. Even professional testing institutions are unable to construct indirect tests which measure writing ability accurately. And if, in fact satisfactory accuracy were a real possibility, considerations of backwash and ease of construction would still argue for the direct testing of writing within teaching institutions.

Given the decision to test writing ability directly, we are in apposition to taste the testing problem, in general forms for writing. This has the following three parts:

1. We have to set writing tasks that are properly representative of the population of tasks that we should expect the students to be able to perform.
2. The tasks should elicit samples of writing which truly represent the student's ability.
3. It is essential that the samples of writing can and will be scored reliably.

Weir (1993:58) states, "Two different approaches for assessing writing ability can be adopted. Firstly, writing can be divided into discrete levels, e.g. grammar, vocabulary, spelling and punctuation, and these elements can be tested separately by the use of objective tests. Secondly, more direct extended writing tasks of various types should be constructed. These would have greater construct content, face and wash back validity but would require a more subjective assessment."

Thus, testing writing is a very complex task because testing of it includes infinite number of things such as spelling, cohesion, coherence, etc. Beside this, the complexity of testing writing increases due to the fact that writing now is not restricted to articles, books, letters, etc on paper

alone. Today computer offers a wide range of opportunities to write documents, e-mails, faxes or which have made writing a more complex process because the writer has to be familiar with dazzling array of tools with which to prepare, organize and present his write-ups.

### **1.1.5 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. In this context, Richards says, "Learning to write in either a first or second language is one of the most difficult tasks. Learning to write is a difficult and lengthy process, that one induces anxiety and frustration in many learners. Yet good writing skills are essential to academic success and a requirement for many occupations and professions" (1985:100).

Correct and effective writing is the most desirable thing to be called an effective writer. Similarly, simplicity and directness are the most useful properties of good writing. In fact, making a simple and clear writing is difficult from the syntactic and semantic points of view. It requires good imagination and logical sequence of thoughts. As an attempt, the following is a short account of the main elements of a good writing:

#### **1.1.5.1 Simplicity**

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

### **1.1.5.2 Clarity**

Good writing must be absolutely free from ambiguity and should be crystal-clear. There should not be different interpretations or misinterpretation in the writing. Ideas should be presented in clear, orderly, readable, understandable and informative style. The writer must always be conscious of the reader and information style. The writer should have the idea of what to say, in which sequence, what is said and how to express something. Good writing should avoid exaggerations as well as contradictory statements.

### **1.1.5.3 Continuity**

Continuity of thought and natural link of ideas are important features in writing. There must be continuity of thought from one word to the following word, from one phrase to another, from one sentence to another, from the first paragraph to the second paragraph and first chapter to the second chapter.

### **1.1.5.4 Economy**

A shorter statement or analysis employing fewer terms is preferred to the one that is longer, other things being equal. The greatness of a writer lies in his/her capacity to express his/her ideas briefly and effectively. Economical writing is efficient and esthetically satisfying. While it makes a minimum demand on the energy and patience of readers; it returns to them a maximum of sharply compressed meaning. Good writing is like a gold coin, small in compass but great in value. Economy of words without sacrificing the meaning is the secret of good writing.

### **1.1.5.5 Coherence**

Good writing deals with one topic at a time. According to Swami (1987:13), in a good piece of writing, all the sentences are closely related to the central idea.

### **1.1.5.6 Complete**

A good writing must be complete. It completes the topic it deals with. Good writing should avoid exaggeration and hyperbolic and self-contradictory statements.

### **1.1.5.7 Free from Error**

As writing is the permanent record of one's thoughts or ideas, it must be accurate. Every written piece has to be free from orthographic, semantic, grammatical, idiomatic, punctuation and other errors.

Besides, every good writing must have examples and illustrations to explain abstract and difficult ideas and new information. There should be appropriate direction, adequate facts and figures, depth of knowledge, specificity and maximum objectivity in every piece of effective writing.

