

# **CHAPTER ONE**

## **INTRODUCTION**

This study is on 'Essay Writing Ability of Students of Grade Seven.' This chapter consists of background of the study, statement of the problem, objectives of the study, research questions, significance of the study, delimitations of the study and operational definitions of the key terms.

### **1.1 Background of the Study**

Language is a medium of communication. It contains several systems within a single system. All systems occur in a consistent way. It is a species specific property of human being. A human really becomes human by his\her language property. It is the only means of establishing social relation, expressing own thoughts, feelings and so on. No language is superior and inferior because all languages fulfill the linguistic need of their speakers. It is needless to say that there is a relation between a language and the culture in which it is used.

Language learning means to learn four skills of language. These four skills are listening, speaking, reading and writing. Among them, listening and reading are receptive skills and speaking and writing are productive skills.

Writing is an activity by which the visual representation of our thoughts, feelings, emotions and ideas are expressed. It is one of the language skills. The things that we speak is temporary but the things imprinted as a written work can be kept for further and coming generation so that they can experience the flavour of that material. So to keep it is as an memorandum or say the long term document, written work or the writing is needed.

If we go back to the history of writing, it has its long history. Harmer (2004) says:

The history of writing is as ancient as Indus Civilization. Some of the earliest writings found so far dates from about 5500 years ago. It was found at a place called Harappa in the region where the target Harappan or Indus civilization once flourished. There is incomplete agreement about the meaning of the symbols that were discovered. However, when the discovery was made, the archaeologist Richard Meadow stated that the inscriptions had similarities to what became of the Indus Script, the first recognized language. Since then many different writing systems have involved around the world. (p. 49)

Writing started with our civilization. Human beings started representing their thoughts and feelings day by day and that became a trend. We have such evident for such writing which is dated about 5500 years ago. It has been so long that writing became the part of our life and started keeping something for future. In such a way the writing originated in the world and became the part of our life. In this regard, Harmer (2004) writes;

Our choice of language may depend upon the channels of communication. If we examine this concept more fully, we can identify language skills that native speakers and competent language use process. Literate people who users language have number of different abilities. They are able to speak on the telephone, write letters and listen to the radio or read books. In other words, they pose the four basic language

skills of writing, speaking, listening and reading. Speaking and writing involve language production so they are productive skills. (p. 16)

Each and every skill has its own significance; writing is one of the language skills necessary for educational field and future career. The writing ability of the person is judged by his ability to put down the ideas in the paper. Thus, writing is thought as a medium of expression of ideas and views; it is one of the language skills equally necessary to be mastered.

An essay writing is one of the part of writing skill. It is a piece of composition on a topic. It is a written composition giving expression to ones own personal ideas or opinions on some topics. Essay is a piece of writing usually short and in prose, on any subject. Narayanswami (2000) says:

An essay is a long piece of composition on a theme or subject. It is self-contained, that is, it has a beginning middle and an end. The beginning usually introduces the subject in general forms. The middle of the essay develops the theme and presents the writer to express his thoughts on it. Then the essay is brought to a close in a suitable concluding passage.

(p. 92)

On the basis of aforementioned definitions, it can be concluded that an essay is a self-contained piece of writing in prose on a theme or subject. It is a written composition of giving expression to one's personal ideas or opinions on some topic. Since it expresses personal opinions or gives information on any given subject. Therefore, it must have unity, coherence and cohesiveness, clear and systematic in the whole writing.

Essay is a short piece of writing on one particular subject that is written by a writer for publication. The dictionary points out two characteristics of essay.

- (a) It can be written on any subject (science, culture, sports, politics, literatures).
- (b) It should be short it is not and should not be as long as novel or an epic. Essay can be classified into several different types. According to subject matter, it can be political or literary, scientific or social etc. According to style, it may be humorous or satirical, prosaic or poetic and so on.

Essay writing primarily develops the learner subjective expressions and creativity. The more the learners practice essay writing, the more fertile they become. Thus, essay writing is essential to develop the imaginative power of the learners. So, it seems essential to explore whether the learners have got mastery over the ability of essay writing or not.

## **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

Language has four skills. These are listening, speaking, reading and writing. Among the four language skills, reading and writing are highly emphasized where listening and speaking are given less attention at lower secondary level in Nepalese context.

According to district level examination specification Grid, the lower secondary level compulsory English curriculum is entirely based on language skills. Unlike the grids of other subjects, language skills are considered as dominant areas of learning. In the district level examination, 25% marks is allocated for listening and speaking. Out of these, 10% marks for listening and 15% marks for speaking, 75% marks for reading. Reading and writing are the main means of assessing the student's ability. Writing skill has been given priority from the past and it still exists. Different methodologies, skills and materials have been provided by the Ministry of Education (MOE) and Curriculum Development Center (CDC) Sanothimi, Bhaktapur to improve writing skills (Baral, 2015, p. 6). In the district level examination, students are also asked to write some compositions. These compositions are essays, letters, story. Though different opportunities and attentions have been given in writing skills, students still

seem poor in writing. The present textbooks prescribed for grade eight have also included exercises for reading and writing skill along with listening and speaking skills. However, the achievement level is still not up to the level. This shows that their writing ability may not be well developed. Thus, the problem of statement might be stated as to find out how well and to what extent the learners are competent in writing essay.

It is necessary to study essay writing ability of the students to improve their essay writing performance. Therefore, this study entitled 'Essay writing ability of grade seven student' makes an attempt to analyze the situation.

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

The objectives of the study were as follows:

- i) to find out the essay writing ability of the students of grade seven,
- ii) to compare the essay writing ability of grade seven students of public and private schools, and
- iii) to suggest some pedagogical implications.

### **1.4 Research Questions**

A research questions is a clear, focused and concise question on the research study. It provides guidelines to the researcher. This study was oriented to find out the answer to the following questions:

- i) What is the level of students in essay writing ability in public and private schools?
- ii) What are the differences between public and private schools students' ability in essay writing?

