

# **CHAPTER ONE**

## **INTRODUCTION**

This study is about the "Proficiency in Mechanics of Writing." It is especially based on graphological devices of writing and students' proficiency on it. This chapter consists of general background, literature review, objectives of the study and significance of the study.

### **1.1. General Background**

This sub-heading especially consists of 'language, language skills, what writing is, importance of writing, development of writing systems, stages of writing, characteristics of writing, essential aspects of writing, mechanics of writing: punctuations, capitalization and spelling rules with their general rules which have been briefly discussed respectively.

#### **1.1.1. Language**

Language is a means of communication through which we express our thoughts, feelings and desires. Communication can be done through several means, but language is, by far, the most common means for communication. It is the most widely used means of communication for people. It is uniquely human possession. It is the distinctive property of human beings. Stressing on the fact, Sapir (1978, p. 8) says "Language is purely human and non- instinctive method of communicating ideas, emotions and desires by means of voluntarily produced symbols."

Language is also taken as a means for establishing a good relationship among the people in a community. It is a form of social behavior that enables the individual to co-operate with others in-group. Language is affected by the

culture of a particular society too. So, in the Encyclopedia Britannica (Vol:13, p. 736) language is defined as "a system as conventional spoken and written symbols by means of which human beings, as members of social groups and participants in its culture, communicate" (as cited in Kafle 2008, p. 1).

Similarly, Crystal (1992, p. 212) defines language as "the systematic conventional use of sounds, signs or written symbols in the human society for communication and self-expression." This definition is broad one, which includes more forms of language than other definitions like: written, spoken and sign forms as well. So, we can say that language is a combined form of many other forms.

All of the above definitions point out that language is a special system of communication, which helps to share the ideas, thoughts and desires. It is also known as a system of systems and a complex process. Linguistic components are arranged carefully and naturally in the connected speech to convey specific meaning. Random arranging linguistic components convey no meaning.

Therefore, language is purely human communicating method as well as a social phenomenon, which is used in the society to establish the relationship between the human being.

English being an international language holds special status of medium of communication. There are many languages spoken in the world. Among them, English is one of the widely used languages because it has gained the status of international language. It is used as a lingua franca because it is used to communicate with the people who are of different linguistic backgrounds. It is claimed that one in every seven people speaks the English language. The English language is taken as the richest language in the world because it has the richest vocabulary in comparison to other languages. Most of the books are

written in the English language, so it is the most dominant language in all areas as in trade, mass media and international diplomacy, etc. It is also language of the world politics, science and technology, economics, medicine, marketing and so on. So, the sound knowledge of English is a basic need now days.

### **1.1.2. Language Skills**

Skill means to do something well and expertly. A language is recognized in terms of four language skills, e.g. listening, speaking, reading and writing. Language skill can be classified into receptive and productive skill. The skills, which are involved in receiving messages, are called receptive skills. Listening and reading are receptive skills. On the other hand, the skills, which are involved in producing messages are called productive skills. Language skill can also be classified into primary and secondary skills. In this sense, listening and speaking are primary skills whereas reading and writing are secondary skills. Language skills are basic components of a language. One cannot approach the language without developing language skills. So, all of the skills are inseparable from the language learning process.

Among four language skills, writing is one of the complex skills. It involves manipulating, structuring and communicating. It is a final product of language. Writing skill needs proper handling of the mechanics to make meaningful sentences or paragraphs.

Writing skill is also taken as the output of listening, speaking and reading skills. Because of the writing skill, we can express our knowledge and experiences to others accurately. Therefore, teaching writing skills should be focused more. One should hear sounds before he sees graphic representations and one should see graphic symbols before he writes them. It proves that three skills (listening, speaking and reading) are basis for writing skills.

### **1.1.3. What Writing is?**

Writing is conveying meaning through the use of graphic symbols that represent a language. It is an expressive skill because we encode meaning by means of certain graphic symbols. It is productive skill, too. It manipulates the mechanics, letters and structures into sensible words or sentences. Writing can be looked at into 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, writing is nothing more than the correct association of conventional graphic symbols with sounds, which have no significant importance for the writer. Thus, writing is clearly much more than the graphic symbols. The symbols have to be arranged according to certain conventions to form words and words have to be arranged to form sentences. So, in, it a 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.

Richards et al. (1985, p. 313) says "Writing is a system of written symbols which represent the sounds, syllables or words of a language." It means all of the languages, which have their own written forms, use graphic symbols that represent spoken sounds. Likewise, Bynre (1993, p. 1) says "The symbols have to be arranged to form words, words have to be arranged to form sentences, according to certain convention." Here, writing is, clearly defined as, much more than the producing some graphic symbols, which have to be arranged according to a certain convention. Merely drawing letter on the paper is not writing.

Similarly, Rivers (1968, p. 243) views "Writing is a complicated process when it involves putting in graphic form according to the system accepted by the

educated native speakers, combination of words, which might be spoken in specific circumstance." This definition of writing focuses on the complexity of writing process where a writer should deal with many things to produce a sequence of words or sentences in a particular order according to the situation and setting.

Writing is also an act of transmitting thoughts, feelings and ideas from past to present and present to future because it is a permanent mirror. That is why, it demands caution in using. In this regard, Harmer (1991, p. 78) views that "writing is an activity through, which human beings communicate with one another and transmit their accumulated culture from one generation to another. It equally provides us with possibilities to discover and articulated ideas in many ways."

In conclusion, we can say that writing is a complex process and system of written symbols, which represent the spoken sounds. It makes us use of graphological devices. When we write, we use graphic symbols; these graphic symbols should be arranged according to certain convention. Only making lists of graphic symbols is not perfect and meaningful writing.

#### **1.1.4. Importance of Writing**

Writing is one of the most important skills in learning a new language because of its quality of being accurate and permanent. There is no doubt that writing is a most difficult skill too, for the language learners. It is a productive skill. By production, it means, to manipulate its mechanics, structuring them into sensible words or units in order to make reader understand the meaning of such complex effort. We are able to share our ideas, arose feelings, persuade and convince the people through writing. It further helps us transmit human being accumulated cultures and provides chances to acquire others ideas and thoughts

too. Stressing on the importance of writing, Bacon (1987 as quoted in Phyak and Sharma 2006, p. 254) says, that "writing attracts special importance because reading makes a full man, conference a ready man and writing an exact man."

Writing is superior to other skills because its main purpose is to enable the learner for creativity and accuracy. It is far from being a simple matter of transcribing language into written symbols. It is a thinking process. It demands conscious and intellectual effort, which is usually sustained over considerable period of time. It is a complex process because it requires many composite skills like, mental, psychological, critical and theoretical. Focusing on its complexity and importance, Nunan (1989, p. 36) says that, "writing is an extremely complex process in which the writer is required to demonstrate control of a number of variables simultaneously." Similarly, Grant (1998, p. 116) states "Writing is more important tool to enter the professional world, best made of learning to be expressed for introvert students consolidate their knowledge of language" (as cited in Niraula 2008, p. 8). Writing provides opportunity to express experiences and knowledge clearly and accurately without any hesitation and nervousness it is the best way to measure the inherent talent and thoughts of the introvert students. Comparatively, it is more important than other skills as it as a permanent record of one's thoughts. Other language skills like, reading and speaking are measured through writing. So we should emphasize in writing in language teaching. In connection with importance of teaching writing, Harmer (1991, p. 53) say that "for the point of view of language teaching, there is often greater pressure for written accuracy than there is for accuracy in speaking and reading." Thus, writing needs accuracy. While writing on a paper, a writer should be aware of the errors in sentence structures, spelling, punctuation and grammar.

In conclusion, writing is very important skill. It conveys information accurately, effectively and appropriately. It can spread our knowledge and experiences to others and helps to obtain others knowledge too. The writing proficiency plays a vital role in securing good marks in the examination or any other written competition. One cannot be perfect in language without good command in writing skill.

### **1.1.5. Development of Writing System**

When we consider the development of writing. It is important to keep in mind that a large number of languages in the world today have spoken forms only. For those languages that have writing systems, the development of writing is a relatively recent phenomenon. Human attempts to present information visually began from cave drawing or clay tokens. They were an early attempt of human being for developing writing system. However, these artifacts are best described as ancient precursors of writing.

Much of the evidence used in the reconstruction of ancient writing systems comes from inscriptions on stone or tablets. In those ancient writing systems other elaborate scripts on wood, leather, or other perishable materials were also used. We lost them. But working from the inscriptions, we can trace the development of one writing system lasting a few thousand years, with which humans have sought to create a more permanent record of what is going on.

There were many stages of development to record some event under the traditional writing system. Yule (1985, p. 21) has suggested some stages of development of writing system. They are pictogram, ideogram, logogram, rebus writing, syllabic writing and alphabetic writing. Let us describe each of them in brief.

- i) Pictogram: When some of the 'pictures' came to represent particular images in a consistent way, it began to describe it as a form of 'pictogram'.
- ii) Ideogram: When the pictures are developed into more fixed symbol forms, or conceptual images. This type of symbols are considered to be part of a system of idea of writing which is called Ideogram.
- iii) Logogram: Particular shapes used in their symbols with forms of inscriptions are more generally described as logogram writing. The relationship between the written form and the object it represented is arbitrary. A good example of logographic writing is the system used by the Sumerians, in the southern parts of modern Iraq.
- iv) Rebus Writing: Using existing symbols to represent the sounds of language is through a process known as rebus writing. In this process, the symbol for one entity is taken over as the symbol for the spoken word used to refer to the entity.
- v) Syllabic\_Writing: When a writing system employs a set of symbols each one representing the pronunciation of a syllable, it is described as syllabic writing.
- vi) Alphabetic Writing: The writing system which has a set of written symbols each one representing a single type of sound was known as alphabet writing. The Greek revised alphabetic writing system was introduced and passed to the rest of Western Europe through Roman.