Writing involves thinking, planning, assembling, classifying and organizing processes. Thus, ability to write good or effective English is not a god given gift to a few people. The art of writing is based upon one's own mental capability. It is very important for specific subject matter.

The above characteristics of good writing play a vital role in the writing proficiency of students. The secondary school students should have the ability to write clear, economic, simple, continuous and error free sentences.

### **1.1.6 Importance of Writing**

As the possession of the quality of being permanent and accurate, writing is the crucial skill. Verghes (1990:16) makes an important observation about the significance of teaching of writing. "Learning a second language is in effect learning the four skills viz, listening, speaking, reading and writing. Each and every skill has its own specific significance but writing is the most demanding language skill. Both in education field and future career, one will be judged in part by one's ability to communicate his view on paper. Writing is an art that provides one a chance to be known and to influence others". Harmer (1991:86) says, "Writing as a co-operative activity, co-operating 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 reinforcement, 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 can not be perfect without the knowledge of writing skill. They can learn to express their ideas explicitly when they are efficient in writing.

According to Richard (1985:101), "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 is far from being a simple matter of transcribing language into written symbols. It is a thinking process in its own. It demands conscious intellectual efforts, which usually has to be sustained over considerable period of time. Writing is a very complex process consisting of many composite skills viz: mental, psychological, theoretical and critical aspects.

The writing proficiency plays a crucial role in securing good marks in the examinations and it can spread knowledge and experience to others. The goal of written language is to convey information accurately, effectively and appropriately. We come to know that students who learn the English language can not be perfect without written skill. They can express their ideas correctly and appropriately when they are efficient in writing. In Nepalese context, for the development of general proficiency in the English language, reading and writing skills should be given emphasis. The best way to develop writing is to get the learners write.

Thus, we can say that the students who learn the English Language cannot be perfect without the knowledge of writing skill because language learning as a whole is the amalgamation of four language skills viz, listening, speaking, reading and writing. So, the students' language competence is better if they can write well.

### **1.1.7 Free Writing**

Free Writing or composition is the final stage in the development of the writing skill. It should, therefore be practised only after students have done sufficient guided practice. Thus, the appropriate level to practise free composition writing extensively is the secondary level although its teaching can start much earlier. To strengthen free writing skill higher secondary level can be considered as a milestone.

Writing free composition requires a careful planning and students should be helped in this stage too. However, the help required here is of indirect sort. The teacher should help the students with the choice of topics, which she could be based on their interest, their familiarity with the subject matter and the usefulness of the ideas. As a whole, the teacher

should help them with procedural information, i.e. information on what is involved in the writing process.

Free writing can be classified into four types. They are narrating (e.g. on incident story), Describing (e.g. in the form of an essay or paragraph), Replying (e.g. in the form of a letter' or application) and explaining (e.g. the reasons for something). Among them, the researcher used three types except narrating in the test items to elicit data from the informants.

Thus, writing is a difficult skill, the development of which requires gradual and systematic progression from stage to stage. At each successive stage teacher's guidance and control over the language gradually decreases and the learner is given increasingly more freedom and challenges. So, both the teacher and the learner have to work patiently and persistently allowing necessary time for themselves through each of these stages until they reach the final stage where the learner can freely produce a piece of composition. And it is the most important stage to reach the ultimate goal of writing proficiency. Free writing is just like swimming in deep ocean where there is no certainty of length, depth, framework and ideas.

## **1.2 Review of the Related Literature**

In the Department of English Education, some studies have been carried out on "Writing proficiency" that are related to this study.

Karki (1996) carried out a study on the comparative study on the English language writing proficiency between the students of private and public schools of grade X in Lamjung district. He found that the students

of private schools have good vocabulary in the English language. They can write word, clause and sentence in appropriate way.

Poudyal (1999) Carried out a study on a comparative study of English language writing proficiency in higher secondary schools of Gulmi and Kathmandu. He found that the students of higher secondary schools of Kathmandu had better English language proficiency than the students of Gulmi. They committed fewer errors in constructing sentences than the students of rural area.

