

CHAPTER- ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Over view

This research is carried out to find out the proficiency of basic level students in letter writing. This chapter contains overview, background of the study, statement of the problem, objectives of the study and significance of the study, delimitation of the study.

1.2 Background of the Study

Listening and reading are receptive skills where as speaking and writing are productive skills. Writing is a productive skill. By production it means to manipulate its mechanism, structuring them into sensible words or units in order to make the reader understand, the meaning of such complex effort. Writing enables the speaker to share ideas, arouse feelings, persuade and convince listener. It further helps to transmit human beings' accumulated culture from one generation to another

According to White and Arndt (1991, p. 21), "Writing is far from being a transcribing language into written symbols. It is a thinking process in its own right. It demands conscious, intellectual effort, which usually has to be sustained over a considerable period of time."

Writing is a complex process, which involves different processes such as generating ideas, discovering a 'voice' with which to write planning, goal setting, monitoring and evaluating what is going to be written as well as what has been written, and searching of language with which to express exact meaning.

Likewise, Harris (1993, p. 10), defines: "Writing is a process that occurs over a period of time, particularly if we take into account it sometimes extended periods of thinking that precedes creating in initial draft." In order to compose a

text, conscious mental effort of the writer is required. Byrne (1968, p. 1) mentions,

Not a great deal is known about individual methods of composing a text, but most people agree that it is neither an essay nor a spontaneous activity. It usually requires some conscious mental effort: we 'think out' our sentences and consider various ways of combining and arranging them. We re-read what we have written as a stimulus to further writing. Other common practices are making notes, drafting and revising. We may even write several versions of text before we are satisfied with the result.

Writing is a process in which some steps are followed while writing any text. Our writings are expected to impart the message to the readers. According to Khania (2005, p. 148) "Writing is not seen just as one of the language skills to be learned, but as an effective way for learners to generate words, sentences and even chunks to discourse." Writing involves the encoding of a message of some kind that is why it is said that we are writing for the readers. While writing a text, it is aimed at translating our thoughts into language. Generally our writing is read by others who try to decode the message because reading involves the decoding or interpretation of the message. But our writing is not always for a reader, for instance 'shopping list' is prepared for our purpose.

Writing is thought more difficult task although listening, speaking and reading skills are said to be pre-requisites to writing. Normally writing begins from copying and the ultimate goal of it is to compose creative writing.

1.2.1 Writing Skill

Writing is a medium of communication that represents language through inscription of signs and symbols. Correct grammar, punctuation and spellings are the keys in written communication. It is a productive skill which helps to

share our ideas through its script. According to Richards et al. (1990, p 10), “Written language is primarily transactional or message –oriented. The goal of written language is to convey information accurately, effectively and appropriately.”

Nunan (1989, p.36), defines:

Writing as the expression of ideas in a conservative way, according to the graphic s convention of the language, the ultimate aim of a writer at this stage is to be able to express him in a polished literary form which requires the utilization of a special vocabulary and certain refinements structures.

Writing is a powerful medium of transmitting thoughts, feelings, and ideas from past to present and present to future. That is why, it demands caution in using it. It is a transparent mirror which can represent our knowledge as well as experiences. Writing is the output of receptive skills.

The main purpose of writing is to enable the learners for free composition and creativity. Writing is not only the matter of transcribing language into written symbols. It is a thinking process in its own right. If we see the present context of Nepal, beginning i.e. Nursery to Ph. D level, a student’s proficiency is mostly measured on the basis of written examination. That is why; writing proficiency plays a vital role in securing good marks in the examination. High school students extensively use the written form of language. They make use of written language in their day- to -day learning activities. Writing is an art that provides learners chance to know and influence others. The goal of written language is to convey information accurately, effectively and appropriately. Writing skill is a complex process. It is one of the most important way of communication and it involves encoding of message includes the pedagogical and grammatical implication therefore, the pivotal aim of teaching to express their thoughts,

ideas and feelings. Writing is the final step, so it is taken that students who learn the English language cannot be perfect without the knowledge of writing skill.

1.2.2 Importance of Writing Skill

Writing is one of the important way of expressing our thought and communicating ideas and views to others. Some have the innate ability to put their thought in words. Writing is more beneficial, specifically for those who are emotional and do not express verbally. This tool allows them to express their ideas thought or their existing mental condition which may not be possible. People express themselves by writing novels, short story, biographies and even personal diaries etc.

Writing is the output of listening, speaking and reading. Bacon (1987) says "Writing attracts special importance because reading makes a full man, conference a ready man and writing an exact man. Writing is superior to other language skills because it has permanent quality. It is regarded as the visual representation of speech.

Some writers view that writing is neither an easy task nor a spontaneous activity. It is difficult to acquire. So, we should be very clear about our purpose in teaching it. Byrne (1968) highlights the importance of writing with following lines.

- i) Writing is often needed for formal and informal testing; even oral activities are being measured through writing in various circumstances.
- ii) 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 alone.
- iii) It has variety in the classroom activities serving as a break from oral work. It increases amount of language contact through work that can be set out of class.
- iv) It is essential medium of examination.

- v) It helps us to refine our ideas.
- vi) Psychologically, it ensures confidence in one's progress in the language.

In conclusion, writing has greater importance as compared to other skills of language. Hence, Writing is the final step, so it is taken that students who learn the English language can't be perfect without the knowledge of writing skill. Writing helps to solidify the student's grasp of vocabulary structure and the complements of the other skills.

1.3 Statement of the Problem

English language has been used as a global language for business, science, media, tourism, politics, diplomacy, education and so on. English dominates all the spheres of human life in many countries in the world. English language is taught as a foreign language in our country. It is taught as a compulsory subject in school level as well as campus level. There are four skills of language. Among four skills, writing is advanced and productive skill. Writing skill of school as well as campus level students is not satisfactory. The writing skill of community school is poor. The achievement of students in writing skill generally the institutional school students seem to be better than community school students. The community school students do not try to attempt free writing activities like letter writing, essay writing etc. Though they get just less marks in final exam, and their competence level is low. There may be plenty of reasons for this poor achievement but the present study is concerned with finding the proficiency level of the basic level students in letterwriting.

As the community school's students are weaker in English, the teachers as well as students hesitate to teach and learn free writing. But the consequence is that the students' achievement is not satisfactory. English test in grade eight is divided into two parts: written test consisting of 75 marks and practical test of 25 marks. The practical test is further divided into two sub-divisions: speaking test of 15 marks and listening test of 10 marks. Most of the students don't attempt these questions and some of the students attempt with blunder mistakes.

They sometimes include their mother tongue in their essay and letter. This is due to the lack of practice of students in writing activities

Most of the students are not familiar of the format of letters, contents, coherence and cohesion of the ideas. Some of them are weak in spelling and grammar and sentence structure. Even the teacher doesn't give more priority in free writing activities. The students are in confusion on formal and informal types of letters. They are able to write personal letters but they hesitate to write application, job application letters and letters to the editors etc. It is needed to carry out research on this topic. This research is carried out to find out proficiency level of basic level students in letter writing. The study was conducted in six schools Palpa district of Tansen municipality. The researcher selected six schools. Out of six schools, three schools were institutional and three from community schools. The total sample population of this study was sixty students. They were ten students from each school including five boys and five girls were the population.

1.4 Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study were as follows:

1. To find out the proficiency in letter writing of basic level students.
2. To list some pedagogical suggestions on the basis of the findings.

1.5 Significance of the Study

This study will be beneficial to those who are involved in the field of language teaching especially in ELT. This study will be relevant to the students, teachers, textbook writers, syllabus designers, examiners, researchers and other people who are directly or indirectly involved in the language teaching and learning activities. With the help of this study, one can get truer picture of free writing proficiency achieved by the students of grade eight students.

1.6 Delimitations of the Study

The study was conducted within the following limitations:

1. The study was confined to six schools, three from institutional and three from community school of Tansen, Palpa.
2. Students' proficiency in letter writing was measured.
3. Two test items; two topics in formal writing and two topics in informal letter writing were the tools of data collection.
4. The primary data was collected only from the test items.
5. The area of the study was limited to only sixty students of grade eight.
6. Out of many students of each selected schools only 10 students, five boys and five girls were the population of the study

CHAPTER- TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 Over view

This chapter consists of review of the theoretical literature, review of empirical literature, implications of the review for the study and conceptual framework.