#### **1.1.6. Stages of Writing**

There are three stages of writing. The first stage is called manipulation in which the writer simply manipulates the aspects or phonological item or a



spoken word in its written form. The learner learns mechanics of writing: hand writing, and punctuation i.e. capitalization, full stop, comma and so on.

The second stage of writing is structuring. 'In this stage, the learner learns the spelling of words, syntactic rules of structuring words, sentences, paragraph and text. The third and highest level in the process of writing is 'semantic stage' in which the learner does not learn only the mechanics and structuring rules of writing but also learn to write complete and meaningful sentences. This stage is the ultimate stage, in which learners have to learn to write correct sentences to be able to design, classify and organize the description of the subject matter.

However, Rivers (1968, p 245) has suggested five stages of writing, which help the learners to write in the foreign language. They are copying, reproduction, recombination, guided writing and free composition. Let us describe each of them in brief.

### **i) Copying**

This stage is also known as the stage of transcription, in which learners become familiar with different aspects of language. According to Rivers (1968) as the student is copying, he should repeat to himself what he is writing. In this way, he depends on the impression in his mind of the sounds, the symbols represented and he has further repetition on practice of basic dialogue or pattern of sentences. After he has some practice in copying accurately with correct diacritical and punctuation marks, he may continue to copy as an aid to memorization. When a learner continues the copying activities, he learns the scripts of the target language and orthographic rules and syntactic rules thoroughly.

## **ii) Reproduction**

In this stage, learners attempt to write without originality with what they have already learned orally. The method of dictating to the learners is effective for reproducing sentences. Further more the teacher emphasizes on writing and describing a picture or showing something. For it, the learner should understand the meaning of sentences.

## **iii) Recombination**

In recombination stage the learners recombine learned skills. It is more appropriate way because learners rebuild on former experience and ideas of writing. It is necessary to manipulate grammatical structure. The learners can substitute words, phrase or sentences expanding them more explicitly. Dictation is also a very fruitful method for recombining the ideas.

## **iv) Guided writing**

The stage of guided writing is a more developed stage than the one discussed above. Now the learners are given some freedom in the selection of lexical items and structural patterns but they have to follow the given suggestions regarding the content. At this stage the learners are given different types of exercises such as completion replacement, expansion or summarizing on elaborating some topics. They can include their ideas partially. Likewise, the learners can expand simple sentences by adding or modifying words or phrases.

## **v) Free writing**

Free writing is a complex activity, which requires varieties of skills. It involves the production and arrangement of written sentences in an appropriate way. At this stage, the learners know how to select the appropriate vocabulary and

structure to express their ideas in a meaningful way. They can express their ideas freely in this stage; they can be master in writing skill.

### **1.1.7. Characteristics of a Good Writing**

Writing is an art of using language but it is a very complex task to write clearly and explicitly. Correct, appropriate and effective writing in logical sentence structure is the most desired thing. Simplicity and directness are the most useful properties of good writing but, making a simple and clear writing is difficult from the syntactic and semantic point of views. It needs good imagination and logical sequence of thoughts. According to Richards et al. (1985, p. 100), essential characteristics of a good writing are as follows:

#### **i) Economy**

A good writer must express his ideas briefly and effectively. There should be economy of words to express meaning clearly and quickly. A short but effective writing can be popular for every reader because it saves time, energy and materials. Economy of words without losing the meaning is one of the best qualities of good writing.

#### **ii) Simplicity**

The second quality of a good writing is reduction of complexities and expression of ideas in a simple way. It avoids the extra stylistic words, ambiguities and so on. Simplicity and smoothness make writing understandable, readable and never confuses the readers in understanding the message of writing.

### **iii) Clarity**

A good writer should not add complications and should be plausible in his writing. The writing must be free from ambiguity and should also be explicit. The writer should have the idea of what to say and how to sequence the expressed thoughts.

### **iv) Continuity**

Continuity of thoughts is another important factor of a good writing. There should be continuity of thoughts from one word to following word, from one phrase to next phrase, from one sentence to another and from one paragraph to another paragraph.

### **v) Accuracy**

Writing is a permanent record of thoughts and ideas expressed by a writer. It should be accurate. Such a written piece should be free from lexical, syntactic semantic and grammatical error.

### **vi) Cohesion**

Cohesion refers to grammatical and lexical relationship with the different elements of a text. This is the relationship between different sentences or between parts of a sentence. So, there should good cohesion in writing.

### **vii) Coherence**

The term 'coherence' is also defined as the relationship which links the meaning of utterances in a 'discourse' or of the sentence in a text. These links may be based on the speaker's shared knowledge. The concept of coherence is a

semantic relation, which refers to the relations of meaning that exist within the text.

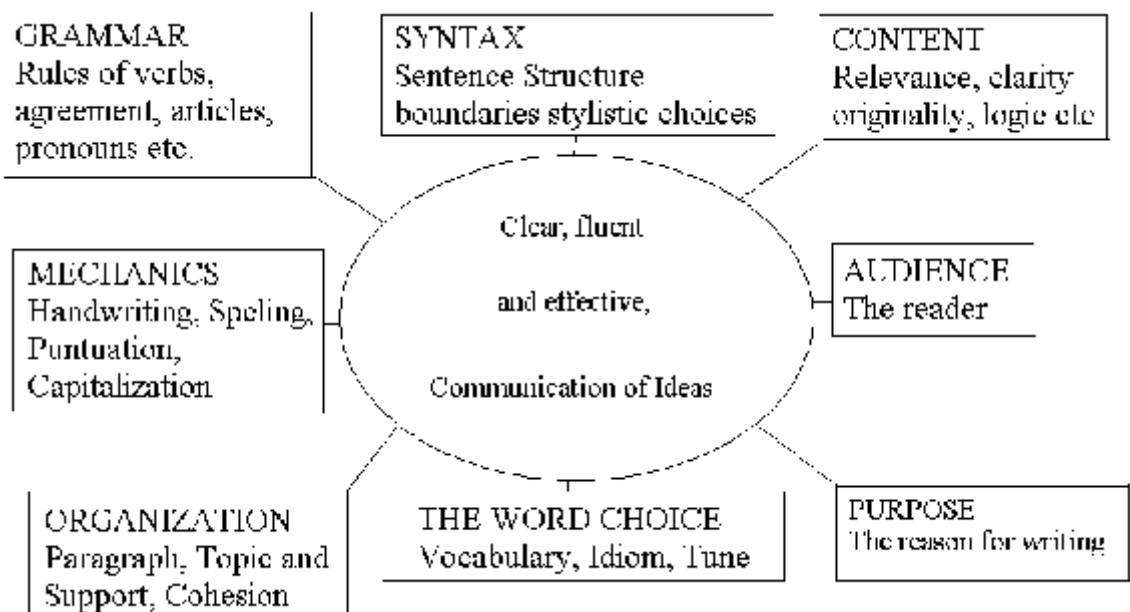
### viii) Organization

Organization plays a vital role in a piece of writing. The ideas expressed by the writer on any topic must be well organized. If a writer has written very effective and constructive ideas but not organized in a proper way, his writing becomes worthless. Organization has equal role in any composition that may be free or guided.

### 1.1.8. Essential Aspects of Writing

There is no one answer to the questions as to how to get mastery in writing because the answer may vary as there are teachers and learners. They have their own styles. Raines (1983, p. 6) says, "Writers have to deal with some aspects (as shown in the following diagram) to produce a special piece of writing.

**Diagram No. 1**



### **1.1.9. Mechanics of Writing**

Mechanics of writing refers to those aspect of writing such as capitalization, spelling rules and punctuation. It is also known as graphological system. It is very basic concept in writing process. The learners must have the sound knowledge of mechanics of writing. Bowen et al. (1985, p. 259) opine,

the mastery of mechanics of writing and practice in the basic skill are necessary first steps for child or adult learners. Under mechanics of writing, the learners should learn the alphabet, the left to right direction of English writing systems, upper and lower case, letters, rules of capitalization, basic spelling patterns of English and rules for words and sentences punctuation.

Use of capitalization refers to the correct use of capital letters. Knowledge of using capital letters is important for writing.

Spelling is to write the letters of a word in their correct order. Spelling plays a very important role since addition, omission or replacement of one letter with another can change the entire meaning of the word or of the whole message. Mastery of writing system requires the ability to spell, words correctly. In language like Nepali does not have many problems, because there exists one to one correspondence between sounds and letters. However, in some languages like English, the relationship between sounds and letters is very complex and therefore, mastery in spelling is needed.

Punctuation is one of the graphological devices of writing process. Speech has its suprasegmental features like pitch, stress, intonation and length, which help

to convey different kinds of meanings. These suprasegmental features like pitch, stress, intonation and length cannot be represented in writing. Devices like punctuation marks (capital letters, word and sentence boundaries, comma, questions mark, etc) are extremely used to help convey meanings or patterns of meaning. For example, in the sentences, it is unclear whether the brother went to the movies or stayed at home.

"I went to the movies with my mother and my brother and my sister stayed at home with my father."

By inserting comma, we can make the meaning clear.

e.g. I went to the movies with my mother, and my brother and sister stayed at home with my father.