### **1.5 Significance of the Study**

This study aimed to explore the essay writing ability of students who are studying in seven in public and private schools. The findings of the study are

expected to be beneficial to all those who are eagerly motivated towards language teaching and learning. Especially, teachers will be benefited by this research as they gain knowledge on the areas where as learners are weak in presenting the parts of the essay. Similarly, this study will be highly useful to the English language practitioners who want to undertake research in the field of language teaching. Moreover, this study will be highly significant for school supervisors, subject experts, syllabus designers, text book writers, materials producers and those who are directly and indirectly associated with teaching learning language to design necessary materials for the students to develop their capacity.

### **1.6 Delimitations of the Study**

This study was limited to the following points:

- i. This study was delimited to forty eight students of grade seven.
- ii. This study was limited to four schools of Saptary district.
- iii. This study was limited to the analysis of responses obtained from those forty eight students.
- iv. This study was limited to the comparative study of the descriptive writing ability of the students of grade seven.
- v. This study was limited to both public and private schools.

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

Some related terms are given below:

**Essay Writing Ability:** Essay writing ability in this research refers to the students' ability in writing essay who are studying in class seven in public and private schools.

**Public School:** The schools which are supported by the aid of government of Nepal is generally called public schools.

**Private School:** The schools which are not supported by the government of Nepal but financial privately is called private school.

**Language Skills:** The term 'Language Skills' in this study primary refer to the ability and talent of the students in writing area

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK**

Literature review is one of the essential tasks to conduct any research. According to Kumar (2009, p. 30), "the literature review is an integral part of the entire research process and makes a valuable contribution to almost every operational step." It is reviewed under two sub headings

#### **2.1 Review of Theoretical Literature**

Review of theoretical literature provides an insight right to the researcher related to a number of aspects that have a direct or indirect bearing on research topic. It serves as a basis for developing a theoretical framework which helps to investigate the problem that a researcher wishes to. So, this section includes theoretical review on language in relation to writing skills and essay writing. Some relevant theories that are contributing to my research work are discussed below:

##### **2.1.1 Language Skills**

Language is universally accepted as the amalgamation of four different interrelated skills. There are listening reading and writing. Among them listening and speaking are primary skills on the basis of priority, whereas reading and writing are secondary such as listening and speaking are used more than reading and writing in daily communication. Listening and reading skills are called receptive skills and speaking and writing skills are called productive skills (Harmer, 1997, p. 96).

In conclusion, Language is used as means of communication by which the world becomes narrow. Every work is possible through language. They used language for different purpose. Language is called the solution of every work happening throughout people's life.

### **2.1.2 Listening Skill**

Listening is the activity of paying attention to and trying to get meaning from something we hear. It is the ability to identify and understand what others are saying. This involves understanding the speaker's accent and pronunciation, his grammar and vocabulary, and grasping his meaning. An able listener is capable of doing these four things simultaneously. Traditionally, listening was regarded as a passive skill and neglected but recently it has been taken as a creative and active process of perceiving and constructing the message from a stream of sounds. It is the first language skill that a child acquires. Very often listening and speaking go side by side.

All the time through history, it appears that listening has not received a great deal of attention until more recent time. However, it has been followed: accepted as an important skill of language and should be taught as an essential element of classroom language teaching. In the context of Nepal, considering the importance of listening and speaking skills of the language, listening and speaking have also been included in the new school level English curriculum and there is the provision of teaching and testing these skills nowadays (Richards, 1990, p. 106).

### **2.1.3 Speaking Skills**

Speaking skill is the most important of all language skills. Speaking refers to expressing one's ideas, emotions and feelings through the oral medium fluently. Many foreign language learners are primarily interested in learning to communicate in the target language. However, teaching speaking does not get much priority in our schooling system. Our classroom teaching is mostly concentrated on reading and writing. It seems that we haven't realized the fact that speaking is the primary skill of the language (Jordan, 1999, p. 22).

The importance of teaching speaking is very easily realized if we view language through modern communicative language teaching (CLT). CLT

views language as a means for communication. The principal goal of teaching any foreign language is to develop communicative competence in the students. When students learn to speak appropriately in the context, both accurately and fluently, then they have developed basics of communicative competence. Communicatively competent speakers are assured to have grammatical accuracy; sociolinguistic or pragmatic appropriateness; strategic fluency and discourse skills in speech. Achieving this goal is not possible, unless we give proper emphasis to speaking skill (Rivers, 1968).

Speaking a language requires to have mastery over different sub-skills. Pronunciation and expression are central in the speech of people. Good pronunciation skill is obtained with the knowledge of consonants and vowels, allophonic variants of consonants and vowels, stress, intonation pattern, allomorphic variants, assimilation and elision. Moreover, speaking requires having mastery not only over vocabulary, grammar and pronunciation but also social meaning of linguistic terms and their functions, level of formality and many other socio-linguistic functions (Jordan, 1999, p. 24).

#### **2.1.4 Reading Skill**

Reading skill is the process of extracting required information from a written text. It is the amalgamation of visual and non-visual experience or behaviour. Venkateswaran (1995, p. 85) writes, "reading is decoding print or 'deciphering' print, or reading is understanding, interpreting or making sense of a given text". It is one of the receptive skills of language. Reading involves the total understanding of a message contained in a text.

Teaching reading refers to the process of making students able to grasp the information contained in the text. Information is simply grasped by means of visual symbols. Meaningful arrangement of symbols always carries information. Moyle (1973, p. 25) mentions a broader view of the teaching of reading is that it involves the recognition of the important elements of meaning

in their essential relation, including accuracy and thoroughness in comprehension.

Reading is important for learners in many respects. Reading text provides learners with grammatical, lexical as well as discourse resources that may help them to process and produce the well formed L2 utterances and texts. In the past, listening and reading skills were taken as the passive receptive skills. But the concept has been changed. Now, both listening and reading are taken as highly active, creative, interactive and critical receptive skills of language because these engage people in thinking, responding, understanding, following, doing or acting.