2.2 Review of Theoretical Literature

The review of theoretical literature provides the concepts and theories related to the research. This research was about freewriting skill of the students. Free writing deals with component of writing skill, characteristics of good writing, stages in development of writing skill, procedures of good writing, letter writing, types of letters, the seven Cs of letters, planning a letter and parts of letters.

2.2.1 Components of Writing

Writing is often a long and painful process in which the final text emerges through successive drafts. Thus, writing is not merely an activity of encoding verbal thoughts in printed symbols but it is the combination of various components. In this context, Heaton (1975, p. 63) states that writing is not a single skill but it is the combination of the following components.

-) Mechanism
-) Coherence
-) Cohesion
-) Orthographic and para - orthographic text.

A. Mechanism

The mechanism of writing mainly includes the graph logical system in writing. It is a very basic concept in writing process. It includes some aspects of writing

such as spelling or alphabets, use of punctuation marks, use of capital and small letters, handwriting, use of abbreviations and numbers, spacing, format etc. If punctuations are wrongly used, they bring change in meaning. Although, incorrect spelling does not often prevent the understanding of written message, it can adversely affect reader's judgment. However, at times slight change in spelling of words can bring drastic change in the meaning they express.

Mechanics includes the following sub points:

- 1) Spellings or alphabets
- 2) Use of punctuation marks
- 3) Use of capital and small letters
- 4) Alphabetic and syllabic writing
- 5) Handwriting: printing style, simple cursive and full cursive.
- 6) Use of abbreviations and numbers
- 7) Format or layout of writing
- 8) Citation and references in format writing.

Emphasizing the importance of mechanism of writing, Bowen, et al. (1985, p. 254 as cited in Pandey , 2011, p. 7) says, “Mastery of mechanism of writing and practice in the basic skills are necessary in the first step for child or adult learners who do not write yet in any language.” Mechanics mainly includes the following three aspects:

-) Capitalization
-) Spelling
-) Punctuation

i. Capitalization

Capitalization is a matter of convention. Many of the conventions e.g. capitalization of the first of a word of the sentences, the pronoun ‘I’, the first letter in first word of quotation and so on are very familiar to us. Some capitalizations, however, are a matter of style rather than convention. While

capitalization for the stylistic purpose, writer usually does so to emphasize a key word or a concept.

ii. Spelling

Robert (1985, p.148 as cited in Dhakal, 2013, p. 6) says, “Spelling rules are frequently more concluding than memorization of individual words. Writing is achieved by correct spelling of individual words. Spelling error is nuisance to the reader.” So, spelling is mainly mastery of convention.

iii. Punctuation

Punctuation is an art of practice or system of inserting marks or paints in writing or printing in order to make the meaning clear. The punctuation marks are used to mark boundaries and relationships. Punctuations are used mainly to convey the meaning to make the expression explicit or unambiguous. The proper use of punctuation marks such as comma, colon, semi-colon, hyphen, full stop, dash, parenthesis, quotation mark, and apostrophe and so on help the writer to organize written language and clarify relation between words, phrases and clauses. The learners of English writing must know the basic use of above described punctuation marks in order to produce an effective, clear and correct written script.

B. Coherence

Coherence refers to the semantic relationship between sentences in a text or it refers to the relationship between an utterance and the meaning it conveys. The logical sense relation between lexical items in writing is referred to as coherence. Some of them are chronological order, spatial order, logical order, climax, comparison and contrast and so on.

Crystal (2003, p. 81) defines:

Coherence refers to the main principle of organization postulated to account for the underlying functional connectedness or identity of a

piece of spoken or written language. It involves the study of such factors as the language users' knowledge of the world, the inferences they make, and the assumptions they hold, and in particular of the way in which coherent communication is mediated through the use of speech acts.

C. Cohesion

Cohesion means intra-textual relations of a grammatical and lexical kind which knit the parts of a text together into a complete unit of discourse and which, therefore, convey the meaning of a text as whole. In simple words, cohesion refers to the grammatical link and lexical relationship between sentences in a text. Thus, the lexical connectedness between/among the lexical items and grammatical connectedness between/among grammatical items can be termed as cohesion. Therefore we can classify cohesion under two headings. They are grammatical cohesion and lexical cohesion.

a. Grammatical Cohesion

The connectedness of the grammaticality of a text refers to the grammatical cohesion. This can be obtained or introduced in a text by introducing grammatically cohesive devices. These devices are substitution, reference, determiners, sentence conjunctions or connectives and sentence adjuncts.

) Substitution

They are normally pronouns instead of nouns and phrase instead of clause.

e.g. She bought a rabbit. I like it.

They like the rabbit and so do I.

) Reference

References are who, whose, which, where etc.

e.g. The woman who is sitting under the tree is your sister.

Determiners

Determiners are the, this, that etc.

e.g. I met a woman. The woman was fat.

) Sentence Conjunctions/Connectives

Sentence conjunctions/connectives are because, because of, although, in spite of, despite, to, in order to etc.

e.g. The man was punished because of his guilt.

Although Ramesh is poor, he is honest.

She went to market to buy some pens.

) Sentence Adjuncts

Sentence adjuncts are however, therefore, on the other hand, moreover, furthermore, besides etc.

e.g. Rasmita is polite, helpful and generous. Furthermore she is talented.

b. Lexical Cohesion

The semantic connectedness of the lexical items or units in a text is referred to as lexical cohesion. It can be introduced by using some connectives and by repeating key words and sentences.

D. Orthographic and Para-orthographic Text

The orthographic system deals with linguistic system such as spelling, word, phrase, and clause. It refers to the text in general where there is no use of chart, picture, table, diagram etc.

On the other hand, para-orthographic texts can convey the same meaning more clearly and more precisely than orthographic texts. They save time and energy for the readers. Examples of para-orthographic texts include charts, diagrams, tables, maps etc. Students are required to change orthographic texts into para-orthographic texts and vice-versa. This activity helps to develop writing skill in a concise and accurate way.

2.2.2 Characteristics of Good Writing

Writing is not only the weapon to save our culture, traditions and share our ideas and thought from one generation to another but also the strategies to develop the nation by writing of scholars, imaginations, principles, facts and events of society. It is an art of using language but it is a very difficult task to write clearly and explicitly. Simplicity and directness are the most useful properties of good writing. But making a simple and clear piece of writing is difficult from the syntactic and semantic point of views. It requires good imagination and logical sequence of thoughts. In this context, Richards et al. (1985, p. 100) say,

Learning to write in first or second language is one of the most difficult tasks. It is difficult and lengthy process that one includes anxiety and frustration in many learners. Yet, good writing skills are essential to academic success and requirement for many occupations.

To be a good writing, there should be an attractive beginning, a well thought out development of ideas and stimulating ending. According to Richards, et al. (1986, p. 36), the essential characteristics of good writing are introduced as follows:

i. Economy

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

ii. Simplicity

Simplicity is the second quality of good writing. It avoids the extra stylistic words, ambiguities and so on. Simplicity and smoothness make writing

understandable and readable which never disturb the readers to understand the theme of writing.

iii. Clarity

A good writing should be clear. A good writer should not add complications in writing. Writing must be free from ambiguity and should be explicit. It should avoid exaggeration as well as self contradictory statements. The writer should have the idea of what to say and how to sequence the expressed thoughts. The concept of continuity of thought is based on the natural linkage of ideas. Such linkage should be maintained from beginning to the end.

iv. Continuity

Another important characteristic of good writing is continuity. There should be continuity of thought from one word to another, from one phrase to another, from one clause to another, from one sentence to another, from first paragraph to second paragraph and from one chapter to another. It should maintain standard from the beginning to the end.

v. Coherence

Good writing deals with one topic at a time. In a good piece of writing, all the sentences are closely related to the central.

vi. Complete

Good writing must be complete. It complete the topic as what it deals with, good writing avoids exaggeration and self contradictory statements.

Vii. Free from Errors

Writing is a permanent record of one's thoughts or ideas so, it must be accurate. Every written piece has to be free from lexical, syntactic, semantic and grammatical errors. Furthermore, a good piece of writing requires examples and illustrations to explain abstract and difficult ideas. Writing involves thinking, planning assembling, clarifying and organizing processes. These above

characteristics of good writing play a vital role in the free writing proficiency of the grade eight students. They should have the ability to write clear, economic, simple and continuous and error free sentences.