### **a) Punctuation**

Punctuation is an art or system of inserting marks in writing in order to make the meaning clear. Harris (1993, p. 30) views "punctuation is an important aspects of written language. It is fundamentally means of marking boundaries and relationship between grammatical unit of written text." The punctuation marks are used to mark boundaries and relationships between words or sentences. They are used mainly to convey meanings and to make the expressions explicit. Good punctuation is essential for writing to be easily and rapidly understood. Unfortunately, it is much easier to check spelling than punctuation. A quick look into a dictionary tells us clearly and surely how a word may be spelled but there are no dictionaries for punctuation and no so more rules and guidelines. The punctuation marks include: comma, colon, semicolon, hyphen, full-stop, dash, slash, parentheses, quotation mark, question mark, exclamation mark, capital letter, apostrophe, line direction and space

between the words. Professional writers and editors make use of all these punctuation marks. The high school students and those who are learning English as a second language need to use all these punctuation marks. All these punctuation marks are briefly discussed below.

**i) Full stop (.)**

Full stop is the most common punctuation mark that is used to mark sentence boundary.

a) It is mainly used to mark the end of declarative sentences, statements, commands or indirect questions.

Example:

Manish and Saroj want to play volleyball. (Declarative)

Basanta has been carrying out a research. (Statement)

Open the door. (Command)

Lalu asked what my name was. (Indirect questions)

b) It is also used to mark after abbreviated forms of the words and initials.

Example:

M.Ed.

P.M.

P.R. Sharma

c) If the sentence ends with an abbreviated word, this abbreviated word uses the full stop.

Example: My brother works for Ac. Black and Co.

d) A series of full stops is used to indicate either an incomplete quotation or a break in speech e.g. the report said " All shops ..... should stay open ..... until six o'clock.



## ii) Comma (,)

Comma is relatively more difficult to be used. It is used to separate the items in a list of words, phrase, or clauses and question tag from the rest of the sentence. It helps to understand the meaning of a sentence. Some rules are given as follows:

- a) Comma is used to separate the items in a list of words, phrases, and clauses.

Example: Prakash bought a book, a pen, a ruler, a pencil and eraser from stationary yesterday.

- b) It is used before direct quotations and also inside closing quotation marks.

Example: Ram said, "What is your name?"

- c) It is used at a particular emphasis and contrast of dramatic effect.

Example: Finally, we won the contest.

- d) It is used between the independent clauses that are joined by coordinating conjunction. (but, end, or, nor)

Example: Ram opened the door, and Rita thanked him.

- e) It is used to separate the tag from the statement.

Example: Ram plays volleyball, doesn't he?

- f) It is used to separate an introductory or transitional word or phrase from the rest of sentence.

Example: In fact, Rajan doesn't even know his name.

- g) It is used with non-defining relative clause, which gives additional information about the noun in a sentence.

Example: Ram Kumar, who is an intelligent student in his class, is my nephew.

### **iii) Question Mark (?)**

Question mark is another mark of punctuation. It is used to close a question sentence. Some rules of using it are given below.

- a) It is used at the end of direct question, even if the question is made in a statement form.

Example: Where did Rajan go the day before yesterday?

You saw him?

- b) Generally, it is not used after a command or statement. But when the command is used to ask questions and has a rising intonation while speaking, the 'question mark' is used.

Example: Will you open the door?

- c) It is used after yes/no question

Example: Are you student?

- d) It is used after tag question.

Example: Ram eats rice, doesn't he ?

### **iv) Exclamation Mark (!)**

Exclamation mark is another mark of punctuation. Its uses are given below:

- a) It is used for sentences, which express strong emotion such as surprise, anger, joy, indignation urgency, enthusiasm, disbelief and so on. It may occur after one word or a few words or at the end of sentences.

Example: Hurray! I've got the job.

Alas! She died.

What a hot day!

- b) It is used for short order.

Get out ! I don't want to see you again.

**v) Quotation Mark (".....")**

- a) Quotation marks are used to separate words actually spoken by someone, from the rest of sentence.

Example: My daughter says her flat is "unfit for a dog to live in."

- b) It is used to give special emphasis to title, title of radio programmes and television shows, title of movies, plays, title of books and newspapers.

Example: The old man reads "Ramayan" everyday.

- c) Quotation marks are used in names of ships, houses, hotels etc.

Example: The "pines" was certainly an imposing house.

'The star of India' sails on Tuesday.

- d) Proverbs are marked off:

Example: "To error is human; to forgive divine" as Pope says.

**vi) Apostrophe (')**

In writing, an apostrophe shows possession or ownership of a person or an animal. It also shows contracted form of words or phrases.

- a) It is used to replace the omitted letters

Example: It's a monument.

Here it's is contracted form of "it is."

- b) It is used to signify possession or ownership of a person, an animal or an abstract noun.

Example: It was grandfather's seventh birthday.

- c) Noun having a special plural form (man, men, mouse, mice) to indicate possession.

Example: The women's conservation soon bored me.

- d) Names of shops and people's home.

Example: My Aunts' and uncles'.

### **vii) Colon (:)**

It is another device of punctuation. It is used in various ways.

- a) It is used for opposed classes, which are not connected by a conjunction.

Example: To err is human: to forgive is divine.

- b) A colon may be used to introduce a comment or explanation at the end of a sentence.

Example: My name was not on the pass-list: I was surprised.

- c) It is used to introduce a quotation of a speech.

Example: William Wordsworth says: "Child is father of the man".

### **viii) Semi-Colon (;)**

- a) It is used to join more closely two or more related statements, which are really complete sentences in themselves.

Example: The restaurant was empty; it was still early.

- b) It is used to separate a series of loosely connected clauses.

Example: I have no money to help him; my pocket is thin.

- c) It is used to mark off the main division in long sentences where there are many commas.

Example: The hunting knife, which had been sharpened to a fine-edge, was lying on the table glinting in the candle light, sinister, threatening; the sleeper's right hand rested, only inches from the jewel encrusted hilt; every few minutes.

### **ix) Dash (-)**

- a) Dash is used before or after a list if a collective word is used.

Example: We bought some crockery-cups, plates, saucers and dishes.

- b) Dash is used for a dramatic effect to introduce something surprising.

Example: Roger Toynbee was sitting upright in his leather chair-dead.

- c) A dash can indicate a pause or a break in speech.

Example: Then - then - I - saw - saw - it was terrible.

**x) Hyphen (-)**

Hyphen are used:

- a) to divide a single word because there is not a room for the whole of that word in the line.

- b) to join two separate words into a compound word.

Example: Mother-in-law, hill-garden, twenty-one

- c) to divide the words into syllables.

Example: Un-truth-full-ness Un-certain

- d) to distinguish meaning of words which have different meaning with and without the hyphen.

Example: re-form and reform

re-bound and rebound

**xi) Parentheses [( )]**

- a) It is used to separate extra information and comment from the rest of the sentence.

Example: Monalisha is gained from heaven (it was all wished) a friend.

- b) It is used to enclose cross-references.

Example: The title "introduction" (see on p. 1) gives us clear idea about writing skill.

- c) Brackets are used to marks off figures and translation of words.

Example: Our highest score (10 goals to nil) came in our last match.

All these punctuation marks, given above help learners to develop writing skill. The learners must know these marks in order to produce clear effective and correct writing scripts.

## **b) Capitalization**

Capitalization is a branch of mechanics of writing. Knowledge of where to use capital letters is important for writing. Some basic rules of capitalization are given below.

i) It is used in the beginning of a sentence.

Example: He is a lawyer.

ii) Initial capitals are used for proper nouns with the name of a person, place, day, month and festival.

Example: We celebrate Dashain in Ashoj or Kartik.

iii) It is used beginning of first word in each line of the verse.

Example: Tiger! Tiger! Burning bright, in the forest of the night.

iv) It is used in the beginning of each adjectives derived from proper noun.

Example: Chinese, Indian, Parisian and Roman.

v) It is used for all nouns and pronouns, which indicate deity.

Example: Ramchandra, He is the god.

God, the Almighty, Allah, the holy spirit.

vi) First letter of books, plays, films, newspaper and musical works.

Example: A look at Indian Architecture, The Daily Telegraph, She Stoops to Conquer.

vii) Initial capitals for a personal title plus a proper name.

Example: King George, Queen Elizabeth and Nurse Thempson

viii) Initial capitals for a personal title plus a proper name.

Example: Well, Doctor, is my father better?

The Secretary read the letter.

The Priminister broadcast to the nation.

ix) Capital letter is used for relationship word alone.

Example: I asked Aunt Alice.

I hope Uncle will not be too late because Grandmother is rather tired and so is Father.

Exception: Brother and sister are not used in this way.

### c) **Spelling Rule**

Writing is achieved by correct spelling of individual words. Spelling errors are nuisance to the reader. Slight change in spelling can bring drastic change in meaning. Robert (1985, p. 148) says "Spelling rules are frequently more concluding than the memorization of individual words." The phonological and orthographical 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, being a special branch of mechanics of writing, is mainly a mastery of convention.

However, there are some basic rules that can be helpful for correct spelling

i) If words of one syllable have vowel before the ending of a consonant the consonant letter is doubled when the suffixes: '-ing' and '-ed' are added

Example: hit- hitting, stop- stopped, begin- beginning

ii) If words of two or more syllable have one vowel before ending of consonant, the consonant is doubled while adding suffixes '-ing' '-ed' and so on.