### **2.1.5 Writing Skill**

Writing is one of the most important skills in learning a new language. It is the last skill of language. It is done at last often crossing all these three skills of language are listening, speaking and reading. Before writing, everybody first should listen, speak and read. It means to manipulate the mechanics of writing structuring them in sensible words, sentences and paragraphs in order to convey some meaning so that the reader can grasp the information which the writer has tried to impart. This writing is an act of transmitting thoughts, feelings and ideas on paper.

Writing is activities by which human beings communicate with one another transmit their accumulated culture from one generation to another. It is thought writing. We are able to share ideas, arouse feelings, persuade and convince others. Rivers (1968) says:

Writing is an extremely complex cognitive activity in which the writer is required to demonstrate control of variables simultaneously. At the sentence level, these include control of content, format, sentence, structure, vocabulary, spelling and letter formation. Beyond the sentence

level, the writer must be able to structure and integrate information into cohesive and coherent paragraph and text. (p. 36)

From aforementioned definition, we can say that writing is very complex process and requires many composite skills, like mental psychological, rhetorical and critical aspects. Writing is the system of written symbols which represent the sounds, syllables or words of language. Writing skill requires different mechanisms as capitalization, spelling and punctuation etc.

### **2.1.6 Importance of Writing Skill**

Writing is an act of transmitting thought, feelings and ideas from past present to future. That's why it demands caution in using it. It is a transparent mirror which can present our knowledge and as well as experiences. It provides us with chance to acquire others ideas, feelings and thought among the four skills of language: writing is the output of listening speaking and reading. Byrne (1991) says 'Writing attracts special importance because reading makes a full man, coherence a ready man and writing and exact mean (p. 52).

The writing proficiency plays a vital role in securing good marks in the examinations. In all levels students are asked to give the answer in written form in their examinations. Lower secondary level student occasionally two part in writing contests like story writing poetry writing, writing essay writing letter writing etc. If the students are not trained in writing skills, they cannot give their writing skill to pass their examination with good marks. Byrne (1991, p. 56) high lights the importance of writing with following lines:

- Writing provides variety in classroom activities, serving as a break from oral work. At the same time, it increases the amount of language contact through work that can be set out of class.

- Writing is often needed for formal and informal testing. In some cases, of course a written test may even be appropriate for example, making note while listening
- Exposure to the foreign language through more than one medium, especially if skills are properly integrated, appears to be more effective than relying on a single medium role.

Writing homework exercises and other activities help the students to acquire the vocabulary and grammar of the lesson. Practically the students minimum contact with the language in the class room must be expanded as much as possible. The overall objective will help to help the learners to express their ideas in written text. Richards (1990, p. 101) says "written language is primarily transaction or message oriented. The goal of written language is to convey information accurately, effectively and appropriately". In this way, the main purpose of writing is to enable the learners for the composition and creativity. Thus, writing, is a transparent mirror, this can present our thoughts and experiences. Written documents can be presented for a long time.

Whatever information about past is available in the preserved is the result of writing. Writing is a permanent record of human affairs, need and accuracies writing has widely been used in order to transmit old experiences, knowledge of religion, Philosophy, politics, sociology, literature and culture. The appointment of a job also starts with writing skills. Therefore, writing has greater importance as compared to the other skills of language.

### **2.1.7 Writing an Essay**

An essay refers to a piece of composition on a topic. It is a written composition giving expression to one's own personal ideas or opinions on some topics.

Narayanswami (2000) says:

The essay is a long piece of composition on a theme or subject. It is self contained, that is it has beginning middle and an end.' The beginning usually introduces the subject in general forms. The middle of the essay develops the theme and presents the writer's thought on it. Then the essay is brought to a close in suitable concluding passage (p. 92)

On the basis of aforementioned definitions it can be concluded that an essay is a self contained piece of writing in prose on a theme or subject. It is a written composition of giving expression to one's own personal ideas or opinions on some topics, whether expresses personal opinions, or gives information on any given subject. Therefore, the essay must have unity, coherence and conciseness and clear systematic in the whole writing. Descriptive essays are the accurate description of some places and things. So as the researcher I am going to focus on the descriptive essay.

### **2.1.8 Parts of the Essay**

An essay is a piece of composition which has well defined parts of its own. They are introduction or the beginning, body or the middle part and conclusion or the ending. Each of these parts play vital roles to make an essay comprise and well written. These three parts have their own role, they are completely inter-related. In other words, there must be unity, coherence, clarity and systematicity in the whole writing. According to Narayanswami (2000), the given below are the parts of good essay:

#### **a. The Introduction**

Introduction is the first part of the essay. As the name suggest it introduces the subject matter by giving general introduction of the topic. It captures the interest of the readers and motivates them to continue their reading. The main

purpose of the introduction is to arrest and draw the attention of the reader for that, in introduction paragraph, the writer should use proverb or quotation or general statement and so on.

Generally, introduction is written in paragraph but someone it may be more than one paragraph.

The length of introduction may be it should be clear, simple, complete and impressive or effective to give the exact account of the subject.

### **b. The Body**

This is the second and most important part of the essay. In this the writer elaborates the subject matters, illustration, description, or elaboration or the supplementary details of the central idea or theme should be presented in body paragraph of the essay. It contains appropriate facts, figures, examples, logic and so on what are need to clarify the subject matter or topic. Body part is also called the discussion part. In this part, coherence should be well maintained because the description should follow the logical order according to the requirements. The body part of the essay may contain more than one paragraph. But each paragraph should have a topic sentence along with the supporting details. The topic sentence contains main idea of the whole paragraph. In topic sentence contains main idea of the whole paragraph. In the same way, the writer's experience, opinions, reasons should be described in this part of the essay. The body part of the essay is complete with itself, because everything is clearly mentioned in body, part of the essay.

### **C. The Conclusion**

The conclusion is the final part of the essay. It gives the logical ending of the whole essay. The interest of the readers which has aroused in the introduction part should be satisfied in the conclusion. Generally introduction makes from general to particular where as conclusion moves form particular to general. The

conclusion should be neither too long nor too short it should be moderate in length.

### **2.1.9 Types of Essay**

Essays can be classified on the basis of different criteria but the following classification is quite usual. Narayanswami (2000, p. 23) has given the following types of essays.