2.2.3 Stages in Development of Writing Skill

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

i. Copying

This is the first stage of writing. This stage is also called transcription. While the student is practicing copying, he should repeat several times what he is writing. Copying is essential and useful for the recognition and production of the letter shapes, for improving handwriting and spelling and for fixing the words and sentences firmly in their memory. In this stage the learner becomes familiar with many aspect of language discussing the significance of this stage of learning writing skill, Rivers (1968, p. 246) says,

As the student is copying, he should repeat to himself what he is writing. In this way s/he depends the impression on his mind of the sounds, the symbol represent and s/he has further repetition, practice of basic dialogue or pattern sentences. After s/he has some practice in copying accurately with correct diacritical and punctuation marks. S/he may continue to copy as an aid to memorization.

When a learner continues the copying activities, s/he learns the scripts of the target language, the orthographic rules and syntactic rules thoroughly.

ii. Reproduction

The second stage of writing is reproduction. In this stage, the student will attempt to write, without originality what he has learned orally and read in his text book. Reproduction is a bit more challenging than copying as the students have to remember the shapes of letters, words and sentences without reference to their written form. The method of dictating to the learner is effective for reproducing sentences. Furthermore, the teacher emphasizes writing and describing a picture or showing something. For it, the learner should understand the meaning of sentences.

iii. Recombination

The third stage of writing is recombination where the learner recombines learned skills in drills. It is a more appropriate way because learners rebuild on former experience and ideas writing. It is necessary to manipulate grammatical structure. The learners can substitute words, phrases or sentences expanding them more explicitly. The writing of drills not only gives valuable practices in accurate and correct construction of sentence but also consolidates what has been learned orally. Completing sentences using pictures, or alternative words, transforming sentences on the basis of given clues, substituting pronouns for nouns are some examples of recombination.

iv. Guided Writing

In this stage, students are given some freedom in the selection of lexical items and structural pattern for their written exercise, but they have to follow the given suggestions regarding the content. At this stage, the learners are given different types of exercise like summarizing or elaborating. They can include the partially modified words and phrases, or the inclusion of further information, can give practice in developing meaning within a framework. Rivers(1968,p.252) “In guided writing, the students will be given some freedom in the selection of lexical items and structural patterns for his written exercise, but within a framework which restrains him from attempting to compose at a

level beyond his state of knowledge.” The skeleton of a story or a dialogue may be supplied for the development of writing. But, students are not totally free because they have to follow the guided frame.

v. Free Composition

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

2.2.4 Procedures of Good Writing

Richard(1990) says, “Free writing is like warming up on a pitcher’s mound or hitting golf on a driving range or tossing a few basket before the real game begins.” There is no pressure because there are no rules and nobody is keeping score. In free writing, students are presented with a topic and they are free to write. Free writing involves the individual selection of vocabulary and structures, the length of composition and expression of personal attitude; however, the teacher may help the students in the collection of ideas, developing outlines, supplying some language materials etc. Free writing contains essay writing, story writing, writing letters of different types etc.

Writing essay is not an easy job. It basically requires the deep knowledge of subject matter along with the sound knowledge and skill of writing. While writing an essay, the following procedures or steps are to be followed:

i. Planning

Planning is the first step of writing composition. Here the writer has to specify the topic. So this can be called the specification of the topics on which the essay

is going to be written. The writer has to make a precise statement of what s/he is going to be written.

ii. Getting Ideas

It is the second step of writing. It is the step of collection and formulation of the ideas. The writer has to join down all the points he can think of on the subject. It means that the writer has to make a quick and short note including all the possible points. The points can occur in any order, i.e. the points can be disordered too. Narayanswami (2000, p. 51) says, “They may appear to be a disconnected series of points”.

iii. Organizing the Ideas

In this step, the writer has to arrange the points, headings collected, in order. The statement of the theme should be read carefully to find a pattern of development of the theme. The main heading should be supported by sub-headings and write them in proper order. Here, some necessary ideas can be added and unnecessary ideas can be elided.

iv. Preparing an Outline

In the third step, the main headings are properly ordered but sub-headings may or may not be ordered. In the fourth step, the sub-headings are properly ordered under the main headings.

v. Writing the composition

At last, the writer has to write the complete composition on the basis of the outline prepared. After completing the essay, the writer has to read through the draft and revise it, paying attention to clarity and grammatical accuracy. The final form of the essay should be clear and accurate.

2.3 Review of Empirical Literature

Every new task needs the knowledge of previous background, which can help and direct to reach the new target for finding out new things or ideas. There are

some research works carried out on writing proficiency by former researchers in the Department of English. They have been carried out in connection with the vocabulary, grammar, guided and free composition etc., but this research will be conducted on free writing which includes letter writing. There are several other research works carried out on language proficiency as well as writing proficiency by former researchers in the area of free composition, letter writing and grammar etc. The related literatures reviewed for the study are as follows.

Adhikari (2007) carried out a research on “Proficiency in Writing of Different Language Groups: A Comparative Study”. The main objective of her study was to find out the writing proficiency of different language groups i.e. Nepali, Newari, Tharu, Magar and Kami. She found that writing proficiency of the students of five language groups studying in grade nine in the public school of Kathmandu district was good. Newar students had the better writing proficiency than the students of other language groups. Kami students were the weakest in writing proficiency.

Sitaula (2008) carried out a research on “A Comparative Study on Students’ Proficiency in Free and Guided Writing”. The objective of this study was to find out the English writing proficiency of the students in free and guided writing. The researcher found that the students’ proficiency was better in guided writing than in free writing.

Subedi (2008) carried out a research on “Proficiency in Writing Skill; a case of Letters”. The objective of this study was to find out the grade nine students’ proficiency in personal letter condolence and sympathy letters. The researcher found that the overall proficiency of grade nine students in letter writing was found to be satisfactory as they secured 61.55% of the marks. The students were quite proficient in letter writing. The students showed better performance in writing personal letter than the sympathy or condolence letter.

Pokhrel (2008) carried out a research on “Writing Proficiency of Students from Different Ethnic Groups”. The objective of this research was to find out and

compare the students' proficiency in using mechanics of writing in terms of different ethnic groups. He found that the Hill-Brahmin students possess the highest writing proficiency and the Tamang students have the lowest writing proficiency. And writing proficiency of Hill-Brahmin students was found to be followed by 61.05%, Chhetri 55.25%, Newar 51.4%, Gurung 46% and Tamang 38.8%. He also found that most of the students were found weak to create their own sentences by free writing items.

K.C. (2009) carried out a research on "Writing Proficiency of Primary English Teachers". The major focus of this research was to determine the writing proficiency of PETs before and after ETTE training as to determine ETTE training in developing writing proficiency. The effectiveness of ETTE training was relatively better and more effective than other teacher training. Most of the teachers had improved their writing proficiency in post-test in comparison to pre-test such as in spelling, punctuation marks, use of capital letters etc.

Rijal (2009) carried out a research on "Grade Eight Students Ability in Essay Writing". The main purpose of this study was to find out the descriptive essay writing proficiency of grade eight students and compare their writing proficiency on the basis of public and private schools and boys versus girls. She found that the descriptive essay writing proficiency of the students of private schools was better than that of the students of the public schools. The proficiency of girls was better than that of boys in both private and public school.

Ghimire (2010) conducted a research on "A Study of Errors Committed by Grade Ten Students in Writing Personal Letters". The objective of this study was to find out the errors committed by the learners in writing personal letters. He found that both government and private schools had problem in writing personal letters. The students of private school had committed 32.7% errors and government school 67.20% errors. Generally they had committed 15 types of errors.

Parajuli (2012) carried out a research on “Guided Writing Proficiency of Grade Nine Students”. The objective of this study was to find out the writing proficiency on guided writing of grade nine students in Rupandehi district in term of paragraph writing, dialogue writing, essay writing, report writing, letter writing and picture description writing. He found that as a whole, the students were good in guided writing i.e. out of 50 marks they obtained 27.22 marks in average which makes 54.45 percent.

Dhakal (2013) carried out a research on “A Study on Proficiency of Grade Eight Students in Essay Writing”. The objective of her study was to find out the essay writing proficiency of grade eight students of Shankarnagar VDC, Rupandehi. The researcher found that the average proficiency of all the students in essay writing was 43.75%. And the writing proficiency of the students of private school was found better than the students of government-aided schools.