Example: refer-referring

Befit-befitting, befitted

Some exceptions:

answer + ing - answering

orbit + ed - orbited.

iii) If words have two vowels before ending with a consonant, the consonant is not doubled while adding suffixes.

Example: join + ed - joined

lead + ing - leading

iv) If the words ending have a letter 'l' preceded or followed by a single vowel or two vowels, the letter 'l' is doubled while adding 'ly', 'ed' and 'ing'.

Example: cruel + ly - cruelly

some exception :

single + ed - singled

model + ing - modeling

v) If words ending have the letter 'e' following a consonant the letter 'e' is dropped adding suffixes: 'ed' and 'able'.

Example: love + ed - loved

move + ing - moving

move + able - movable

Exception:

dye + ing - dyeing

singe + ing - singeing

vi) A final 'e' is retained before a suffix beginning with consonant.

Example: hope + ful = hopeful

immediate + ly = immediately

Exception:

argue + ment - argument

due + ly - duely

vii) Words ending in 'ee' do not retain 'ee' before a suffix.

Example: agree + ed - agreed

agree + ment - agreement

viii) Words ending in 'y' following a consonant change the 'y' into 'i' before any suffix except 'ing'.



Example: carry + ed - carried

marry + es - marries

carry + ing - carrying

hurry + ing - hurrying

ix) Words ending in 'ce' the 'e' is changed into 'i' before adding 'ous'.

Example: grace + ous - gracious

space + ous - spacious

x) Words ending in 'ce' or 'ge' retain 'e' before suffix beginning with 'ous' and 'ful'.

Example: courage + ous = courageous

peace + ful = peaceful

xi) When 'full' is added to the words the second 'l' is dropped.

Example: beauty + full - beautiful

xii) Verb ending in 'y' following a vowel retain the 'y' before suffix.

Example: stay + ed = stayed, stay + s = stays

xiii) Verbs ending in 's', 'sh', 'ch', 'o', 'x' and 'z' are added with 'es' to change them into singular form (v<sup>s</sup>).

Example: Pass + es = passes

wash + es = washes

go + es = goes

watch + es = watches

xiv) Verbs ending except given in (xiii) add 's' to change them into singular form.

Example: eat + s = eats

talk + s = talks

put + s = puts

speak + s = speaks

xv) Adjectives ending in 'y' following a consonant change the 'y' into 'i' before adding suffix 'er' and 'est' for comparative and superlative degrees respectively.

Example: happy - happier - happiest

heavy - heavier - heaviest

xvi) Adjectives that are long (two or more than two syllables) take 'more' and 'most' for comparative and superlative degrees respectively.

Example: beautiful-more beautiful-most beautiful

xvii) Adjectives ending in 'e' add only 'r' for comparative and 'st' for superlative.

Example: large - larger - largest

nice - nicer - nicest

xviii) Noun ending in 's', 'sh', 'ch', 'x', 'o' and 'z' take 'es' for their plural counterparts.

Example: box + es - boxes

bench + es - benches

potato + es - potatoes

dish + es - dishes

bus + es - buses

Exceptions:

dynamo + s - dynamos

photo + s - photos

Radio + s - Radios

xviii) Noun ending in 'f'/'fe' add 'ves' to change them into plural forms.

Example: knife + es = knives, life + es = lives, calf + es = calves

Exceptions:

belief + s = beliefs

chief + s = chiefs

cliff + s - cliffs

proof + s - proofs

xx) Some nouns change their vowels while changing them into plural forms.

Example: man - men, woman - women

foot - feet, tooth- teeth

xxi) Some nouns always remain plural.

Example: trousers, jeans, glasses, binoculars etc.

xxii) Nouns ending in 'ics' always remain singular.

Example: politics, mathematics, ethics

xxiii) Some nouns are considered as plural themselves.

Example: police, cattle, people, public, clergy etc.

xxiv) Miscellaneous.

a) Any/some/no come before body, thing are gathered together.

Example: anybody, somebody, anything etc.

b) 'One' comes after 'any' or 'some' which are gathered.

Example: anyone, someone, no one

c) Noun and pronoun that come after any, some, no and every are separated to each other except body or things.

Example: any books, some books, no girl etc.

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

Many researches have been carried out on writing proficiency of students of different levels. However, not a single research has ever been carried out to find out 'proficiency of students in mechanics of writing'. But there are some researches, which are indirectly related to the mechanics of writing to some extent, at the Department of English Education of Tribhuvan University.

Karki, (1996) carried out a study on "Comparative study between the students of public and private school of grade ten in Lamjung district." He conducted the research on the students of grade ten in Lamjung district. The major findings of his study were that students of private schools had good vocabulary power and they were better in writing competency than the students of public school. Some of the students of public school could not write sentences in an

appropriate way. His study limited on the proficiency of the students in free writing only in secondary level of the single district.

Paudel, (1999) carried out a study on 'Comparative Study of Writing Proficiency in Higher Secondary School of Gulmi and Kathmandu.' He carried out the research on the students of higher secondary level of Kathmandu and Gulmi districts. The major findings of his study were that students of Kathmandu were found better than the students of Gulmi. They committed less graphological and grammatical errors than the students of rural areas. His study shows that girls had better proficiency than the boys in writing. This study was limited to the proficiency of the students of higher secondary level in guided writing.

Shah (2003) carried out a study on "Writing proficiency of grade nine students." He conducted the research on the class nine students. The major findings of the study were that students of grade nine were weak in using punctuation marks. They committed more errors in the use of comma than the other specific punctuation marks. His study was limited only to the proficiency of secondary level students in using punctuation marks. It had not covered other aspects of writing mechanics i.e. spelling rule and capitalization in detail.

Kafle (2007) carried out a study on "Proficiency in guided writing". He conducted the research on the students of grade ten in Kathmandu district. The major findings of his study were that students of grade ten scored better marks in parallel writing than the other types of guided writing. The proficiency of girls was found better than boys. In writing, students of private schools were found more proficient than the students of public school. His study was only limited to measure the proficiency of the grad ten students in guided writing. It had not covered any aspects of writing mechanics.

Kumar (2008) carried out a study on "Proficiency of grade six students in writing." He conducted the research on the students of grade six in Parsa District. The major findings of his study were that students of grade six were found satisfactory in writing. They obtained 55 percent marks in average writing proficiency of the boys was, comparatively, found better than the girls. His study was limited to the students of lower secondary level and their proficiency in guided writing. It had not covered other aspects of writing.

Pokharel (2008) carried out a study on "Writing Proficiency of Students from Different Ethnic Groups". He carried out the research on the students of grade eight in the Kathmandu district. The major findings of his study were that writing proficiency of Brahmin students was the best of all as they obtained 62 percent and the Tamang were the poorest. Most of the students were found weak in free writing than in guided writing and writing mechanics. His study was confined only to a single district, single level as well as ethnic groups. It had covered only the areas of spelling rule.

Although, all the four language skills are inseparable from the teaching learning process. The Nepalese people learn the English language for the literacy purpose rather than linguistic purpose. So they emphasize writing skill giving in high priority than other three skills. Therefore, it is necessary to emphasize on writing skill in Nepalese context.

Thus, this study was carried out to find out the proficiency in mechanics of writing. This study compare the proficiency in terms of districts, levels, gender and schools. This study differs from the other studies in its sample population, area of the study, topic of the study and statistical analysis of the data. This study focuses on the proficiency of students in writing mechanics and provides suggestions to improve of the proficiency in a balanced way in writing.

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

The objectives of the study are as follow:

- i) To find out students' proficiency in using mechanics of writing.
- ii) To compare proficiency of the students in term of level, school, district, gender and item.
- iii) To suggest some pedagogical implications.

### **1.4. Significance of the study**

The study is expected to be significant for the subject experts, syllabus designers. They will use the findings of the study in order to in corporate the mechanics of writing in syllabi. Likewise it will be useful to the writers that they will include appropriate exercises based on the graphological devices in writing mechanics. They will also prepare their books error free by considering the importance of writing mechanics.

It will be also the great asset for the English teachers who are teaching in the remote or urban areas to take the finding of the study seriously in their English class and teach students giving high priority in mechanics of writing. It will be remarkable contribution to the areas of teaching writing skill. It would not be wrong to claim that this study will be beneficial to the interested persons who want to develop their writing skill in English. They will know the importance of graphological devices in writing and will try to develop proficiency on it.

Similarly, this study will be significant for material developers. They will prepare remedial course by considering the major findings of the study. It will be also useful to the researchers, in the Department of English Education, for the further study on writing skill and mechanics.

## **CHAPTER-TWO**

### **METHODOLOGY**

This section deals with methodology. The researcher followed the following methodology in order to achieve the objectives specified.

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

This study is basically based on data collected by the researcher from the field. Some reference materials were also used as secondary sources of data.

##### **2.1.1. Primary Sources of Data**

The research is mainly concerned with field study. The sources of data were the students of three levels (lower secondary, secondary and higher secondary) of Kalikot, Surkhet and Banke districts.

##### **2.1.2. Secondary Sources of Data**

The researcher consulted various books i.e. Bhandari (2005), Bowen (1985), Bynre (1993), Crystal (1992), Gautam (2008), Gordon (1978), Harmer (1992), Harris (1993), Kumar (1996), Richards (1985), Rivers (1968), Sapir (1978), Yule (1985) related to the topic in question. All these constitute the secondary sources of data for the study.