Barakoti (2001) carried out a research study on errors committed by PCL second year students in writing free compositions. He found that the students committed errors in sentence construction, spelling and organization of thought.

Bhattarai (2001) carried out a research study on a comparative study of the writing proficiency of the bachelor's level students. He found that the students of institutions have greater proficiency in writing than the students of faculties.

Sah (2003) carried out a study on writing proficiency of grade nine students. He found that the students committed mistakes in the use of comma than in the use of other specific punctuation marks, i.e. capital letter, full stop, apostrophe, question mark and so on.

Although the research works mentioned above are related to writing proficiency, none of the research works has been carried out on free writing proficiency of higher secondary level students of Kathmandu valley. So, the present researcher attempted to do so.

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

The objectives of this research were as follows:

- I. To find out free writing proficiency of grade eleven students of Kathmandu valley.
- II. To compare their free writing proficiency on the basis of the following variables:
  - a. Stream of Education Vs Humanities,
  - b. Education Vs Commerce and
  - c. Humanities Vs Commerce.
  - d. Boys Vs Girls
- III. To suggest some pedagogical implications on the basis of the findings of the research.

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

This study is directly related to the students of three faculties viz, commerce, education and humanities of Kathmandu valley. This study is useful for those who are involved in the field of language teaching especially in ELT. It is also very important for teachers, students and researchers. The findings of this research are useful in the area of teaching free writing skills. To be more specific, this study is relevant to teachers, textbook writers, course designers, students and other interested people in language teaching and learning.

# **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 sources of data for this study were the eleven grade students from the streams of commerce, education and humanities.

#### **2.1.2 Secondary Sources**

The secondary sources of data for this research were the related books such as Byrne (1984), White and Arndt (1991), Rivers (1968), journal articles, magazines, the theses approved in the Department of English Language Education, T.U. and many other types of researches. The researcher also visited different websites related to writing proficiency.

### **2.2 Population of Study**

The total population of this study was the higher secondary level students studying in grade XI in the streams of humanities, education and commerce of selected higher secondary schools.

The sampling population was sixty. Twenty students from each stream were selected from Kathmandu valley.

## **2.3 Sampling Procedure**

The researcher used purposive (Judgmental) non-random sampling procedure in order to select the required number of students. Those students were selected from the streams of education (first year), humanities (first year) and commerce (first year). He selected 20 students (10 boys and 10 girls) from each stream.

## **2.4 Tools for Data Collection**

The researcher used a set of test items consisting of three questions to collect data from the students. The tasks were letter writing, paragraph writing and essay writing consisting of the marks twenty, ten and twenty respectively. Total marks of the test were sixty. Students were given one and half-hour time to answer those items. The informants were free to use their own vocabulary and structure.

## **2.5 Process of Data Collection**

The researcher adopted the following process for data collection:

- The researcher visited the selected higher secondary schools and talked to the concerned authority for permission to take the test.
- Then, he consulted the students to make them known about the research.
- After that, the test items and answer sheets were distributed to the selected population.
- At last, answer sheets were collected from the population after their writing.

## 2.6 Limitations of the Study

The research was carried out under the following limitations:

- a. The researcher attempted to limit the research by including the students studying at the stream of education, humanities and commerce.
- b. The population of study was only from the higher secondary level (eleven grade) of three streams consisting twenty students from each stream and altogether sixty students. Those students were only taken from Kathmandu Valley.
- c. The study was limited to a test consisting of three questions that were paragraph writing, letter writing and essay writing.
- d. Free writing proficiency of the higher secondary level students (first year) was measured.
- e. The primary data were collected only through the test items.
- f. The research work was limited to the following areas:
  - a. Tense, agreement, cohesion, coherence, content and spelling.
- g. Students' free writing proficiency was compared on the basis of following variables:  
boys Vs girls, streams of education Vs humanities, education Vs commerce and humanities Vs commerce

# CHAPTER THREE

## ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

This chapter is the crucial part of this research report which consists of all the main aspects of the research study. To be more specific, tabulation and interpretation of data is done in this chapter. The analysis is further divided into the following sub-headings.