Parajuli(2013)carried out research on “Proficiency in Free Writing of Grade Eight Students”. The objective of this study was to find out the proficiency in essay writing and letter writing of grade students. The researcher found that the student were more proficient in essay writing than letter writing.

From the above description, it shows that a number of researches have been carried out in the area of writing proficiency focusing on different aspects and issues in different levels of language. But no researches have been carried out on the “Proficiency of Basic Level Students in Letter Writing”. Therefore, this research is different and unique as it attempts to find out the proficiency in letter writing of basic level students.

2.4 Implications of Review for the Study

The researcher has to review the existing body of literature on the related topic of the research. Literature review is an ongoing process that goes on until the research is complete. The researcher may review different books, journals, theses and online resources related to the research topic. Literature review helps the researcher in many different ways from the beginning to the end of the

research. In the initial stages of research, it helps us to establish the theoretical roots of our study, clarify our ideas and develop our methodology, but later on the literature review serves to enhance and consolidate our knowledge base and helps us to integrate our findings with the existing body of knowledge.

Reviewing literature can be time consuming, daunting and frustrating, but it is also rewarding. According to Kumar (2006, p. 30), the functions of the literature review are as follows:

-) It provides a theoretical background of the study.
-) It reviews the means by which you establish the links between what you are proposing to examine and what has already been studied. In other words, it helps you to refine research methodology.
-) Through the literature review to show how findings have contributed to the existing body of knowledge in your profession.
-) It enables to contextualize findings.

So literature review is a way of getting knowledge about the process of conducting a research. Literature review may not be a problem for an expert researcher who has conducted research many times. But, for a novice researcher who conducts research for the first time, it proves to be very helpful to review the existing body of literature in his/her related field. The literature review brings clarity and focus to our research problem, improves our methodology and broadens our knowledge base. Before starting the research, the researcher may be in a wonder about how to start. He may not have any idea about the topic of the research, procedures and its components. But if he/she reads other theses, books in the related area of the topic. He/she gets clear idea about how to begin the research. Literature review provides a guideline to the researcher. It broadens the mind of the researcher and provides him/her enough knowledge about conducting the research.

2.5 Conceptual Framework

Conceptual framework is the plan or idea on which the study is established. The concept of this research was generated due to the students are not proficient in writing, specially the students of community schools. To know the fact, the researcher collected some answer-sheets of first -terminal examination of class eight students of institutional and community schools. He found that most of the students of community schools' students were not appeared the free writing part. So, to get the in-depth knowledge, the researcher planned to conduct a research on letter writing topic. For this, he consulted various related books, thesis, articles and internet sources. Then he collected theories and principles which are listed in the following figure.

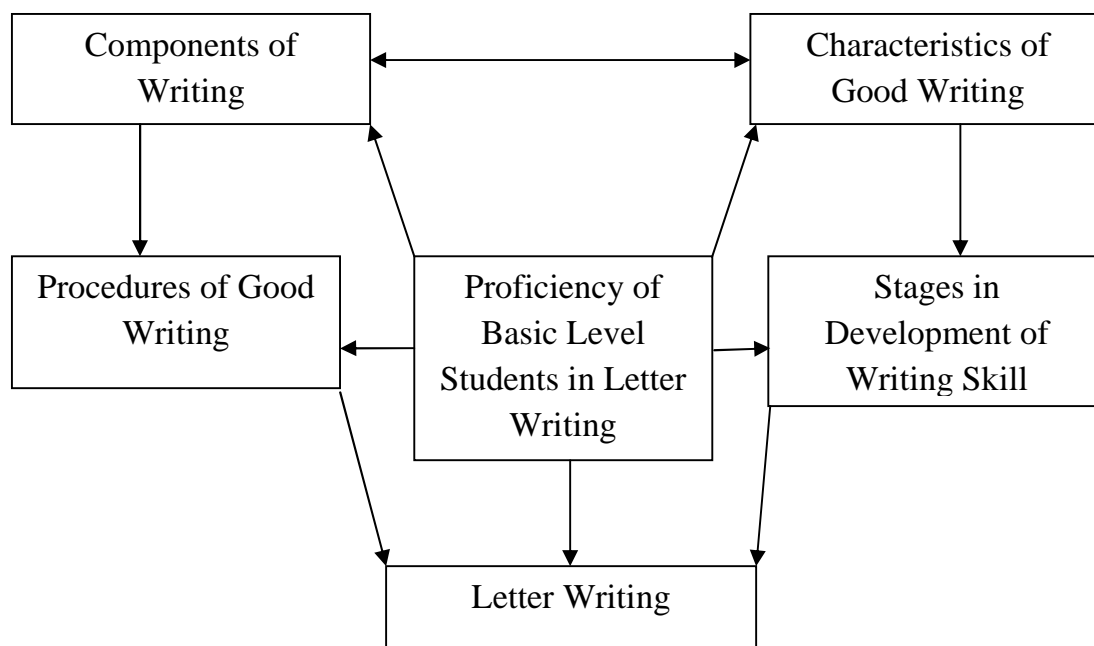


Fig. No. 1

2.6 Letter Writing

A letter is a communication between sender and receiver. It is a written message addressed to a person or an organization, usually in an envelope, and sent by post. It is a complete communication between friends, relatives and organizations. The information imparted by the letters should be clear and natural. The language and style differ from one letter to another. For instance, a

personal letter is normally written in personal and informal style; and it can consist of colloquialisms, slang and dialects as well. On the other hand, a business letter or an official letter is written in a formal and impersonal style.

Letter writing is an art. It is one of the most important factors of keeping personal and social relation alive and friendly. Letter writing is equally important for all the peoples and offices or institutions. There is no doubt that letter is the most widely used written form of communication. Telephoning and personal visit may not be possible all the times. They may be expensive at times, too. Therefore, letters are the best substitutes to convey message or keep in touch with one another and retain relations. Every letter has its specific audience and clearly defined and announced function. Letters can be both formal and informal and they can be used as a personal or professional means of communication. The purpose has to be clear to write effective letters, moreover, suitable formats, courteous and useful language makes the letter nice.

In letter writing, precision and clarity of meaning are extremely important. Time is a valuable resource, and precise communication helps save the time of the writer as well as of the recipient. People who value time and communication are bound to gain out of their effective communication skills.

Further, the reader creates an image of the writer or the organization through their letters. A good letter should make for effortless reading. It should be clear and concise, with short sentences and simple words. It should keep to the facts and be easy to read and understand.

Letter writing, with its many forms and uses, is an activity that is particularly advantageous for the following reasons:

-) The vocabulary and structures in the letter may be taken from the students' own learned material.
-) The letter may be short and simple in form and style, gradually increasing in length and complexity as the student's progress.

-) The letter writing assignments may vary according to type and style as selected by the teacher and the students.
-) The letters may be corrected and kept in the students' notebook for actual use as models later on.

In addition to these reasons for practicing letter writing early in the English language training, there is another even more pedagogically important reason to consider. Letters that are well-organized in form and content generally follow a pattern that is similar to basic composition writing. A well-composed letter, like a good composition in English, usually has three basic components:

- 1) A salutation, corresponding to the introduction;
- 2) A general message, corresponding to the body; and
- 3) A closing and signature, corresponding to the conclusion of the composition.

Usually letters fulfill the following functions:

-) They help to establish good will.
-) They provide essential information.
-) They prompt the actions.
-) They help extending business.
-) They create a favorable impression
-) They provide documentation.

2.6.1 Types of Letters

Letters can be of various natures depending on which the writer is writing to, why she is writing and from where she is writing. She may be writing just to know how about her friends or relatives, to some offices from her office, to business firms or customers. Depending on the various purposes, the letter may be different in type.