#### **I. Descriptive Essays**

Descriptive essays are the accurate description of some places and things such as countries, islands, mountains seas, rivers, aspects and phenomena of nature, towns, building and soon. So these types of essays can be said to be the accurate account of something which conveys the faceted pieces of information to the readers.

#### **II. Narrative Essays**

Narrative essays consist mainly of the narration of some events, or series of events. Narrative essays are average, accurate accounts of the past events. The events can be historical or legendary occurrences, stories either true or imaginary, a journey or voyage, programmed, accidents and biography of the well know personalities.

#### **III. Expository/Argumentative Essay**

The aim of argumentative essays is to convince the readers that the position of the readers that the position of the writer has taken on a subject or saying is right. The writer has to try to give his own reflections and thoughts about the proposition concerned. Views both for and against the proposition must be considered. An expository essay consists of an exposition or explanation.

#### **IV. Reflective Essays**

A reflection is a thought on some subject or idea arising in the mind. So, reflective essay is the reflection of the writer's experiences on a variety of topics. Normally the topic of the reflective essay can be abstract in nature. For example habits on qualities, social, politics and theological topics. In fact, such compositions express the writer's original thoughts on some topics.

#### **V. Imaginative Essays**

Essays on subjects such as the feeling and experiences on the sailor wrecked on a desert island may be called imaginative essays. In such, the writers are called to place himself in Imagination in a position of which he has had he actual experience. Such subjects as if I were the king on the auto biography of the hour would call for imaginative essays.

#### **2.1.10 Descriptive Essay Writing**

Descriptive essays are the accurate description of some places and things such as animals, islands, mountains, plants, towns, countries, buildings, seas, rivers, motor-cars, aspects and phenomena of nature etc and on. So these types of essays can be said to be accurate account of something which conveys the factual pieces of information to the readers. The information to be included in these kinds of essay is seen and what is heard by the writers of the descriptive essay does not make room for their own imagination. Wren and Martin (1989, p. 380) say:

A descriptive essay consists of description of some place or thing : eg.,

- a. Animals, plants, minerals (such as the elephant, papal tree, coal);
- b. Towns, countries, buildings such as (Bombay, Italy, the Tajmahal);
- c. Aspects and phenomena of nature (such as volcanoes, the monsoon, Sunlight, organic life) ; and
- d. Manufactured articles (such as motor cars stream engines, paper, silk)

### **2.1.11 Characteristics of Good Essay**

A good essay should be divided into a number of paragraphs and should follow the characteristics of a good paragraph. The qualities of a good essay, as mentioned by Narayanswami (2000) are described below:

#### **I. Unity**

An essay must have unity, developing one theme with a definite purpose. In another way, an essay must have an aim, i.e. it must have a single central idea to impart to the readers. The subject must be clearly defined in the mind and kept in view throughout. There should be only apt description, examples, and illustrations and so on. All the supporting details should directly be related to the central idea.

#### **II. Balance**

Everything mentioned in the essay should be balanced. All the details should be directly related to central idea. Balance refers to the balance among the parts of the essay. The introduction, the body and the conclusion should deal with the same controlling idea. The introduction should be shorter than the body. Similarly, the conclusion should deal with same controlling idea. The introduction should be shorter than the body. Similarly, the conclusion should also be shorter, but impressive. The theme of the essay should have a balanced thought leading to the conclusion.

#### **III. Coherence**

The essay should follow a clear order and move steadily towards the goal or aim specified before we start writing. Coherence can be maintained by presenting the materials in a particular order. The common orders are chronological order, logical order and spatial order. We have to determine which orders should be followed depending upon the requirement. Thus, ideas

are arranged in a definite pattern. So, the important ones stand out prominently and the relation between the ideas is clearly seen.

#### **IV. Length**

The length of the essay depends on the writers, purpose in writing. The writer should specify for whom he is writing because the length of the essay also depends on the reader's background and needs. The length of the essay should not influence the unity, coherence, balance, clarity and the parts of it. Each part should contribute to the total effort.

#### **V. Style**

The usual style of writing an essay is formal if we are writing descriptive essay. Complete sentences are used and vocabulary is rich making use of words which sounds are high. Argumentative and reflective essays seem more literary than descriptive and narrative ones.

#### **VI. Clarity**

The language style of the essay should be clear. It is said that ambiguity should not be introduced in the sense of high soundness.

#### **VII. Grammatical Correctness**

All the words and sentences used in the essay should be formal and standard or normative. Colloquialisms and slangs should not be introduced. On the other hand, in the sense of literacy expression, grammaticality should not be broken.

#### **VIII. Cohesion**

Grammatical and lexical connectedness should be well introduced in the language of the essay. Cohesion refers to unity. Appropriate cohesive devices keep the parts and thoughts of the text together. Any kinds of texts must have a certain structure which depends on factors quite different from those required in the structure of a single sentence. The lexical connectedness between or

among the lexical items and grammatical connectedness between/among the elements of the sentence grammatical kind can be termed as cohesion.

### **XI. The Personal Touch**

An essay is supposed to have individual feelings, ideas, thoughts and impressions. On the other hand, an essay can reveal the personal feelings and opinions of the writer. An essay is a written composition giving expression to one's personal ideas or opinions on subject; and this personal touch should not be lost.

### **X. Climax**

If any essay contains serve statements of varying importance or emphasis, it is appropriate to arrange them in an ascending scale of the importance. The thoughts as the supporting details are supposed to lead the matter of the climax.

#### **2.1.12 Importance of Technical Essay Writing**

If a language student ever needs to writer anything in the second language, it will probably be an essay. Essay is one of the most wide pared forms of written communication. For this reason, we have to be devoted classroom time to teaching essay writing. But it is not only because essay writing also gives us the chance to deals with a variety of the terms and functions that are essential parts of language mastery we can write essays to express to describe something narrate some events, give logic about a topic or theme essay writing tasks make students consider audience as well as their accuracy. We can share our knowledge experiences through essays Wren and Martin (1989) say:

An essay can give real image to the readers from any subject make.