### 3.1 Holistic Analysis

### 3.2 Item wise Analysis

### 3.3 Gender-wise Analysis

### 3.4 Stream-wise Analysis

Data were collected with the help of the test-items containing three questions related to free writing. The full marks of those test items were sixty. The first item was ‘writing a letter’, the second was ‘writing a paragraph’ and the third was ‘writing an essay’.

### 3.1 Holistic Analysis

**Table No. 1: Total Free Writing Proficiency**

The following table shows the overall analysis of total free writing proficiency of grade XI students.

Total Sample	Total Average	Above Average		Below Average		Full Marks
		No. of Students	Percentage (%)	No. of Students	Percentage (%)	
60	26.35	31	51.66	29	48.33	50

The above table shows that the total sample of the students was 60 and the total average was 26.35. The percentage of the students scoring above the average was 51.66% and the percentage of the students scoring below average was 48.33%. So, the majority of the students were above average and the proficiency in free writing was considered satisfactory.

### 3.2 Item-wise Analysis and Interpretation of Total Proficiency

**Table No. 2: Total Proficiency in Item No. 1**

The following table displays total free writing proficiency in item No. 1

T. Sa	T. A.	Above Average				Below Average				Full Marks
		N. St		%		N. St		%		
		B	G	B	G	B	G	B	G	
		17	16	28.33	26.66	13	14	21.66	23.33	
60	11.26	33		55		27		45		20

The above table shows the total proficiency in the item No. 1 in which the students were asked to write a letter. The average score obtained by 60 students in that item was 11.26. The table shows that 55% of the total students crossed the average marks and 45% students obtained below average marks. The above table also shows that the total numbers of students above average were 33 and the total number of students below average were 27.

**Table No. 3: Total Proficiency in Item No. 2**

The following table displays total free writing proficiency in item No. 2

T. Sa	T. A.	Above Average				Below Average				Full Marks
		N. St		%		N. St		%		
		B	G	B	G	B	G	B	G	
		19	19	31.66	31.66	11	11	18.33	18.33	
60	5.5	38		63.33		22		36.66		10

The above table shows the total free writing proficiency in item No. 2 in which students were asked to write a letter. The full mark of this item was ten and average score obtained by the sixty students in that item was 5.5. In this item, 63.33% students crossed the average marks. Among the total students, the percentage of the girls above average and below average were 31.66% and 18.33% respectively.

**Table No. 4: Total Proficiency in Item No. 3**

The following table displays total free writing proficiency in item No. 3.

T. Sa	T. A.	Above Average				Below Average				Full Marks
		N. St		%		N. St		%		
		B	G	B	G	B	G	B	G	
		15	16	25	26.66	15	15	25	23.33	
60	9.62	31		51.66		29		48.33		20

The full mark of item No. three was twenty. In this item, students were asked to write an essay. The average score obtained by 60 students

in this item was 9.62. This table shows that 51.66% students scored above average marks and 48.33% students scored below average marks. The total number of students scoring above average was 31 and the total number of students scoring below average was 29.

### 3.4 Gender-wise Analysis

**Table No. 5: Gender Wise Analysis of Total Proficiency**

The following table displays gender-wise analysis of total free writing proficiency.

Total Sampling	Number of Boys & Girls	Item No. 1	Item No. 2	Item No. 3	Total	Total percentage %	Full Marks
	Boys (30)	333	164.5	300.5	798	26.61	
	Girls (30)	343	165.5	277.5	785.5	26.17	
60		676	330	577.5	1583.5	52.78	50

The above table shows that boys obtained greater proficiency than that of girls but the difference between them was just slight rather than heavy. The total proficiency of boys was 26.61% and of girls was 26.17%. Thus, as a whole, the male students were found to be slightly better than female students.