Generally, there are different kinds of letters. They are:

- a. Personal Letter or friendly letters.
- b. Official Letter
- c. Business Letter
- d. Letter of application
- e. Letter to Newspaper
- f. Letter to condolence
- g. Letter of invitation
- h. Certificates to a pupil

Personal Letter is written to person having intimate relation with the writer. It includes letter to friends and relatives. The official letters include letters from one office to another. Applications of jobs and letters to newspapers and so on are examples of official letters. The business letters are written while ordering for goods; while entering into business relations etc. letter of condolence is sincere sympathy expressed to close relatives of someone who has recently died, wishing the departed soul rest peacefully in heaven. Miscellaneous letters refer to notices, Circular letters, advertisements and government notifications.

a. Formal Letters

Formal letters are used in formal situations for particular purposes. The language style is formal, i.e. colloquialisms and slangs cannot be introduced in the formal letters. Most of the official and business letters are formal ones because these letters are written maintaining formality of the language. There must be formal relation between the sender and the receiver. Formal letters are normally short and clear. Official letters, business letters, letters of application, letters to the editor, etc. are the examples of the formal letters. They are practiced from one institution to another or from one office to another or from one organization to another, from one office to a person and from a person to an office.

b. Informal Letters

Informal letters are personal letters. Personal letters are written in friendly and informal language but the formality of the language is not supposed to be given importance. The language of the informal letters is simple, clear, conversational and familiar. The features of the conversational forms of the language can be introduced. They are practiced from one person to another such as relatives and friends who are normally close or known each other.

2.6.2 The Seven Cs of Letter Writing

To write an effective letter, one needs to understand the purpose of writing and then draft the letter, focusing on the reader's perspective. Formal letter should be clear, courteous, firm, and as friendly as the topic allows. The best letters have a conversational tone and read as if the reader is being spoken to.

According to Raman and Sharma (2012, p. 392), the following are the seven Cs of letter writing:

-) Clarity
-) Cordiality
-) Consciousness
-) Conviction
-) Correctness
-) Completeness
-) Courtesy

While writing a letter, we usually try to convince our readers or device a positive reaction from them. The readers will respond quickly only if the meaning is crystal clear and conveyed well. We need not attempt to present ourselves or our organization as perfect and flawless. Instead, by taking a stance and accepting responsibility, we may create a more reliable impression. .

The following points will certainly improve the letter writing skills:

-) Creates a favorable impression on the reader.

-) Appeal to the reader's point of view.
-) Write every detail comically.
-) Write letters in a courteous, friendly and sincere way.
-) Try to promote good will through the letter.
-) Write the letter clearly and completely.
-) Express the ideas concisely.
-) Maintain unity by holding the ideas together.
-) Make proper diversion in paragraphs.
-) Make least use of jargons.

2.6.3 Planning a Letter

Writing is serious business as it creates permanent records. As effective letters can accomplish their objectives effortlessly, they need to be properly planned and prepared. We need to determine the structure of the letter before we start writing. It is important to remember that by taking time to plan our letters, we save time in writing and proofreading them. According to Raman and Sharma (2012, p.408), the meticulous planning of formal letters involved the following four steps:

-) Being clear with the purpose
-) Understanding the message to be included
-) Knowing the reader
-) Deciding whether a response is required

a. Clarity of Purpose

We need to be clear in our mind about the main goal to be accomplished through our letters. If we write a letter to tell potential customers about our product, our purpose will not only be to inform them but also to persuade them to buy our product.

b. Audience Awareness

Before writing a letter we should ask ourselves, ‘Who am I writing this letter to?’ Are we writing it to a person known to us or to a new person? This kind of question will enable us to decide the degree of formality of our letters.

Identifying our readers is an important step in our planning process.

c. Deciding the Content

Depending on the purpose and the audience, we can decide the details to be included in the letter. As already mentioned earlier, the seven C’s of effective letter-writing should be kept in mind while planning the content of our letters. For instance, when we write a letter to an author to appreciate her book, we may need to start with a brief introduction of ourselves and then move on to congratulate the author for writing an excellent book. Then few salient points of the book that had interested to us can be mentioned. Finally, we can conclude the letter by congratulating the author once again.

e. Understanding the Need for Response

While planning our letters, it should be clear whether it is needed a reply from our readers and if so, it should be asked: What kind of reply is it? Is it an action to be taken, a policy to be implemented, an instruction to be followed or some details to be sent? These questions will enable us to decide the supporting details to be included in our letters.

2.6.4 Parts of Letters

A letter is a properly ordered combination of different parts. Each part has its own importance, but different types of letters have different parts. All the parts are not equally important and necessary for all the letters. The parts of the letter listed below are found in almost all types of letters even though some parts which are essential in business letters may not be used in personal ones.

However, the common parts of a letter are listed below:

- a. The Letterhead
- b. The Heading
- c. The Superscription (Inside Address)
- d. The Salutation
- e. The Body
- f. The Ending
- g. The Subscription (Complementary Close)
- h. The Signature
- i. The Postscript
- j. The Enclosures
- k. The Typist's Initial
- l. The Envelope

Letters can be of various natures depending on purpose of writing. Letter gives information to the receiver about the contents. Similarly a letter contains different parts which depend upon the type and purpose of writing letters; however, there are the following six points of forms which can be applied to almost all.

a. Heading

Heading is placed at the right-hand corner top of the letter, the address above and date just below it. This part informs the reader where (the writer's or sender's address) and when (the date on which) one wrote the letter.

b. The Salutation (Greeting)

The greeting depends on the relation in which one stands to the person one is writing to. It is placed at the left hand of the first page, at a lower level than the heading. For example: Dear father

c. Communication

Communication is the body part of a letter. It has the contents and purpose of letter to the receiver. It is the main part of the letter. It covers more part of the letter which illustrates contents to the receiver.

d. Subscription

Subscription is such polite leave taking word written below the last words of the letter, and to the right side of the page. The first word of the subscription must begin with a capital letter. The letter should not be ended simply with the writer's name, because this would look rude. So subscription is required to end letter. For example. Yours sincerely

e. Signature

Signature is done after the subscription which is written below it. The name of sender's can be written in signature. This part must be placed below the subscription

f. Superscription

Superscription is written in an envelope. It includes the senders and receiver's name and address. The sender's name and address is written in left side of an envelope where as receiver's name and address is written in right side of the envelope.

2.6.5 A Model of Formal Letter

A formal letter is an official way of communicating. It is written for formal purpose. It is broad and encompasses more specific categories. It includes an application letter, resignation letter, complaint letter, inquiry letter etc. A model of an application letter is presented

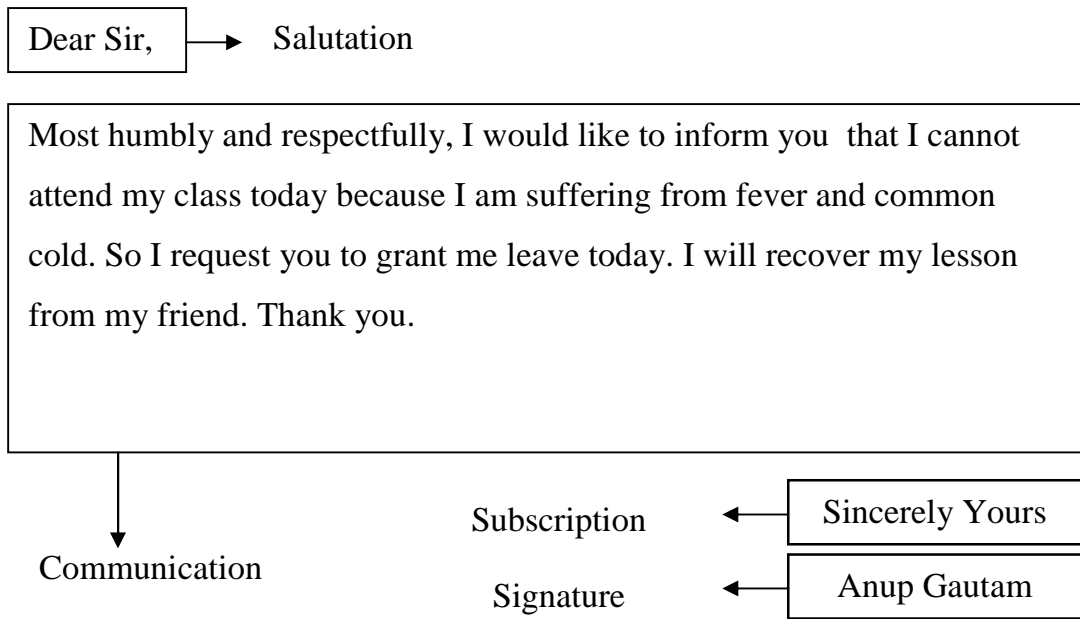
A letter to the principal asking for sick leave

Bhagawati tole, Tansen

To The Principal Palpa

New Horizon English Boarding School,

Tansen, Palpa



Grade Eight, Roll No.25

2.6.6 A Model of Informal Letter

An informal letter is a personal letter written to friends, relatives and other close persons. Informal letters are written from time to time to deliver good news to people or to inquire about their health or to convey a festival's greetings or even simply to maintain some contact with a person close to you. Informal letters also rely a lot on memories, shared secrets, humorous, moments of past and shared dreams and conversations. A model of personal letter is shown.