Each of these language functions has its own associated vocabularies, connotations, sensitive structures and appropriate choice of words and tone to fit the audience as well as international language; our students

should be competent in its description of some things on objectives may be necessary to persuade readers to accept or particular judgment. The description should be accurate and successful to catch convey our own feelings, thought ideas, interests, knowledge about subject matter through writing essay. (p. 372)

Similarly, Rivers (1968) says:

Composition exercises which are not closely related to intensive reading assignment should be so designed that they do not become tests of originality and invention. Precise description of persons, places and things provide excellent training in exact expression (p. 254).

Essay writing encouraged the students to interpret their experiences logically. They could express their experiences logically. They could give the excellent image to the readers through the essays; we could get originality of expression. Creative thinking and critical writing could provide insight to the laborious person. In this way, this essay writing activity had got international value for this reason too essay writing should be taught from the school level in each country.

## **2.2 Review of the Empirical Literature**

Any study requires the knowledge of previous background to obtain the targeted objectives and deepen the study. So, I have made an attempt to review related studies, articles and reports to accomplish my study. Some of the relevant works reviewed are as follows:

Karki (1996) carried out a study on "A comparative study on English writing proficiency between the students of private and public schools of grade ten in Lamjung District. "The main purpose of his study was to find out English

writing proficiency of grade ten students. The sample of the study comprised of eighty students from twenty secondary schools of Lumjung District. The tools for the collection of data consisted of a test covering different language items related to the curriculum. He found that the students of private schools were far better in all the areas of vocabulary, grammar, spelling and punctuation than the students of public schools.

Likewise, Poudyal (1999) carried out a research on "A comparative study of English language writing proficiency in higher secondary schools of Gulmi and Kathmandu district". The main purpose of this study was to find out writing proficiency of the higher secondary school. The population consisted of 60 higher secondary level students from four streams, 60 each from Humanities, Education Commerce and Science. The tools for data collection consisted of two guided and two free compositions. Both were open ended questions. Finally, it was found that the students of Kathmandu district were better than the students of Gulmi district in writing proficiency.

Rijal (2009) carried out a research entitled "Grade Eight students' ability in essay writing". The main objectives of the study was to find out the proficiency level of the students in essay writings she used a test item containing questions of descriptive essay writing. She selected 8 schools from Kirtipur Municipality by using purposive (judgmental) sampling procedure. She selected 80 students out of them 40 were girls and 40 were boys. The tool of consisted of test items. The study showed that the writing proficiency of grade eight students was above average. It was also found that students of public schools were better than that of the government schools and the girls were better than the boys in performance.

Khadka (2012) carried out a research on "Writing proficiency of higher secondary level students." The main objectives were to find out the writing proficiency of the higher secondary level students. He selected 60 students (30 boys and 30 girls) of class XII from education and management stream from

different higher secondary schools of Rauthat district. He used non-purposive (judgmental) random sampling procedure in order to select the required number of students. He designed test items to collect the required number of students. The test items included three different types of essay questions for assessing their writing proficiency. It was found that most of the students had lack of organization skill even if they have had good ideas on the problems. Moreover, they were unable to organize their ideas in an essay.

Baral (2015) carried out a research on 'Essay writing proficiency of grade 10 students.' The main purpose of this study was to find out descriptive essay writing proficiency of the students of public and private schools to compare the essay writing proficiency of the students of grade ten public and private schools and to suggest some pedagogical implication. He followed survey design to collect data. The population of this study was the students of grade ten. Altogether 60 students from 6 schools (3 public and 3 private schools) were the sample population of his study. The researcher selected six schools by using purposive non-random sampling procedure the researcher selected six schools by using purposive non-random sampling procedures from Letang VDC of Morang district. The researcher used test item as the tool for data collection and conducted test in essay writing providing two topics which were descriptive in nature. He found 18.21 as overall average out of 24 marks.

All above these research works were conducted on writing proficiency. Some of them were related to guided writing and writing free composition. However, some were related to grammatical errors committed by different levels of students. There was a single research conducted out on writing ability of students of grade eight. But my research was different in grade, sample population, area of the study, although the topic bears similarity.

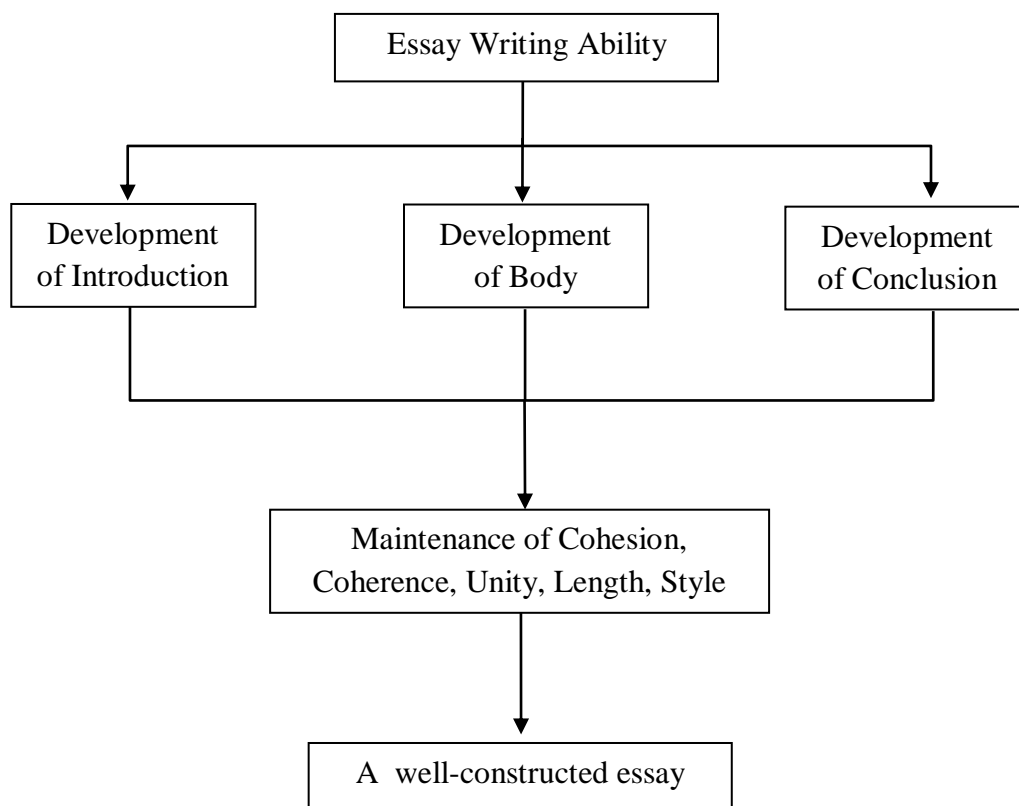
### **2.3 Implications of the Review of the Study**