**Table No. 6: Gender-wise Analysis and Interpretation of Each Item**

The following table displays gender-wise analysis of each item.

Item No.	Boys (30)		Girls (30)		Full Marks
	Total	%	Total	%	
1	333	55.55	343	57.16	20
2	164.5	54.66	165.5	55.16	10
3	300.5	50.08	277	46.16	20

The above table shows the gender wise analysis of each item in which the total proficiency of girls in item No. 1 was 57.16% and of boys was 55.55%. In item No. 1, girls obtained greater proficiency than the boys in writing a letter.

The total proficiency of girls in item No. 2 was 55.16% and of boys was 54.66%. The girls studying in eleven grade were found to have better proficiency than the boys in writing a paragraph.

The total proficiency in item No. 3 obtained by boys was 50.08% and by girls was 46.16% which shows that boys were found to be better than the girls in writing an essay.

### 3.5 Stream-wise Analysis

**Table No. 7: Stream wise Analysis of Total Proficiency**

The following table displays stream-wise analysis of total free writing proficiency.

S.N.	Stream's Name	Items			Total	%	Full Marks
		1	2	3			
1.	Humanities	231.5	116	207.5	555	55.5	
2.	Commerce	228	109	192.5	529.5	52.95	
3.	Education	216.5	105	177.5	499	49.5	50

The above table displays the total proficiency of 60 students studying in three different streams viz, humanities, commerce and education. The above table shows that the total proficiency of the students belonging to the streams of humanities, commerce and education was 55.5%, 52.95% and 49.5% respectively. Among these three streams, the students belonging to the stream of humanities obtained the highest position securing 55.5%. The students belonging to the stream of education obtained the lowest proficiency in free writing securing 49.5%. Students belonging to the stream of commerce obtained the free writing proficiency in between them securing 52.95%.

**Table No. 8:Stream-wise Analysis of each Item**

The following table displays stream-wise analysis of each item.

Item No.	Humanities		Commerce		Education		Full Marks
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	
1	228	57	231.5	57.87	216.5	54.12	20
2	109	54.5	116	58	105	52.5	10
3	192.5	48.12	207.5	51.87	116	29	20

The above table displays the stream wise proficiency of each item. In item no. 1, among three streams, the students from commerce obtained the highest proficiency in free writing securing 57.87%, the students' belonging to the stream of education obtained the lowest free writing proficiency securing 54.12% and the students belonging to the stream of humanities obtained the free writing proficiency in between them securing 57% .

In item no 2, among three streams, the students from commerce obtained the highest free writing proficiency, securing 58%, the students' belonging to the stream of education obtaine the lowest free writing proficiency securing 52.5% and the students belonging to the stream of humanities obtained the free writing proficiency in between them securing 54.5%.

In item no. 3, among three streams, the students from commerce obtained the highest free writing proficiency, securing 51.87%, the students' belonging to the stream of education obtained the lowest free writing proficiency securing 29% and the students belonging to the stream of humanities obtained the free writing proficiency in between them securing 48.12%.

# CHAPTER FOUR

## FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The purpose of the study was to find out the free writing proficiency of grade eleven students of Kathmandu valley. The students were selected from three streams, viz, commerce, humanities and education of Kathmandu valley. The data were taken from sixty students consisting of twenty students from each faculty. Among twenty students ten boys and ten girls were selected from each stream.

Many techniques were applied to analyze and interpret the data such as holistic analysis, item wise analysis, stream-wise analysis and gender wise analysis.