A letter to her friend describing about the festival of Lhosar.

Barangdi, Amandanda

Palpa

Jan 8 2017

Dear Sabina,

When I got your letter this morning, my happiness knew no bounds. As wished by you, I am going to give you a brief account of Losar, the New Year festival of Sherpas.

The word Losar is formed of two words Lo(year) and Sar(new) which mean New Year. Among the Sherpa community Losar is a great festival which falls in the month of Poush according to the Hindu calendar. This festival is observed by following the Manjushri tradition.

In this festival Sherpa people wish happy life among themselves. On this occasion they wear new fine clothes and enjoy grand merriment. They perform dancing and singing their traditional folk songs. They eat a special food containing different nine kinds of substances. They hoist their religious flags at the top of their houses. They also offer flowers, food and money to their Gods in order to please them.

In the end they scatter flour as a symbol of best wishes. I look forward to hearing from you.

Susmita

CHAPTER- THREE

METHODS AND PROCEDURES OF THE STUDY

3.1 Over view

This chapter deals with the methods and procedures of the study. The study was aimed at finding out the proficiency of basic level students in letter writing. The title of the study was “Proficiency of Basic level Students in Letter Writing.”

For this purpose the researcher adopted the following methods and procedures:

3.2 Design and Method of the Study

Since the present study was a qualitative study, the researcher designed the study selecting the required population for the study. The researcher selected six schools from Tansen municipality, Palpa using random sampling procedure.

Among them three were institutional and three community schools. Ten students from each school including five boys and five girls were the design of the study.

3.3 Areas of the Study

The areas of the present study were as follows:

) New Horizon Secondary School, Tansen, Palpa	10 Stds.
) Bethel Boarding School, Tansen, Palpa	10 Stds.
) Vrindavan Academy Secondary School, Tansen, Palpa	10 Stds.
) Padma Public Secondary School, Tansen, Palpa	10 Stds.
) Janata Model Secondary School, Tansen, Palpa	10 Stds.
) Devbani Sanskrit and Sadharan Sec. School, Tansen, Palpa	10 Stds.
Total	40 Stds

3.4 Sampling Procedures

For this research work, First the researcher selected six schools of Tansen, Palpa using simple random sampling procedure, three institutional and three

community schools. He randomly selected 10 students from each selected schools by using purposive random sampling procedure, five boys and five girls from each selected schools representing different ethnic groups.

3.5 Data Collection Tools

The major tool for collecting data of this study was interview with teacher, students and written test. Researcher prepared questionnaire of 40 marks and he took test which contained two test items to collect data from the students. Those were two topics for formal letter writing and two topics for informal letter writing, students were asked to appear test items of letter writing like personal letter, application letter, letter to the editor. They were free to choose any topics according to their convenience. No hints were provided to the students. The questionnaire was made on the basis of DLE set. The researcher evaluated those tasks in terms of coherence and cohesion, organization, format(address, date, salutation and subscription), contents (head, body, tail), correctness of language (spelling, grammar and punctuation) in letter writing.

3.6 Data Collection Procedures

The researcher adopted the following procedures to collect the required data. First of all the researcher visited the selected schools; New Horizon Secondary School, Bethel Boarding School, Vrindavan Academy Secondary School, Padma Public Secondary School, Janata Model Secondary School, Devbani Sanskrit and Sadharan Secondary School. Then he requested the concerned authority for the permission to take the test. Then he asked the help of the subject teacher to select the students using purposive random sampling. Then he conducted the test in a separate room after giving the required instruction to the students for the test. The test tasks were designed for one hour and fifteen minutes. The researcher administered the test in a school on a single day. After conducting the test, he collected the answer sheets and thanked the students for their co-operation. The same procedure was followed to collect the required data in other schools also. After collecting the answer sheets, he checked them on the

basis of the marking scheme given for the S.L.C exams and collected the required data for the research. The pass marks in this test was 3.5 (out of 10) or 14 (out of 40).

3.7 Data Analysis and Interpretation Procedures

The main objective of this study was to find out the proficiency in letter writing. Therefore the researcher used the simple statistical procedure in which he presented the obtained marks of students with their respective percentages. After then the collected data have been analyzed and interpreted using various analytical and statistical tools such as description and tabulation comparison.

CHAPTER- FOUR

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

4.1 Over view

This chapter is the core part of the research report. It deals with the results and discussions of the data obtained. So it is the main part of this research report which consists of all main aspects of the research study. The collected data are analyzed, interpreted and presented comparatively in holistic, gender wise, school wise, item wise and ethnic based respectively.

4.2 Analysis of interpretation

The discussion is divided into the following sub-headings:

1. Holistic Analysis
2. Gender-wise Analysis
3. School-wise Analysis
4. Item-wise Analysis
5. Ethnic-based Analysis

4.2.1 Holistic Analysis

Holistic analysis refers to the analysis of proficiency in letter writing of all selected schools. For this, the performance of the students of institutional and community schools was observed, analyzed and interpreted. The students were asked to write any two formal letter and two informal letters out of four which carried ten marks each. To make the scoring scientific and reliable, the mark was allocated on the different headings as given below.

Marking Scheme for Letter writing

) Format/Layout(Address, Date, Salutation, Subscription)	2 Marks
) Contents and Subject matter	4 Marks
) Organization/Coherence of Ideas	2.5 Marks
) Correctness of Language(Spelling, Grammar, Punctuation)	1.5 Marks
) Total	10 Marks

The students were given two types of questions on formal and informal letter writing. Each question carries 10 marks of total 40 marks of four questions. The answer sheet was checked on the basis of above marking scheme. The number of boys and girls were categorized into three levels (High, Mid, Low) on by the help of their score and percentage. High level students represents those students who scored above 60% score, middle level students represents such students who scored above 30% and below 60% and low level such students such students who scored below 30%. The students were categorized high, mid and low by their percentage. Answer sheets were evaluated on different aspects of letters such as proficiency on format of letter, contents/subject matter, organization/ coherence of ideas and correctness of language (spelling, grammar, punctuation) on the basis of CDC marking scheme. In holistic analysis. The students' proficiency was measured on these headings.

4.2.1.1 Proficiency in Format/Layout of Letter writing

To find out the proficiency of boys and girls in format or layout of letter writing, the number of boys and girls were categorized into three levels (high, medium, low) on the basis of the score. The performance of boys and girls is shown in the following table.

Table No. 1

Proficiency of Boys and Girls in Format/Layout

S.N.	Category	Boys	(%)	Girls	(%)	Total
1	High	17	56.67	18	60	35
2	Mid	11	36.66	8	26.67	19
3	Low	2	6.67	4	13.33	6
	Total	30	100%	30	100%	60

Source: Field Survey Report: 2073

The above table shows that the number of high level boys was 17, medium level 11 and low level 2. It covers percentage 56.67, 36.66 and 6.67 but girls number

of high level was 18 medium 8 and low 4 which cover percentage 60, 26.67, 13.33 respectively. The numbers of students in high level were more than medium and low.

4.2.1.2 Proficiency in Contents of Letter writing

To analyze and find out the proficiency of boys and girls in contents or subject matter of letter writing, students' knowledge in contents were checked whether they had written the subject matter related to the question or not. The students are categorized into three levels (high, medium and low) on the basis of score. To analyze the number and percentage of the students, the following table has been used.

Table No.2

Proficiency of Boys and Girls in Contents

S.N.	Category	Boys	(%)	Girls	(%)	Total
1	High	13	43.33	12	40	25
2	Mid	12	40	13	43.33	25
3	Low	5	16.67	5	16.67	10
	Total	30	100%	30	100%	60

Source: Field Survey Report: 2073

The above table shows that the number of boys in high level were 13, medium 12 and low 5. It covers percentage of 43.33, 40 and 16.67 respectively. The number of boys in high level were 12, Medium 13 and low 5. It shows percentage high 41.67 medium 41.67 and low 16.67. It is shown that boys and girls were similar in contents of letter writing.