The review of the literature is a milestone for any research. The purpose of literature review is to expand upon the context and background of the research.

I also consulted many sources to broaden on the horizon of my knowledge to proceed my research work. I have reviewed many books, journal articles, report and so on. All these sources helped to bring clarity and focus on the research problem and to improve methodology and to contextualize the finding from the study of Karki (1996), Poudyal (1999) Rijal (2009), Khadka (2012), Baral (2015) the researcher got the ideas for selecting topic and improving methodology. Specially, the study conducted by Rijal helped me to design methodology and research tools. The study of Karki (1996) and Poudyal (1999) provided knowledge on writing skills. The book written by Narayanswami expanded the horizon of my knowledge on the process of essay writing to design the theoretical aspects of my research work.

## 2.4 Conceptual Framework

This research was based on the following conceptual framework:



## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **METHODS AND PROCEDURES OF THE STUDY**

This chapter presents the procedure of the study, which involves the design of the study, population sample and sampling strategy, study area/field, data collection tools, data collection procedures and data analysis and interpretation procedure. To achieve the set of objectives of the study, the following methodologies were adapted.

#### **3.1 Design of the Study**

Survey research was used to complete this study. To compare the essay writing ability of the students, the researcher followed this design. In this type of research, the researcher visited the determined area to find out existing data. Survey was superficial study of an issue or phenomenon. It was a general view and characterization of the circumstances and the testing of its status. It was the most commonly used method of investigation in education research. According to Nunan (2010):

The main purpose of survey research is to obtain a snapshot of conditions, attitudes and or events at a single in point. It is used to study large and small population or universe by selecting and studying sample chosen from the population. (p. 112)

In nutshell, survey research is conducted to highlight important educational issues and data were given by the sample thought that whole group has given same type of information. It means, researchers generalist obtained the result from the sample to the whole population.

Research was a systematic process of investigating. We could not conduct research haphazardly. In order to carry out a research the researcher had to pass

through a series of systematic steps. For this different scholars had suggested the survey research procedure differently in their own style.

Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2010, p. 209) have suggested the following fourteen step procedure of survey research:

1. Define the objectives
2. Decide the kind of survey required (e.g. longitudinal, cross sectional, cohort study etc.)
3. Formulate research question or hypothesis (the null hypothesis and alternative hypothesis)
4. Decide the issue on which to focus
5. Decide the information that is needed to address the issues.
6. Decide the sampling required.
7. Decide the instrumentation
8. Generate the data collection instruments.
9. Decide how the data will be collected
10. Pilot the instruments and refine them
11. Train the interviewers (if appropriate)
12. Collect the data
13. Analyze the data
14. Report the results

The above procedures of survey research entailed that survey was one of the important research methods used in educational investigations it was mainly carried out to find out peoples attitudes, opinions and specified behaviour on creation issues, phenomena, events or situation. The finding of survey was

generalized to the whole group. That is why, the researcher chose survey design in his research study.

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

The population of study were all the students of grade seven. Among them, the researcher selected forty eight students as the sample from four different schools (two public schools and two private schools). The researcher selected twelve students from each school by using purposive non-random sampling procedure from four different schools of Saptary district.

### **3.3 Research Tools**

The researcher used test as the major tool for data collection. The researcher conducted test related to essay writing providing three topics which were descriptive in nature.

### **3.4 Sources of Data**

The sources of data involved both primary and secondary sources. They are described below as follows:

#### **3.4.1 Primary Source of Data**

The primary source of this study included the students who were studying at grade seven in public and private schools.

#### **3.4.2 Secondary Source of Data**

Secondary sources of data were various books like, Byrne (1991), Harmer (1997), Jordon (1999), Narayanswami (2000), Khadka (2012) and other researches and articles.

### **3.5 Data Collection Procedures**

The researcher collected data using the following procedures:

- First of all, the researcher went to the selected schools with an official letter from the department.
- The researcher got permission from the authority to consult the English language teachers.
- The researcher built rapport with the concerned teachers and explained them about the purpose of my study.
- The researcher conducted the test to the selected students and thanked them for information.

### **3.6 Data Analysis and Interpretation Procedures**

The systematically collected data were analyzed, interpreted presented descriptively as well as analytically using statistical tools and tables. The data for this study were marks obtained by the students in essay writing test.

### **3.7 Ethical Considerations**

Before collecting the data, the researcher got permission with his supervisor for the betterment of my study. He followed the rules and norms of research. He was careful of the citation of the sources. He took only required data and information. He did not go against of his supervisor and participants while analyzing and interpreting the data. He took account of the source language text and the writer's cultural expression and identity.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATIONS OF DATA**

This chapter mainly deals with the analysis and interpretation of the data collected from the primary sources. The data were collected with the help of the test consisting of open ended questions. The questions were constructed being based on the objectives of the study. The primary sources of data were collected from forty eight students of grade seven from four schools of Saptary district.