### 4.1 Findings

On the basis of the study and interpretation, the findings of the present research have been presented as below:

- a. The free writing proficiency of the students was found satisfactory in the sense that 51.66% students obtained above average marks in which the average marks was 26.35 out of 50 marks.
- b. Students obtained 57.16%, 55.16% and 46.16% in items no. one, two and three respectively. So, the students were found to have the highest proficiency in writing than other items.
- c. The total proficiency of the boys was 26.61% and of girls was 26.17%. So, the free writing proficiency of boys was found to be better than that of girls.
- d. The average total proficiencies of the students from humanities, commerce and education were 55.55% 52.95% and 49.5% respectively. The proficiency of the students of humanities stream in free writing proficiency was found to better than other streams.

## **4.2 Recommendations**

On the basis of the findings of the present research work, the followings recommendations have been made:

- a. Essay writing has to be encouraged
- b. Girls should be encouraged to participate in free writing
- c. The students of education stream should be involved in free writing activities adequately.
- d. Model writing on different topics should be presented to the students in order to encourage them in writing assignments.
- e. Inter college, Intra college, stream wise and gender wise free writing competition should be conducted in order to compensate the gaps among them.

If these above mentioned recommendations are considered by the concerned officials and persons and if the students are stimulated to participate in free writing, then the free writing proficiency can be improved. It also helps to minimize the gap in writing proficiency of different streams and of gap found between the boys and girls.

## Appendix 5

### Allotment of the Marks: Item No.1

S.N.	Variables	Item No. 1
1.	Content	6
2.	Grammar	2
3.	Format	4
4.	Vocabulary	2
5.	Spelling	2
6.	Punctuation	2
7.	Cohesion / coherence	2
	Full Marks	20

### Allotment of the Marks: Item No.2

S.N.	Variables	Item No. 2
1.	Content	4
2.	Vocabulary	2
3.	Spelling	1
4.	Grammar	1
5.	Punctuation	1
6.	cohesion / coherence	1
	Full Marks	10

### **Allotment of the Marks: Item No.3**

<b>S.N.</b>	<b>Variables</b>	<b>Item No. 3</b>
1.	Content	8
2.	Vocabulary	2
3.	Spelling	2
4.	Grammar	2
5.	Punctuation	2
6.	cohesion / coherence	2
7.	Format	2
	Full Marks	20

**APPENDIX 2**  
**Commerce**  
**Kamana International College**

<b>Name of Students</b>	<b>Gender</b>	<b>Item 1</b>	<b>Item 2</b>	<b>Item 3</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>1. Anisha Maharjan</b>	<b>1 F</b>	<b>8.5</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5.5</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>2. Pooja Regmi</b>	<b>2 F</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>3. Prabita Shahi</b>	<b>3 F</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>31</b>
<b>4. Anita Shrestha</b>	<b>4 F</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>5. Rupa Adhikari</b>	<b>5 F</b>	<b>12.5</b>	<b>5.5</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>6. Sunita Adhikari</b>	<b>6 F</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>7. Anju Rana</b>	<b>7 F</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>8. Pabitra Gurung</b>	<b>8 F</b>	<b>13.5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>27.5</b>
<b>9. Ranjita Shrestha</b>	<b>9 F</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>27.5</b>
<b>10. Krishna Shrestha</b>	<b>10 F</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>31</b>
		<b>114.5</b>	<b>52.5</b>	<b>94.5</b>	<b>261.5</b>

Name of Students	Gender	Item 1	Item 2	Item 3	Total
1. Dinesh Raj Basnet	M 1	10.5	5.5	12	28
2. Bishal Adhikari	M 2	10	6	8	24
3. Purna Lal Maharjan	M 3	5.5	5	7.5	18
4. Sanjaya KC	M 4	14	6	13	33
5. Prabat Man Sing Basnet	M 5	14	6	4	24
6. Ashish Singh	M 6	11	6	12	27
7. Narayan Karki	M 7	13	6	7.5	27
8. Subash Thapa	M 8	14	5	13	32
9. Suman Sharma	M 9	11	6	12	29
10. Sandip Rijal	M10	8	5	9	22
		113.5	56.5	98	268