#### **2.2. Sample Population of the Study**

The sample of the study consists of the students of grade eight, ten and twelve of Kalikot, Surkhet and Banke district (90 from each district). The number of total sample was 270. Among them, 50 percent were the boys and 50 percent were the girls.

### **2.3. Sampling Procedure**

Three schools of each district were selected through purposive sampling procedure. Thirty students from each school were selected by using random sampling procedure. Among them, each level has ten students.

### **2.4. Tools for Data Collection**

The major tool for data collection was a set of test items. The test was of 100 full marks. The test items were based on mechanics of writing only. There were mainly three sets in single question sheet. They are given below:

- i) Set-A: It was based on punctuation. It carried 40 full marks. It included test items for the correct use of different punctuation marks.
- ii) Set-B: It was based on capitalization. Test items in Set-B were designed to find out proficiency of students in using capital letter. It carried 30 full marks.
- iii) Set-C: It was based on spelling rule. It included tests items about the spelling of the words. It carried 30 full marks.

An hour time was allocated for the test.

### **2.5. Process of Data Collection**

First of all, the researcher prepared a set of written test. Then he visited all the selected schools of three different districts. He requested the head teachers and class teachers for providing the class to administer the test. The students were selected and encouraged to perform better. Two students were allowed to sit on a bench so as not to let them copy each other's answer. They were carefully watched and explained the questions in case they did not understand. The researcher collected the answer sheets when the test was finished and thanked



them for their help. The answer sheets were carefully marked and the scores obtained by the students were analyzed.

## **2.6. Limitations of the Study**

The study had the following limitations:

- i) The population of the study was the students of only nine schools of Kalikot, Surkhet and Banke (three schools from each district).
- ii) The students were from eight, ten and twelve grades only.
- iii) The tools were limited to find out students' proficiency in mechanics of writing (punctuation, capitalization and spelling rule).
- iv) The study was based on two hundred and seventy students (90 from each district and 30 students from each school).
- v) The study focused only on the proficiency in mechanics of writing.
- vi) Nine public schools were (three from each district) selected on the basis of purposive sampling procedure.
- vii) Only the government aided schools were selected for the study.

## **CHAPTER-THREE**

### **ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION**

This chapter deals with the analysis and interpretation of data. The collected data using the test items from the students of different schools were analyzed and interpreted in terms of different variables like, districts, levels, gender; items etc. with the view to making the study more objective. The Analysis and interpretation have been carried out by using the simple statistical tools: mean and percentage.

The analysis and interpretation of data have been carried out under the following headings:

- 1. Overall Analysis of Proficiency of the Student**
- 2. Item-wise Analysis**
- 3. Level-wise Analysis**
- 4. Gender-wise Analysis**
- 5. School-wise Analysis**

#### **3.1. Overall Analysis of the Proficiency of Students**

**Table No. 1**

#### **Overall Proficiency of the Students**

Total Sample	Full Marks	Marks Obtained	Percentage
270	27000	14445	53.5%

The above table shows the overall proficiency of students in using mechanics of writing. Students (270) scored 14445 marks (53.5 percent) out of 27000 full marks. The proficiency of students was satisfactory.

### 3.1.1. Comparison of the Proficiency of Three Different Districts

**Table No. 2**

#### **District-wise Proficiency of Students**

S.N.	District	Full Marks	Obtained Marks	Percentage
1	Kalikot	9000 (90x100)	4410	49%
2	Surkhet	9000 (90x100)	4950	55%
3	Banke	9000 (90x100)	5130	57%

The above table presents comparison of proficiency in mechanics of writing of the students from Kalikot, Surkhet and Banke district. The full marks for each district was 9000 (90 students from each district and 100 marks questions). The total mark obtained by the students of Kalikot was 4410 (49 percent), students of Surkhet was 4050 (55percent) and students of Banke was 5130 (57percent). If we see the position, the students of Banke, Surkhet and Kalikot held the first, second and the third position respectively.

The overall analysis of the proficiency in using mechanics of writing of three districts shows that the students of Banke and Surkhet were nearly equally proficient but students of Kalikot were comparatively less proficient than the students of Banke and Surkhet.

The description above can also be shown in the bar diagrams as below:

### 3.2. Item-wise Analysis of the Proficiency

There were altogether three items where the first item was punctuation, second capitalization and the third spelling rules. In each item, the examinees were tested. By comparing their scores in all these items, it was found that the

highest proficiency was in capitalization and the lowest in punctuation. However, students' proficiency was not so remarkable in all of the three items

### 3.2.1. Analysis of the Total Proficiency of Students in Three Items

**Table-3**

#### **Total Proficiency of the Students in Punctuation, Capitalization and Spelling:**

Total sample	Obtained Marks								
	Punctuation			Capitalization			Spelling Rules		
	F.M.	O.M.	%	F.M.	O.M.	%	F.M.	O.M.	%
270	10500	4644	43	8100	5048	62.5	8100	4266	52.5

The above table shows the total proficiency of 270 sample students in punctuation, capitalization and spelling rules. The students secured 4644 marks out of 10800 (43.5 percent) in punctuation, 5048 marks out of 8100 (62.5 percent) in capitalization and 4266 marks and 8100 (52.5 percent) in spelling rule. Hence, the students in capitalization were found to be better than in punctuation and spelling rules. The students' proficiency in punctuation was found to be poorer than their proficiency in spelling.

### 3.2.2. Analysis and Comparison of Item-wise Proficiency of the Three Different Districts.

**Table No. 4**

#### **Item-wise Proficiency of the Students of Three Districts**

S. N.	District	Punctuation			Capitalization			Spelling rule		
		F.M.	OM	%	F.M.	OM	%	F.M.	OM	%
1	Kalikot	3600	1296	36%	2700	1566	58%	2700	1378	51%
2	Surkhet	3600	1692	47%	2700	1728	64%	2700	1458	54%
3	Banke	3600	1656	46%	2700	1756	65%	2700	1512	56%

The above table shows the analysis of proficiency on the basis of three different items of writing mechanics. Out of 3600 full marks, the students of Kalikot obtained 1296 marks (36 percent) in punctuation whereas the students of Surkhet and Banke obtained 1692 marks (47 percent) and 1656 marks (46 percent) respectively. The data proves that the student of Surkhet and Banke were more proficient in using punctuation marks than the students of Kalikot. The students of Surkhet were found to be the best in the use of punctuation marks. However, their proficiency is not remarkably more than those of student of Banke.

Out of 2700 full marks, in capitalization, students of Kalikot obtained 1566 marks (58 percent) whereas students of Surkhet and Banke obtained 1728 marks (64 percent) and 1756 marks (65 percent) respectively. The data shows that students of Kalikot were found to be nearly close to the students of Banke and Surkhet. The gap between the proficiency of the students of Banke and Surkhet was also not so remarkable.

Likewise, out of 2700 full marks, in spelling rule, students of Kalikot scored 1378 marks (51 percent), Surkhet scored 1458 marks (54 percent) and Banke scored 1552 marks (56 percent). Students of Banke were able to hold highest a position in spelling and the students of Kalikot were the poorest proficient in it. Similarly, the student of Surkhet was nearly equal to Banke.

In conclusion, Students of all districts were better in capitalization and spelling rules than in punctuation.

### **3.3. Level-wise Analysis and Study of Proficiency**

There are three levels of secondary education in Nepal. To find out level-wise proficiency of the students in mechanics of writing, students of grade eight from lower secondary level, grade ten from secondary level and twelve from higher secondary level were selected. By comparing the proficiency it was found that there was minor gap between different levels in some districts but remarkable gap in others.

#### **3.3.1. Analysis of the Total Proficiency of Three Levels**

**Table No. 5**

#### **Total Proficiency of Higher Secondary, Secondary and Lower Secondary**

Level	Total Sample	Full Marks	Obtained Marks	Percentage
H.S.L.	90	9000	5400	60%
S.L.	90	9000	4650	51.5%
L.S.L.	90	9000	4230	47%

The above table shows the total proficiency of the students from each level. The sample size of each level was 90. The higher secondary level students

secured 5400 marks (60 percent) whereas the students of secondary and lower secondary levels secured 4650 marks (51.5 percent) and 4230 marks (47 percent) respectively. The proficiency gap between higher secondary and secondary levels is more than the gap between secondary and lower secondary levels. The students of lower secondary level were nearly equally proficient to the student of secondary level.

### 3.3.2. Comparison of Level-wise Proficiency of Three Different Districts.

The following table is about the analysis of proficiency of different levels of Kalikot, Surkhet and Banke districts.

**Table No. 6**

#### **Level-wise Proficiency of the Students of Three Districts**

S.N.	Level	Kalikot			Surkhet			Banke		
		F.M.	OM.	%	F.M.	OM.	%	F.M.	OM.	%
1	H.S.L.	3000	1726	57.5%	3000	1770	59%	3000	1860	62%
2	S.L.	3000	1426	47.5%	3000	1620	54%	3000	1590	53%
3	L.S.L.	3000	1246	41.5%	3000	1470	49%	3000	1530	51%

The above table shows the comparison of the level-wise proficiency of three different districts. The proficiency of the students has been found to be increasing from the lower to higher level. The proficiency of the higher secondary level students of Kalikot district was 57.5 percent obtaining 1726 marks out of 3000 full marks. Like-wise, the students of Surkhet in higher secondary level secured 1770 marks (59 percent) and the students of Banke obtained 1860 marks (62 percent). Comparatively, Students of Banke displayed better performance than ones from Surkhet and Kalikot but students of Surkhet were found better than the students of Kalikot. The data shows a miner gap

between the proficiency of the students of three different districts in higher secondary level.