This study was carried out to find out the essay writing ability of the students of grade seven and to compare the essay writing ability of grade seven students of public and private schools. For this purpose, the collected data were analyzed and interpreted under the following main headings:

- Holistic analysis
- Genderwise analysis
- Componentwise analysis
- Scholwise analysis
- Comparison of public and private schools

#### **4.1 Holistic Analysis**

The performance of private and public school was observed, analyzed and interpreted. For this, there were three essays with the weightage of 24 marks. To find out the overall performance of the students, the researcher analyzed and interpreted their obtained marks and found the average marks. On the basis of average marks, the researcher placed them under above average and below average with the percentage.

The following table shows the holistic analysis of the performance of the students:

**Table 1**  
**Holistic Analysis of the Performance of the Students**

No. of students	Average marks secured	Above average		Below average	
		No. of students	%	No. of students	%
48	14.64	26	54.16%	22	45.83%

The above table shows the overall performance of the students in descriptive essay writing. The overall average is 14.64 marks out of 24 full marks. The percentage of students scoring above is 54.16% and the below average is 45.83%. The majority of the students were above average and the proficiency of essay writing was found good.

#### 4.2 Genderwise Analysis

The essay writing ability of boys and girls of private and public were observed, analyzed and interpreted. The genderwise performance in essay writing has been analyzed as given below.

**Table 2**  
**Genderwise Analysis of Performance**

Text	Tools	Marks obtained Essay Writing		
		Boys	Girls	Difference
Private school	Mean (Average)	16.5	16	0.5
	Percent (%)	68.75%	66.66%	2.09%
Public school	Mean (Average)	14.23	13	1.23
	Percent (%)	59.29%	54.16%	5.13%

This above table shows the essay writing ability of boys and girls in both private and public schools. The average marks obtained by the boys in private school is 16.5 (68.75%) and girls is 13 (66.66%) and the average difference

between boys and girls in the same text is 0.5 (2.08%) out of 24 full marks. Similarly, the average mark of the boys in public school is 14.23 (59.29%) and the girls is 13 (54.16%) and the average difference between boys and girls in the same text is 1.23 (5.13%) out of 24 full marks. In both private and public school, boys showed better performance.

### 4.3 Componentwise Analysis

The componentwise ability of the students of private and public schools in essay writing has been observed, interpreted and analyzed as given below:

**Table 3**  
**Componentwise Analysis of Performance**

Components	Tools	Marks obtained in elements of essay			Full marks
		Private schools	Public schools	Difference	
Subject matter	Mean (Average)	7.58	6.58	1	24
	Percent (%)	75.83%	65.83%	10%	
Grammar	Mean (Average)	4.33	3.71	0.62	
	Percent (%)	86.66%	74.16%	12.5%	
Language	Mean (Average)	2.87	2.33	0.54	
	Percent (%)	57.5%	46.66%	10.84	
Style	Mean (Average)	1.54	1.25	0.29	
	Percent (%)	38.54%	31.25%	7.29%	

This table shows the essay writing ability of student in private and public school. The average marks of the students of private schools in subject matter is 7.58 (75.83%) and that of public schools is 6.58 (65.83%) and the average difference between them is 1 (10%) out of 10 full marks. The students of private school obtained 4.33 (86.66%) in grammar and public schools students obtained 3.71 (74.16%). The average difference between them in grammar is 0.62 (1.25%) out of 50 full marks.

The average marks obtained by the students of private school in language is 2.87 (57.5%) and the public schools 2.33 (46.66%) and the average difference among them in language is 0.54 (10.84%) and out of 5 full marks. The average marks of the students is got 1.54 (38.54%) and the public schools is 1.25 (31.25%) and the average difference between them is 0.29 (7.29%) out of 4 full marks.

Thus, on the basis of subject matter, grammar, language, style private schools students showed better performance them public schools students.

#### 4.4 Schoolwise Analysis

The performance of the students of different schools has been analyzed and interpreted in the given below table:

**Table 4**  
**Schoolwise Analysis of Performance**

S.N.	Name of the schools		Total marks obtained by the students	Average marks obtained by each student	% obtained	Average marks to students
1	Private schools	i) Sarda Secondary English Boarding School	192	16	66.66%	16.33
		ii) Phuleshwar Public Higher Secondary School	200	16.66	69.44%	
2	Public schools	i) Shree B.S.R.J. Higher Secondary School	184	15.33	63.88%	13.87
		ii) Shree 5 Mahendra Secondary School	149	12.41	51.73%	

The above table shows the schoolwise ability of the students in essay writing. The total marks obtained by the students of Phuleshwor Public Higher Secondary boarding school is 200. It is 16.66 (69.44%) and the average marks obtained by the students is 16.66 which is the highest marks among the selected schools. The mark obtained by the students of this school is above average. Similarly, the students of Sarda Secondary Boarding School have obtained 192 marks in total. They have secured 66.66% and the average mark of the students is 16. The marks obtained by the students of this school is equal to average.

On the other hand, the students of Shree B.S.R.J. higher secondary school have obtained 184 marks. They have got 63.88% and their average marks is 15.33. The marks obtained by the students of this school is above average. The students of Shree 5 Mahendra Secondary School have obtained 149 marks. The percentage of total mark is 51.73% and the average mark obtained by the students is 12.41 which is the lowest marks among the selected schools. It is less in mark than B.S.R.J. higher secondary school. The marks obtained by the students of this school is below average.

From the analysis and interpretation of the above table the essay writing ability of the students of each private school is quite better than the essay writing ability of the students of each public school.

#### **4.5 Comparison of Public and Private School**

Here, the researcher has presented the comparison of the performance of the students of both private and public schools. The data have been given in the following table:

**Table 5**  
**Comparison of Public and Private School**

Tools	Marks obtained in Essay Writing		
	Private school	Public school	Difference
Mean (Average)	16.33	13.87	2.47
Percent (%)	68.04%	57.81%	10.23%

The above table shows the average marks obtained by the students in private and public schools. The average marks obtained by the students in private school is 16.33 (68.04%) whereas the total average marks in the students of public school is 13.67 (57.81%) and the total average difference between the students of private and public school is 2.47 (10.23%) out of 24 full marks.

Thus, essay writing ability of the students in both public and private schools was satisfactory. There was negligible difference between public and private schools.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

This chapter is concerned with the findings, conclusions and recommendations of the study which have been drawn from the analysis and interpretation of the data.