**APPENDIX 3**  
**Humanities**  
**Madan Bhandari Memorial College**

Name of Students	Gender	Item 1	Item 2	Item 3	Total
1. Laxmi Manahdhar	F 1	14	7	13	34
2. Shirijana Adhikari	F 2	12	6	12	30
3. Gita Upreti	F 3	13	7	13	33
4. Alina Subedi	F 4	11	5	7	23
5. Deepika K.C.	F 5	13	7	10	30
6. Maya Lama	F 6	12	6.5	12.5	31
7. Nirmala Parajuli	F 7	9	6	5	20
8. Sabita K.C.	F 8	11	6.5	10.5	28
9. Rina Joshi	F 9	9	6	9	24
10. Sunita Basnet	F 10	12	5	10	27
		116	62	102	280

<b>Name of Students</b>	<b>Gender</b>	<b>Item 1</b>	<b>Item 2</b>	<b>Item 3</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>1. Lakpa Dohje Sherpa</b>	<b>M 1</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>34</b>
<b>2. Sujan Mahara</b>	<b>M 2</b>	<b>13.5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>13.5</b>	<b>33</b>
<b>3. Raju Shrestha</b>	<b>M 3</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>4. Purnaman Singh</b>	<b>M 4</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>6.5</b>	<b>12.5</b>	<b>31</b>
<b>5. Sujan Lama</b>	<b>M 5</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>33</b>
<b>6. Ramesh Karki</b>	<b>M 6</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>5.5</b>	<b>11.5</b>	<b>29</b>
<b>7. Mohan Maharjan</b>	<b>M 7</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>8. Bholu Thapa</b>	<b>M 8</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>34</b>
<b>9. Prabhat Rijal</b>	<b>M 9</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>10. Manoj Shiva</b>	<b>M 10</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>17</b>
		<b>115.5</b>	<b>54.0</b>	<b>105.5</b>	<b>275</b>

**APPENDIX 4**  
**Education**  
**Richmond Academy**

<b>Name of Students</b>	<b>Gender</b>	<b>Item 1</b>	<b>Item 2</b>	<b>Item 3</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>1. Sulochana Thapa</b>	<b>F 1</b>	<b>13.5</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>13.5</b>	<b>32</b>
<b>2. Ranjita Subedi</b>	<b>F 2</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>3.5</b>	<b>10.5</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>3. Parmila Baniya</b>	<b>F 3</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>5.5</b>	<b>3.5</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>4. Jyoti Poudel</b>	<b>F 4</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>5. Ramila Gopali</b>	<b>F 5</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>6. Shova Aale</b>	<b>F 6</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>7. Sanchita Thapaliya</b>	<b>F 7</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>8. Manisha Mainali</b>	<b>F 8</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>9. Bimala Raya</b>	<b>F 9</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>10. Anjana Lama</b>	<b>F 10</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>23</b>
		<b>112.5</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>80.5</b>	<b>244</b>

<b>Name of Students</b>	<b>Gender</b>	<b>Item 1</b>	<b>Item 2</b>	<b>Item 3</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>1. Bishal Gurung</b>	<b>M 1</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>2. Sanjeev Aryal</b>	<b>M 2</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>6.5</b>	<b>9.5</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>3. Alish Budhathoki</b>	<b>M 3</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>6.5</b>	<b>14.5</b>	<b>32</b>
<b>4. Umesh Parajuli</b>	<b>M 4</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>5. Shyam Bhandari</b>	<b>M 5</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>6. Manoj Adhikari</b>	<b>M 6</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>29</b>
<b>7. Roshan Shrestha</b>	<b>M 7</b>	<b>12.5</b>	<b>6.5</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>8. Bishnu Lama</b>	<b>M 8</b>	<b>7.5</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>8.5</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>9. Laxman Karki</b>	<b>M 9</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>10. Sujan K.C.</b>	<b>M 10</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>6.5</b>	<b>8.5</b>	<b>26</b>
		<b>104</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>97</b>	<b>255</b>

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