4.2.1.3 Proficiency in Coherence/ Organization of Letter Writing

The table no. 3 shows the performance of boys and girls in coherence and cohesion of letter writing, the organization and coherence of writing. The numbers of students were categorized in to three levels on the basis of score percentage. The number of boys and girls are shown in the following table.

Table No.3

Proficiency of Boys and Girls in Coherence/ Organization

S. N	Category	Boys	(%)	Girls	(%)	Total
1	High	10	33.33	11	36.67	21
2	Mid	15	50	14	46.67	29
3	Low	5	16.67	5	16.67	10
	Total	30	100%	30	100%	60

Source: Field Survey Report: 2073

The above table shows that the number of boys is in high level 10, medium level is 15 and low level 5 only. It covers percentage high level 33.33, medium level 50 and low level 16.67. Similarly the numbers of girls in high level were 11, medium 14 and low 5. It carries percentage 36.67, 46.67, 16.67 respectively. The number of boys and girls were more in medium level than high and low. So the students were average in coherence.

4.2.1.4 Proficiency in Correctness of Language

To carry out the overall performance of boys and girls in the correctness of language, the student's proficiency in spelling, grammar and punctuation marks are evaluated. The number of students were categorized into three level (high, medium and low) on the basis of score which is shown in the following table

Table No.4

Proficiency of Boys and Girls in Correctness of Language

S.N.	Category	Boys	(%)	Girls	(%)	Total
1	High	14	46.67	9	30	23
2	Mid	12	40	15	50	27
3	Low	4	13.33	6	20	10
	Total	30	100%	30	100	60

Source: Field Survey Report: 2073

The above table shows that the proficiency of boys was better than girls in the correctness of language. The number of high level boys were 14, medium level 12 and low level 4 which cover 46.67%, 40% ,13.33% respectively where as number of girls high 9, medium 15 and low 6 which cover 30%, 50% and 20%. The students were of average level in the correctness of language in letter writing.

4.2.1.5 Overall Performance of the Students in Letter Writing

The table no. 5 represents the overall performance of the students. The researcher analyzed and interpreted their obtained marks and found the average marks. On the basis of the above marks, the researcher selected them above average and below average with percentage. It is shown in the following table.

Table No.5

Overall Performance of the sampled students

S.N.	Category	No. Of Students	Percentage
1	Above Average	32	53.33%
2	Average	–	–
2	Below Average	28	46.67%
	Total	60	100%

Source: Field Survey Report: 2073

The above table shows that the overall average score was 20.77 marks (out of 40). The number of students above average were 32 where as below average were 28. The percentage of students scoring above average was 53.33% and the below average was 46.67%. Most of the students below average were not able to write correct spelling, sentence patterns, format of letters and they were weak to construct ideas in English.

4.2.2 Gender - wise Analysis

Gender-wise Analysis refers to the analysis of the students on the basis of sex. Equal number of boys and girls were taken for the administration of the test from each selected schools for gender-wise analysis. The purpose of this analysis was to compare the boys' and girls' performances on the given tests and find out whether there were any differences in their performance in spite of the same environment.

4.2.2.1 Performance of Boys and Girls in Institutional Schools

To show the performance of boys and girls of institutional schools, the researcher analyzed their obtained marks and found average marks, percentage, the highest score and the lowest score which are given below in the table.

Table No. 6
Overall Proficiency of Boys and Girls in Institutional Schools

S. N.	Variables	No. of Stds	Total F.M. of each Stds.	Total O.M.	Average Score	Highest Score	Lowest Score
1	Boys	15	600	371.5	24.77	30	14
2	Girls	15	600	409	27.26	30	22
	Total	30	1200	780.5	26.01	–	–

Source: Field Survey Report: 2073

The above table shows that girls have done better performance than boys in letter writing in the institutional schools. The overall average of boys was 24.77 and girls' was 27.26(out of 40). The average score of institutional school's was 26.01(out of 40). The highest score of boys was 30 and the lowest score was 14(out of 40). Similarly, the highest score of girls was 30 and the lowest score was 22 Therefore girls were found slightly better than boys.

4.2.2.2 Performance of Boys and Girls in Community Schools

To show the performance of boys and girls of Community-based schools, the researcher analyzed their obtained marks and found average marks, percentage, the highest score and the lowest score which are given below in the table

Table No.7

Proficiency of Boys and Girls in Community Schools

S.N.	Variables	No. of Sts.	Total F.M. of each stds.	Total O.M.	Average Score	Highest Score	Lowest Score
1	Boys	15	600	242.5	16.17	24	8
2	Girls	15	600	223	15.53	25	8.5
	Total	30	1200	465.5	15.52	–	–

Source: Field Survey Report: 2073

The above table shows that boys have done better performance than girls in letter writing in the institutional schools. The overall average of boys was 16.42 and girls' was 15.53 (out of 40). The highest score of boys was 24 and the lowest score was 8(out of 40). Similarly, the highest score of girls was 25 and the lowest score was 8.5. Therefore boys were found slightly better than girls

It shows that girls were better than boys in institutional schools and boys were better the girls in community based schools. The reason for the better proficiency of the boys must be their sincerity, discipline and hard labor. In case of Boys of community schools, girls were not sensible in the organization of information. While I was administering the test items at every school, the boys were very active, curious to learn so they had high performance among all the students.

4.2.2.3 Overall Performance of Boys and Girls in Letter Writing

To find out the overall performance of the students, the researcher analyzed and interpreted their obtained marks and found the average marks, the highest marks and the lowest marks. It can be shown in the following table.

Table No. 8

Overall Performance of Boys and Girls

S.N.	Category	No. of Stds.	Total F.M. of each Stds.	Total O.M.	Average
1	Boys	30	1200	614	20.47
2	Girls	30	1200	632	21.06
	Total	60	2400	1246	20.77

Source: Field Survey Report: 2073

The above table clearly shows the total proficiency of boys and girls of the six selected schools of Palpa district of Tansen municipality. The average score of all students was 20.77(out of 40). The average score of the boys' was 20.47 and the girls' was 21.06 (out of 40). The percentage of girls was 52.67% and of boys was 51.17%. Therefore, girls' proficiency was found better than boys.

4.2.3School- wise Analysis

School-wise analysis refers to the analysis of the whole selected schools proficiency in letter writing.

For the comparison of all selected schools in letter writing proficiency, the students were compared in terms of passed students and failed students and the highest and the lowest scores obtained by the students. Equal number of students was taken from each of the selected schools. For this purpose, each of the students was provided with a question sheet consisting of two topics for formal writing and two for informal letter writing. They were free to choose any two topics carrying equal marks for letter writing. The researcher selected ten students (five girls and five boys) by using purposive random sampling procedure representing different ethnicity. It is shown in the following table clearly.

Table No. 9**Performance of the Selected Schools in Letter Writing
(Formal and Informal Letters)**

S.N	Name of the Schools	No. of Sts	Total F.M.	Total O.M.	Total Passed Sts.	Total Failed Sts.	Highest Score	Lowest Score
1	New Horizon Secondary School, Tansen Palpa	10	400	282.5	10	-	30	26.5
2	Bethel Boarding Secondary School, Tansen Palpa	10	400	255	10	-	29	17.5
3	Vrindavan Academy Secondary School, Tansen Palpa	10	400	243	10	-	30	14
4	Janata Model Secondary School, Tansen Palpa	10	400	188	8	2	24	10.5
5	DevbaniSanskrit and Sadharan School, Tansen, Palpa	10	400	174	8	2	25	11
6	Padma Public Secondary	10	400	103.5	1	9	14	8

	School, Tansen Palpa							
	Total	60	2400	4246	47	13	–	–

Source: Field Survey Report: 2073

The table above shows the total proficiency of 60 students (10 students from each of the selected schools, five boys and five girls) of three institutional and three community schools of Palpa district Tansen municipality. The table shows that 10 students from NHS School were passed. It shows 100% result. The highest score was 30 and the lowest score was 26.5 (out of 40). Similarly, out of 10 students from BBS School, 10 students were passed and none was failed in the letter writing proficiency test. The highest score of this school was 29 and the lowest score was 17.5 (out of 40). From VAS out of 10 students, 10 students were passed and none was failed. The highest score of this school was 30 and the lowest score was 14 (out of 40). Similarly, JMS School, only eight students were passed and two students were failed. The highest score of this school was 24 and the lowest score of this school was 10.5. Out of 10 students from DSS Secondary School, 8 students were passed and 2 students were failed. The highest score of this school was 25 and the lowest score was 11. In the same way, from PPS School, only one student was passed and 13 students were failed. The highest score of this school was 14 and the lowest score was 8. The table represents that out of 60 students, Passed number of students were 47 where as failed number of students were 13.