In Secondary Level, out of 3000 full marks, students of Kalikot obtained 1426 marks (47.5 percent), students of Surkhet obtained 1620 (54 percent) and students of Banke 1590 (53 percent) respectively. The students of Kalikot, in secondary level, were found the least proficient and the students of Surkhet were found most proficient.

In lower secondary level, out of 3000 full marks, the students of Kalikot district obtained 1246 marks (41.3 percent), the students of Surkhet obtained 1470 marks (49 percent) and the students of Banke secured 1530 marks (51 percent). The students of Banke scored highest marks in lower secondary level. Likewise the Students of Surkhet showed better performance than Kalikot. The proficiency of the students of Banke and Surkhet in lower secondary level was higher than the secondary level proficiency of the students of Kalikot district.

### **3.4. Gender-wise Analysis of the Proficiency**

Out of total sample population 50 percent were boys and 50 percent were girls. Their proficiency in using mechanics of writing is shown in the following table.

**Table No. 7**

#### **Gender-wise Proficiency of the Students**

S.N.	Gender	Total Sample	Full marks	OM.	Percentage
1	Boys	135	13500	7290	54%
2	Girls	135	13500	7020	52%



The above table shows the total proficiency of the boys and girls. The number of boys and girls was equal. The boys obtained 7290 marks (54 percent) out of 13500 full marks whereas the girls obtained 7020 (52 percent). Hence, the data proves that the proficiency of the boys is slightly higher than the proficiency of girls. However, there is the meager difference of 2 percent only which is statically not significant.

### 3.4.1 Comparison of Gender-wise Proficiency in Three Different Level

**Table No. 8**

**Gender-wise Proficiency of the Students in Three Levels**

S.N.	Level	Boys			Girls		
		F.M.	O.M.	Percent	F.M.	O.M.	Percent
1.	H.S.L	4500	2730	60.5	4500	2624	58
2.	S.L.	4500	2386	53	4500	2280	50
3.	L.S.L	4500	2130	47	4500	2146	47.5

The above table shows the proficiency of the boys and girls in lower secondary, secondary and higher secondary levels. The boys obtained 2730 marks (60.5 percent) out of 4500 full marks whereas the girls obtained 2624 marks (58 percent) in higher secondary level.

In secondary level, the boys obtained 2386 marks (53 percent) but the girls obtained 2280 marks (50 percent) out of 4500 full marks. Similarly the boys of lower secondary level obtained 2130 marks (47 percent) and the girls obtained 2146 marks (47.5 percent) in the same full marks.

The data proves that the boys were found more proficient in higher secondary and secondary level than the girls but in lower secondary level, the girls found better than the boys.

### 3.4.2 Comparison of Gender-wise Proficiency in Terms of District.

The following table is about the analysis of proficiency of Kalikot, Surkhet and Banke on the basis of gender.

**Table No. 9**

#### **Gender-wise Proficiency of the Student of Three District**

S. N.	District	Boys			Girls		
		F.M.	OM	Percentage	F.M.	OM	Percentage
1.	Kalikot	4500	2250	50%	4500	2206	49%
2.	Surkhet	4500	2476	55%	4500	2340	52%
3.	Banke	4500	2665	57%	4500	2476	55%

The above tabulated data shows that the boys and the girls of Kalikot district obtained 2250 (50 percent) and 2206 (49 percent) marks out of 4500 full marks respectively. Likewise, the boys and the girls of Surkhet obtained 2476 (55 percent) and 2340 (52 percent) marks out of 4500 full marks. Similarly, the boys and the girls of the Banke secured 2266 (57 percent) and 2476 (55 percent) marks out of 4500 full marks respectively.

Here, the data shows that the boys of Kalikot, Surkhet and Banke were more proficient than the girls of the same districts. But girls of Banke and boys of Surkhet are found equally proficient. Both the girls of Surkhet and Banke were found more proficient and better than the boys of Kalikot district. No

remarkable gap was found in the proficiency of the boys and the girls in all districts. So, the boys and the girls were found equally proficient.

### 3.5. School-wise Proficiency Analysis

**Table No. : 10**

#### **School-wise Proficiency of the Students of Different Nine Schools**

S. N.	Name of School	District	Full marks	O.M.	Percentage
1.	Saraswati H.S. School	<b>Kalikot</b>	3000	1526	50.8
2.	Badimalika H.S. School		3000	1388	46.2%
3.	Panch Dev H.S. School		3000	1504	50%
4.	Jana H.S. School	<b>Surkhet</b>	3000	1672	55.7%
5.	Amar Jyoti H.S. School		3000	1706	57%
6.	Bhairab H.S. School		3000	1522	50.7%
7.	Mahendra H.S. School	<b>Banke</b>	3000	1712	57%
8.	Navayani H.S. School		3000	1664	55.4%
9.	Magal Prasad H.S. School		3000	1740	58%

The above table shows the school-wise proficiency of nine different schools of Kalikot, Surkhet and Banke district. Out of 3000 full marks the students of Sarasawati H.S. School of Kalikot district, obtained 1526 marks (50.8 percent), the students of Badimalika H.S. School obtained 1388 marks (46.2 percent), and the students of Panchdev H.S. School obtained 1504 marks (50 percent). The student of Saraswoti H.S. School and Panchadev H.S. School were found equally proficient but the students of Badimalika H.S. School were found less proficient (4 percent) than other two schools.

Likewise in Surkhet, the student of Jana H.S. School obtained 1672 marks (55.7 percent), the student of Amar Jyoti H.S. School obtained 1706 marks (57 percent) and the student of Bhairab H.S. School secured 1522 marks (50.7percent) only. The data shows that the students of Amar Jyoti H.S. School Neware were found the most proficient and the students of Jana H.S. School were found nearly proficient to Amar Jyoti H.S. School but the students of Bhairab H.S. School were found the least proficient of all.

In Banke, the students of Mahendra H.S. School secured 1712 marks (57 percent), the students of Narayani H.S. School obtained 1664 marks (55.4 percent) and the students of Mangal Prasad H.S. School obtained 1704 (58 percent) marks. The data proves that the students of Mangal Prasad H.S. School were found the most proficient and the students of Mahendra H.S. School held the second position. But the students of Narayani H.S. School were found the least proficient.

In overall, the students of Mangal Prasad H.S. School of Banke scored the highest marks. The students of Amar Jyoti H.S. School Surkhet and the students of Mahendra H.S. School followed Mangal Prasad H.S. School Banke getting nearly equal marks. Likewise, the student of Badimalika H.S. School of Kalikot showed the lowest proficiency of all.

## **CHAPTER-FOUR**

### **FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATION**

#### **4.1. Findings**

The major focus of this research was to find out the proficiency of the students in mechanics of writing from different districts. The data were analyzed in terms of total proficiency, level-wise proficiency, gender-wise proficiency, item-wise proficiency and district-wise proficiency which was done using the simple statistical tools. The following findings were deduced after the analysis and interpretation of data:

- i. The finding of the study shows that the total proficiency of the students in mechanics of writing was found 53 percent. That was a satisfactory performance in writing.
- ii. Between three districts, the students of Banke were found the most and the students of Kalikot were the least proficient in mechanics of writing comparing to overall proficiency.
- iii. The proficiency of students in punctuation was found only 43.5 percent whereas their proficiency in capitalization and spelling rule was 62.5 percent and 52 percent respectively. That was poorer performance of students in punctuation than capitalization and spelling rules. Students of all districts got the highest marks in capitalization and the lowest marks in punctuation.
- iv. Between three levels, the students of higher secondary level obtained 60 percent marks whereas the students of secondary and lower secondary obtained 51.5 percent and 47 percent marks respectively. A remarkable gap was found between higher secondary and secondary level proficiency but

lower secondary level proficiency was found to be nearly equal to secondary level with minor gap.

- v. The proficiency of the students of Banke district displayed the highest performance in higher secondary and lower secondary level with 62 percent and 51 percent respectively but the students of Surkhet obtained the highest marks in secondary level with 54 percent. The students of Kalikot secured the lowest marks in all levels.
- vi. The proficiency level of boys was found a bit better i.e. 54 percent whereas 52 percent proficiency was found in girls. But there was no significant difference (2 percent) between boys and girls. The proficiency in higher secondary and secondary level was 2 percent difference between boys and girls but was equal (47 percent) in lower secondary level.
- vii. The proficiency of the girls of Banke and Surkhet was found higher than the boys of Kalikot district in overall.
- viii. The proficiency of the students of Mangal Prasad H.S. Nepalgunj, Banke was found the highest (58 percent) and Badimalika H.S. School Kalikot the lowest (50 percent).
- ix. 10 percent students were found so weak in using punctuation marks even in Banke and Surkhet too.
- x. 5 percent of the students in Banke and Surkhet were found excellent in mechanics of writing.

## **4.2. Recommendations**

The following recommendations are made in the light of findings of the study.

- i. Since the mechanics of writing was found neglected in teaching. So adequate attention related to this area should be given.