#### **5.1 Summary of Findings**

The main aim of the study was to find out the essay writing ability of the students of grade seven and to compare the essay writing ability of grade seven of public and private schools in terms of style, grammar, language and subject matter. So, I selected 48 students of Saptary district. The major tool of data collection was the subjective type test containing 24 marks. On the basis of the analysis and interpretation of the data, the following findings have been drawn:

- (a) The essay writing ability of grade seven students was found satisfactory in both private and public schools. Most of the students were above average. In total, 54.16% students were above average and 45.83% students were below average.
- (b) In the essay writing, students of private school obtained 16.33 (68.04%) and the students of public school got 13.87 (57.81%) which is the negligible difference.
- (c) The boys performed better in writing essay than the girls. The boys scored 16.5 (68.75%) and girls scored 16 (66.66%) in private schools. Similarly, the boys scored 14.23 (59.29%) and the girls scored 13 (54.16%) average marks in public schools. Only negligible difference was found between boys and girls in both private and public schools.

- (d) The essay writing ability of the students was found better in private school 7.58 (75.83%) in subject matter, 4.33 (86.66%) in grammar, 2.87 (57.5%) in language and 1.25 (31.25%) in style. In essay writing the students of private school obtained 16.33 (68.04%) and the students of public school got 13.87 (57.81%).
- (e) The essay writing ability of the students of both private and public school was found satisfactory only two schools were below average. Other two schools were above average.

## **5.2 Conclusions**

The present study entitled "Essay Writing Ability of Students of Grade Seven" aims to find out the essay writing ability of the students of grade seven and to compare the essay writing ability of students of public and private schools. To carry out the study, I selected forty eight students from Saptary district through purposive non-random sampling procedure, 12 from each school. Altogether 48 students were selected. A set of test items consisting of essay writing was the tool for data collection.

Thus, it can be concluded that the essay writing ability of the seventh grade students was found satisfactory in both private and public schools. Most of the students were above average. In total, 54.16% students were above average and 45.83% were below average. The students from private schools showed quite better performance than the students of public schools in essay writing. There was no great difference between the students of private schools and public schools. The students of private schools got 16.33 (63.04%) marks in average. On the other hand, the students of public school got 13.87 (57.81%) marks. The difference between them was 2.47 (10.23%). From the analysis, it can be said that in both public and private schools boys showed better performance than the girls. The essay writing ability of the students was compared on the basis subject matter, grammar language and style. It showed that the students of private schools were better than the students of public schools in writing

essays. The schoolwise analysis of essay writing ability showed that each private school students showed better performance than each public school student.

In nutshell, essay writing ability of private and public school was found satisfactory

### **5.3 Recommendations**

On the basis of the findings of the study, some recommendations have been listed below along with some guidelines for improving essay writing. To the essay writing ability of the students, the researcher have recommended under the following headings.

- (a) Students should be asked to write as many essays as they can which are of their interest.
- (b) The students of public schools were found having lower writing ability than counterparts of private schools. The students should be encouraged in the writing tasks to improve their writing ability.
- (c) The teachers of both private and public schools should proper strategies of wiring while teaching writing and students should be practiced based on different components of writing essay such as subject matter, grammar, language, style and spelling. Writing technique and practice materials should be emphasized to enhance writing comprehension.
- (d) Boys and girls should be encouraged in writing activities by the teacher in the class. The teacher should follow cooperative learning to enhance writing ability in the class. Students should be asked to read. Out of course books such as newspaper, magazines for knowledge and write some paragraphs on specific topic.

- (e) English language teachers of both private and public schools should emphasize writing technique and practice materials to enhance writing proficiency.
- (f) Government should provide special trainings, seminars and workshops for teachers on how to teach writing skills.

### **5.3.1 Policy Related**

The recommendations of the research at policy level are as follows:

- Curriculum and the syllabus designer should design the syllabus and curriculum that highlights the practical aspects of writing skills.
- The policy should be formulated to encourage the teachers to involve in seminars and to prepare ELT journals in essay writing.
- It would be helpful for curriculum development centre to incorporate more courses related to essay writing, while designing the new course.
- The course content should maintain in proper organization of different aspects of writing.
- The text book writer should write the text books by considering the students level and capacity and include the many exercises on writing essays.
- The expert subject matters and trainers should provide essential training for both novice and experienced teachers in the areas of writing.
- At last, but not least, the school administration can also utilize this study to formulate the policy at school level.

### **5.3.2 Practice Related**

The recommendations at practice level are as follows:

- Students should be asked to write as many essays as they can which are of their interest.
- The teachers should follow the proper strategies while teaching, writing skill to the students in the classroom.
- The teachers should focus on weak students and conduct different types of writing activities.
- The teacher essay should teach written comprehension not only from the text but also from the newspaper, journal, article and real life situations, to improve essay writing of the students.
- The teachers should emphasize different types of practice materials to enhance writing ability of the students in the classroom.

### **5.3.3 Further Research Related**

The current study has only been limited to the essay writing ability of students of grade seven. This is why, other levels and areas of study need further researchers. This work can serve as a reference tool for those who are interested in and want to carry out further research on strategy adopted by teachers in teaching creative writing.

## **APPENDIX 1**

### **Essay Writing Tasks for Grade Seven Students**

Class : Seven

Time : 1 hour

Subject: English

Full Marks: 24

**Write the essays in about 150 words on the following topics:**

- a. My school
- b. My village or Town
- c. My favourite teacher

## APPENDIX II

The following marking scheme was used in evaluating the student's essays.

### **I. On the basis of parts of essay**

- i. Beginning - 4 Marks
- ii. Body - 6 marks
- iii. Conclusion - 4 marks

### **II. On the basis of whole essay**

- i. Characteristics and subject matter - 5 marks
- ii. Spelling - 1 mark
- iii. Grammar
  - Sentence structure - 1 mark
  - Subject-verb agreement - 1 mark
  - Tense - 1 mark
  - Punctuation - 1 mark

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