- ii. Effective training should be conducted to build up the teaching career of teachers, which may give newness to the students and increase the confidence of the teachers in teaching language skills.
- iii. Proficiency of writing mechanics needs to be tested frequently.
- iv. Use of punctuation marks should be emphasized.
- v. Correction can be one of the best techniques to improve competence in the mechanics of writing. Self-correction, peer correction or teacher correction can be applied considering the situation.
- vi. Since there is a gap between students of remote area and urban area, in the production of better proficiency, so to maintain the gap, schools of remote area should be provided with different facilities and instructional materials along with teacher training.
- vii. Students should be supported for providing educational materials or visual aids to develop writing skills.
- viii. Enough practice exercises about mechanics of writing should be provided in the course book.
- ix. Teaching load should be reduced, so that teachers can prepare their lesson plan, correct the students' homework and handwriting and develop the skills of using writing mechanics.
- x. The teachers should simultaneously give opportunities to both boys and girls.
- xi. Mechanics of writing is one of the important aspects of writing skills so enough attention should be given to it by the teachers and the students.
- xii. Above all, there should be a system of separate test items with suitable full marks to test the proficiency of students in writing mechanics in the examination i.e. S.L.C., Test.
- xiii. There may be several reasons behind the poor performance of students in writing mechanics so concerned authorities in the field of education, need

to pay a serious attention to bring these problems into the main focus and minimized them.

- xiv. Concept of writing mechanics should be begun from primary level upto higher secondary level.



## REFERENCES

- Bhandari, B.M. (2005). *Reading and Writing*. Kathmandu : Vidhyarthi Pustak Bhandar.
- Bowen, J., Donald, et al. (1985). *TESOL, Technique and procedure*. USA : New Bury House Publication
- Bynre, D. (1993). *Teaching writing skills*. London: Longman.
- Crystal, D. (1992). *Linguistics*. Harmondsworth: Penguin.
- Cowise, A.P. (1989). *Oxford advanced learner's dictionary of current English*. Calcutta : OUP.
- Gautam, C.M. (2008). *English grammar, composition and pronunciation*. Kathmandu : Gautam Parkashan.
- Gordon, I. (1978). *Practical punctuation*. London: Heineman Education Book Ltd.
- Harris, J. (1993). *Introducing writing*, Penguin Books Ltd.
- Harmer, J. (1992). *The practice of English language teaching*. London Longman.
- Kafle, C.L. (2007). *Proficiency in guided writing*. An unpublished M.Ed. thesis, Tribhuvan University, Kathmandu.
- Karki, H.B. (1996). *A comparative study between the student of public and privet school of grade ten in Lamjung District*. An unpublished M.Ed. thesis, Tribhuvan University, Kathmandu.
- Kumar, N. (2008), *Proficiency of grade six students in writing*. An unpublished M.Ed. thesis, Tribhuvan University, Kathmandu.

- Kumar, R. (1996). *Research methodology*. New Delhi: Sage publication.
- Niraula, R. (2008). *Ungraded nonstop writing as a tool to improve writing skill*. An unpublished M.Ed. thesis, Tribhuvan University, Kathmandu
- Nunan, D. (1989). *Designing tasks for the communicative classroom*. Cambridge : Cambridge University Press.
- Paudhyal, H.L. (1999). *Proficiency in writing skill in higher secondary school of Gulmi and Kathmandu*. An unpublished thesis of M.Ed. T.U., Kathmandu.
- Pokherel, R.C. (2008). *Writing proficiency of students from different ethnic groups*. An unpublished thesis of M.Ed., Tribhuban University, Kathmandu.
- Raines, A. (1983). *Technique in teaching writing*. Oxford : Oxford University Press.
- Rana, S.P. (1996). *Mesarment and evaluation in education*. Kathmandu : Vidharthi Pustak Bhandar.
- Richards, J. et al. (1985). *Longman dictionary of applied linguistics*. London: Longman.
- Rivers, W. (1968). *Teaching foreign language skills*. Chicago. University of Chicago
- Robert, W.H. (1985). *The writer's company*. U.S.A. : Little Brown Company.
- Sapir, E. (1978). *Language*. London: Granda Publication.
- Shah, L.M. (2003). *Writing proficiency of grade nine students*. An unpublished of M.Ed. thesis Tribhuban University, Kathmandu.

Sharma B.K. and Phyak, P.B. (2006). *Teaching english language*. Kathmandu : Sunlight Publication.

Sharma, G.P. (2008). *New English grammar*. Kathmandu : Shabdartha Prakashan.

Shrestha, R.K. (2007). *Speedy English grammar and composition*. Kathmandu : Vivek Prakashan.

Subedi, H.L. (2004). *English composition and grammar*. Kathmandu : Neema Pustak Prakashan.

Wood F.T. (1981). *Current English usage*. New Delhi : Delhi Publication.

Yule, G. (1985). *The of study of Language*. Cambridge University Press.

## **APPENDIX-B**

### **List of the Selected Schools.**

1. Shree Saraswoti Higher Secondary School, Thirpu, Kalikot
2. Shree Badhimalika Higher Secondary School, Raskot Kalikot
3. Shree PanchDev Higher Secondary School, Mama Kalikot
4. Shree Jana Higher Secondary School, Birendranagar, Surkhet
5. Shree Bhairab Higher Secondary School, Bhairabsthan, Surkhet
6. Shree Amar Jyoti Namuna Higher Secondary School, Neware, Surkhet
7. Shree Mahendra Higher Secondary School, Nepalgunj, Banke
8. Shree Narayani Higher Secondary School, Nepalgunj, Banke
9. Shree Narayani Higher Secondary School, Nepalgunj Banke

**Appendix - C****SCORING SHEET OF THE DIFFERENT SELECTED SCHOOLS****APPENDIX-C.1****SCORING SHEET OF JANA HIGHER SECONDARY SCHOOL****BIRENDRANAGAR, SURKHET**

S.N.		Higher Secondary Level		Secondary Level		Lower Secondary Level	
		Students	Total	Students	Total	Students	Total
		1-5 B. 6-10 G.		1-5 B. 6-10 G.		1-5 B. 6-10 G.	
1	Boys	St. 1	76	St. 1	66	St. 1	52
2		St. 2	76	St. 2	54	St. 2	50
3		St. 3	52	St. 3	62	St. 3	34
4		St. 4	84	St. 4	28	St. 4	58
5		St. 5	58	St. 5	68	St. 5	54
		Total	346		278		248
6	Girls	St. 6	30	St. 6	42	St. 6	64
7		St. 7	76	St. 7	58	St. 7	32
8		St. 8	72	St. 8	58	St. 8	44
9		St. 9	62	St. 9	52	St. 9	46
10		St. 10	46	St. 10	64	St. 10	54
		Total	286		274		240
		Grand Total	632		552		488
		Percentage	63.2		55.2		48.8

APPENDIX-C.2  
 SCORING SHEET OF BHAIRAB HIGHER SECONDARY  
 SCHOOL  
 BHAIRABSTHAN, SURKHET

S.N.		Higher Secondary Level		Secondary Level		Lower Secondary Level	
		Students	Total	Students	Total	Students	Total
		1-5 B. 6-10 G.		1-5 B. 6-10 G.		1-5 B. 6-10 G.	
1	Boys	St. 1	46	St. 1	60	St. 1	40
2		St. 2	48	St. 2	64	St. 2	40
3		St. 3	32	St. 3	50	St. 3	46
4		St. 4	76	St. 4	56	St. 4	54
5		St. 5	50	St. 5	54	St. 5	50
		Total	252		284		230
6	Girls	St. 6	36	St. 6	32	St. 6	50
7		St. 7	40	St. 7	40	St. 7	32
8		St. 8	78	St. 8	58	St. 8	52
9		St. 9	68	St. 9	56	St. 9	52
10		St. 10	48	St. 10	40	St. 10	50
		Total	270		226		236
		Grand Total	522		510		466
		Percent	52.2		51		46.6

APPENDIX-C.3  
 SCORING SHEET OF AMAR JYOTI HIGHER SECONDARY  
 SCHOOL  
 NEWARE, SURKHET

S.N.		Higher Secondary Level		Secondary Level		Lower Secondary Level	
		Students	Total	Students	Total	Students	Total
		1-5 B. 6-10 G.		1-5 B. 6-10 G.		1-5 B. 6-10 G.	
1	Boys	St. 1	40	St. 1	62	St. 1	52
2		St. 2	56	St. 2	68	St. 2	52
3		St. 3	72	St. 3	72	St. 3	50
4		St. 4	82	St. 4	30	St. 4	58
5		St. 5	48	St. 5	50	St. 5	52
		Total	298		282		278
6	Girls	St. 6	48	St. 6	54	St. 6	52
7		St. 7	54	St. 7	60	St. 7	54
8		St. 8	46	St. 8	60	St. 8	58
9		St. 9	84	St. 9	46	St. 9	50
10		St. 10	64	St. 10	66	St. 10	46
		Total	290		284		260
		Grand Total	588		566		538
		Percent	58.8		56.6		53.8

APPENDIX-C.4  
 SCORING SHEET OF MAHENDRA HIGHER SECONDARY  
 SCHOOL  
 NEPALGUNJ, BANKE

S.N.		Higher Secondary Level		Secondary Level		Lower Secondary Level	
		Students	Total	Students	Total	Students	Total
		1-5 B. 6-10 G.		1-5 B. 6-10 G.		1-5 B. 6-10 G.	
1	Boys	St. 1	82	St. 1	84	St. 1	54
2		St. 2	48	St. 2	34	St. 2	52
3		St. 3	66	St. 3	52	St. 3	62
4		St. 4	52	St. 4	70	St. 4	52
5		St. 5	60	St. 5	30	St. 5	58
		Total	318		270		278
6	Girls	St. 6	56	St. 6	50	St. 6	44
7		St. 7	48	St. 7	66	St. 7	52
8		St. 8	74	St. 8	72	St. 8	48
9		St. 9	78	St. 9	58	St. 9	52
10		St. 10	62	St. 10	38	St. 10	48
		Total	318		284		244
		Grand Total	636		554		522
		Percent	63.6		55.4		52.2



APPENDIX-C.5  
 SCORING SHEET OF NARAYANI HIGHER SECONDARY  
 SCHOOL  
 NEPALGUNJ, BANKE

S.N.		Higher Secondary Level		Secondary Level		Lower Secondary Level	
		Students	Total	Students	Total	Students	Total
		1-5 B. 6-10 G.		1-5 B. 6-10 G.		1-5 B. 6-10 G.	
1	Boys	St. 1	64	St. 1	76	St. 1	44
2		St. 2	50	St. 2	58	St. 2	66
3		St. 3	62	St. 3	64	St. 3	24
4		St. 4	68	St. 4	40	St. 4	64
5		St. 5	62	St. 5	54	St. 5	54
		Total	306		292		264
6	Girls	St. 6	42	St. 6	60	St. 6	62
7		St. 7	36	St. 7	54	St. 7	52
8		St. 8	66	St. 8	50	St. 8	50
9		St. 9	68	St. 9	46	St. 9	54
10		St. 10	80	St. 10	44	St. 10	48
		Total	292		244		266
		Grand Total	598		536		530
		Percent	59.8		53.6		53

APPENDIX-C.6  
 SCORING SHEET OF MANGAL PRASAD HIGHER  
 SECONDARY SCHOOL  
 NEPALGUNJ, BANKE

S.N.		Higher Secondary Level		Secondary Level		Lower Secondary Level	
		Students	Total	Students	Total	Students	Total
		1-5 B. 6-10 G.		1-5 B. 6-10 G.		1-5 B. 6-10 G.	
1	Boys	St. 1	74	St. 1	52	St. 1	52
2		St. 2	68	St. 2	36	St. 2	52
3		St. 3	58	St. 3	32	St. 3	42
4		St. 4	68	St. 4	56	St. 4	50
5		St. 5	58	St. 5	58	St. 5	40
		Total	326		254		236
6	Girls	St. 6	62	St. 6	60	St. 6	46
7		St. 7	48	St. 7	44	St. 7	54
8		St. 8	74	St. 8	56	St. 8	52
9		St. 9	76	St. 9	60	St. 9	54
10		St. 10	62	St. 10	52	St. 10	42
		Total	322		272		248
		Grand Total	648		526		484
		Percent	64.8		52.6		48.4

APPENDIX-C.7  
 SCORING SHEET OF SARASWATI HIGHER SECONDARY  
 SCHOOL  
 THIRPU, KALIKOT

S.N.		Higher Secondary Level		Secondary Level		Lower Secondary Level	
		Students	Total	Students	Total	Students	Total
		1-5 B. 6-10 G.		1-5 B. 6-10 G.		1-5 B. 6-10 G.	
1	Boys	St. 1	62	St. 1	48	St. 1	56
2		St. 2	54	St. 2	52	St. 2	32
3		St. 3	70	St. 3	56	St. 3	58
4		St. 4	70	St. 4	62	St. 4	44
5		St. 5	44	St. 5	44	St. 5	26
		Total	300		262		216
6	Girls	St. 6	58	St. 6	40	St. 6	28
7		St. 7	50	St. 7	38	St. 7	34
8		St. 8	56	St. 8	50	St. 8	60
9		St. 9	52	St. 9	42	St. 9	64
10		St. 10	66	St. 10	52	St. 10	58
		Total	282		222		244
		Grand Total	582		484		460
		Percent	58.2		48.4		46

APPENDIX-C.8  
 SCORING SHEET OF BADIMALIKA HIGHER SECONDARY  
 SCHOOL  
 RASKOT, KALIKOT

S.N.		Higher Secondary Level		Secondary Level		Lower Secondary Level	
		Students	Total	Students	Total	Students	Total
		1-5 B. 6-10 G.		1-5 B. 6-10 G.		1-5 B. 6-10 G.	
1	Boys	St. 1	44	St. 1	50	St. 1	32
2		St. 2	54	St. 2	34	St. 2	34
3		St. 3	54	St. 3	60	St. 3	34
4		St. 4	42	St. 4	42	St. 4	24
5		St. 5	66	St. 5	38	St. 5	34
		Total	260		214		158
6	Girls	St. 6	62	St. 6	40	St. 6	20
7		St. 7	60	St. 7	52	St. 7	32
8		St. 8	58	St. 8	56	St. 8	24
9		St. 9	52	St. 9	52	St. 9	12
10		St. 10	62	St. 10	46	St. 10	36
		Total	286		246		198
		Grand Total	546		460		356
		Percent	54.6		46		35.6

APPENDIX-C.9  
 SCORING SHEET OF PANCHADEV HIGHER SECONDARY  
 SCHOOL  
 MANMA, KALIKOT

S.N.		Higher Secondary Level		Secondary Level		Lower Secondary Level	
		Students	Total	Students	Total	Students	Total
		1-5 B. 6-10 G.		1-5 B. 6-10 G.		1-5 B. 6-10 G.	
1	Boys	St. 1	64	St. 1	38	St. 1	38
2		St. 2	76	St. 2	58	St. 2	34
3		St. 3	56	St. 3	44	St. 3	54
4		St. 4	58	St. 4	52	St. 4	44
5		St. 5	68	St. 5	52	St. 5	52
		Total	322		240		222
6	Girls	St. 6	54	St. 6	42	St. 6	42
7		St. 7	46	St. 7	58	St. 7	44
8		St. 8	62	St. 8	58	St. 8	46
9		St. 9	56	St. 9	36	St. 9	36
10		St. 10	52	St. 10	50	St. 10	38
		Total	270		244		206
		Grand Total	592		488		428
		Percent	59.2		48.8		42.8

## **APPENDIX-D**

### **Questionnaire**

Name :

Sex :

School's name :

Please attempt all the questions.

1. Q.No. 1. Rewrite the following sentences by putting suitable punctuation marks [comma (,), full stop (.), apostrophe ('), question mark (?), exclamation mark (!), colon (:), dash (--), hyphen (-), semicolon (;) and quotation mark (".....").

For example :

Are you a student

Answer : Are you a student?

- i) Ram bought two pens three notebooks and twenty one pencil.
- ii) Rohan asked what my name was
- iii) Hurray we won the match.
- iv) The hotel was good but expensive.
- v) Sujats wedding party starts at four o clock.
- vi) We bought some clothes shirts, pants and trousers.
- vii) it was it was I can't it was horrible.
- viii) They stayed inside it was raining.
- ix) If I were president I would develop my country.

- x) I met my mother in law yesterday.
- xi) Do you like playing volleyball
- xii) Sita says, "Are you student "
- xiii) He eats rice, doesn't he
- xiv) P R Sharma has passed MA.
- xv) if I were a bird, I would fly
- xvi) Sita come here.
- xvii) The boy who is wearing red cap is my brother.
- xviii) Do you know how to operate computer
- xix) What a beautiful girl
- xx) Its my house.

## SET 'B'

Q.No. 2. Rewrite the following sentences by putting capital letters where needed.

For Example

Ram lives in surkhet.

Answer : Ram lives in Surkhet.

- i) We studied french at our school.
- ii) Anil lives in biratnagar.
- iii) We celebrate dashain festival.
- iv) I was born in baishakh.
- v) People worship the god, ramchandra.
- vi) I like munamadan very much.
- vii) The minister spoke on the mass.
- viii) They reached at the to of mt. everest on monday.
- ix) American live nepal very much.
- x) ramesh is good boy.
- xi) oh ! they arrive.
- xii) I buy 'the rising nepal' most.
- xiii) Well, doctor, is my father better ?
- xiv) Christian read bible.
- xv) they always go to temple.



### SET 'C'

Q.No. 3. Join the following words with their parts.

For Example

write + ing = writing

i) put + ing =

ii) join + ing =

iii) carry + ing =

iv) love + ing =

v) carry + ed =

vi) hope + ed =

vii) move + able =

viii) grace + ous =

ix) beauty + full =

x) happy + est =

xi) knife + es =

xii) stay + ed =

xiii) agree + ed =

xiv) courage + ous =

xv) large + er =

*Thank you for your kind help and co-operation.*

## APPENDIX-A

### Comprehensive Chart

Marks Obtained by the Students of Different Districts and Levels in the Three  
Items of Writing Mechanics (Punctuation, Capitalization and Spelling rule)

Level	Kalikot			Surkhet			Banka	
	Punctuation F.M. 40	Capitalization F.M. 30	Spelling F.M. 30	Punctuation F.M. 40	Capitalization F.M. 30	Spelling F.M. 30	Punctuation F.M. 40	Capitalization F.M. 30
Boys (15)	268	326	288	294	320	294	330	330
Girls (15)	254	334	250	300	290	262	272	330
Total (30)	532	660	538	594	610	556	602	660
Boys (15)	198	256	262	304	292	248	272	300
Girls (15)	240	244	228	268	296	220	230	290
Total (30)	438	500	490	572	588	468	502	590
Boys (15)	172	210	208	282	272	214	242	280
Girls (15)	202	226	190	260	250	228	282	270
Total (30)	374	436	398	542	522	442	524	550
Total (90)	1296	1566	1378	1692	1728	1458	1656	1710

*Note :* The boys (15) and girls (15) of each district and level have 600 full marks in Punctuation and only 450 full marks is in Capitalization and spelling rule.