4.2.3.3 Performance of Students in Institutional and Community Schools

To carry out the proficiency in letter writing of basic level students, three institutional and three community schools of grade eight students of Palpa district of Tansen municipality were selected. The same set of test items were given to all the students. After analyzing, interpreting and tabulating the overall performance of the students, we can differentiate the writing proficiency on the basis of the institutional and community-based schools.

Table No. 10

Proficiency of Institutional and Community Schools

S.N.	Schools	No. of Stds.	Pass No. of Stds.	%	Fail No. of Stds.	%
1	Institutional	30	30	100	–	–
2	Community	30	17	56.67	13	43.33
	Total	60	47	78.33	13	21.67

Source: Field Survey Report: 2073

The table indicates that 30 students (out of 30) of institutional schools were passed in letter writing test and none was failed. The percentage of passed students was 100%. It shows that the performance of institutional schools was very good. Most of the students were familiarized with the format of letter writing, volume of writing, grammar, paragraphs, use of correct vocabulary and tense while few of them had written a paragraph instead of changing paragraphs while writing. They were poor in vocabulary as well as coherence and cohesion. And some of students were confused in salutation.

Out of 30 students from community schools, 17 students were passed and 13 students were failed. The percentage of passed students was 56.67% and the percentage of failed students was 43.33%. It shows that the students of community schools were poor in letter writing. There was great difference in the performance of the students in institutional and community schools. Most of the students from community schools were found poor at subject-verb agreement, vocabulary and tense. Due to limited vocabulary, they were not able to express their ideas in English.

4.2.4 Item-wise Analysis

For item-wise analysis, the number and percentage of the students in formal and informal letter writing proficiency were analyzed, interpreted. To show performance of boy's and girl's in formal and informal letter writing, no of

students total score, average score, average percentage, highest score and lowest score which are presented as below in the table

Table No.11
Proficiency of Boys and Girls in Informal Letter Writing

S. N.	Variables	No. of stds	F.M. of each stds.	Total O.M.	Average	Percent %	H.M.	L.M.
1	Boys	30	600	351	11.7	68.50%	15.5	4
2	Girls	30	600	318	10.6	53%	15.5	2.5
	Total	60	1200	669	11.15	55.75%	–	–

Source: Field Survey Report: 2073

The above table shows that boys' performance is better than girls in informal letter writing. The average score of boys was 11.7(out of 20) and girls was 10.6 which shows average percentage 68.50% and 53% respectively. The highest score of boys was 15.5 and girls' was 15.5 and lowest score were 4 and 2.5. It shows that boys are better than girls in informal letter writing.

Table No.12
Proficiency of Boys and Girls in formal Letter Writing

S.N.	Variables	No. of stds.	F.M. of each stds	Total O.M.	Average	Average %	H.M.	L.M.
1	Boys	30	600	311	10.37	51.85%	14.5	5
2	Girls	30	600	314	10.47	52.35%	15	5
	Total	60	1200	625	10.42	52.1%	–	–

Source: Field Survey Report: 2073

The above table shows that girls' performance was better than boys in formal letter writing. The average of boys' was 10.37 and girls' was 10.47 (out of 20).The average percentage of girls' was 52.35% and boys' was 51.85%. The highest score of boys was 14.5 and lowest score was 5 where as girls' highest score was 15 and lowest score was 5(out of 20).It shows that girls were better than boys in informal letter writing.

It clarifies that boys and girls were similar in formal letters like letter to the editor, application letter. They were of average level. The proficiency in informal letter writing, boys were better than girls. They were familiar with personal letter describing any local festival, letter to the family members.

4.2.5 Analysis on the Basis of Ethnicity

Ethnic-wise analysis refers to the analysis of the performance of the students on the ground of different ethnic groups. For this, students from different groups were selected by using purposive random sampling procedure while administering the test. Their performance was analyzed and interpreted.

Table No.13
Analysis on the Basis of Ethnicity

S. N.	Ethnicity	Total no. of Sts.	No. of Passed Sts.	Percent %	No. of Failed Sts.	Percent %	Highest Score	Lowest Score
1	Others	44	35	79.54	8	18.18	30	8
2	Janajati	13	10	76.92	3	23.08	29	11.5
3	Dalit	3	1	33.33	3	66.67	27.5	8.5
	Total	60	46	76.67	14	23.33		

Source: Field Survey Report: 2073

The above table shows that the majority of the students were other caste, then Janajati and at last Dalit. In regard of passed and failed students, Other caste students got the highest proficiency that is 81.83% success. Dalit students got the least proficiency that is only 33.33% success. Out of 3 Dalit students, only one student was passed. The highest score of the all students was 30 (out of 40) and it was secured by the student belonging to other caste. The lowest score was 8 (out of 40). It was obtained by the students belonging to other caste. The performance of the students of different ethnicity ranked in the given order: Other caste, Janajati, and Dalit.

It depicts that Other caste students got the highest proficiency. It means the students of this ethnicity were found studious. Janajati were of medium level. Dalit students got the least proficiency in letter writing. It means they have to be more serious towards their study. The reason of this least proficiency might be the effect of their family background, the time and environment for their study at home was very uncomfortable. So, they are not able to pay proper attention in their study.

4.3 Summary of findings

The study has the following findings:

1. The overall performance of boys' and girls' in format writing of letter was satisfactory. The number of boys and girls were more in high than medium and low. Among 60 students, 58.33% students had scored above 60% score in format writing of letter.
2. The students' proficiency in contents/ subject matter, they were of average level. Among 60 students, 41.67% students had scored above 60% score where as 16.67% students were of low level. They were weak in writing contents related to question.
3. The students' performance in coherence or organization of contents was not satisfactory. 48.33% students were of medium level in coherence and 16.67% were low level. they were weak in organization of contents.
4. The overall performance of boys' and girls' in the correctness of language was not better. The number of boys were more than girls in high level. 46.67% boys were of high level but 38.33% girls were of high level. as a whole 45% students were medium level and 16.67% were low level in the correctness of language.
5. The students were seen average in letter writing i.e. out of 40 marks they obtained 20.77 marks in average which makes 51.92 percent. The percentage of students scoring above average was 53.33% and below average was 46.67%. Most of the students below average were not able to write correct spelling, correct sentence pattern, format of letters and they were weak to construct ideas in English.
6. Among the students of six schools the students of NHSS obtained average marks 31.5 (out of 40) and the students PPSS obtained the average marks obtained 10.35. The average percentages were 78.12% and 25.87% respectively.

7. Among all the students, girls were seen most proficient than boys in formal letter writing. The average marks obtained by girls' were 10.47 which make 52.35% and boys' was 10.37(out of 20) which makes 51.85% respectively.
8. Boys were seen most proficient than girls in informal letter writing. The average mark obtained by boy was 11.7(out of 20) and girls' was 10.6 respectively. And the average percentages were 68.50% and 53% respectively.
9. The students were seen more proficient Informal letter writing in the comparison of Formal letter writing. In formal letter writing, the average mark obtained by them was 10.58 which make 52.52%. And in Informal letter writing, the average mark obtained by them was 11.15 which make 55.57%.
10. The proficiency in letter writing of the students of the institutional schools was found better than that of the students of community schools. Overall proficiency of the institutional schools was 65.05% and the community schools' was 38.8%. The average marks obtained by them were 26.02(out of 40) and 15.52 respectively.
11. The overall proficiency of the boys' was 20.47 and the Girls' was 21.47 (out of 40). In percentage, boys were 51.17% and girls were 52.67%. The proficiency in letter writing, girls were found better than boys.
12. In the institutional schools, the overall proficiency of the boys was 24.77and the girls was 27.27(out of 40) which make 61.92% and 68.17% respectively. It shows that girls were better than boys in letter writing.
13. In the community schools, the overall proficiency of the girls was 14.87 and the boys' was 16.17 (out f 40) which make 40.42% and 37.17% respectively. It shows that boys were better than girls comparatively.
14. As a whole in institutional schools, the students of NHSS were most proficient and the students of VASS were least. The average marks

obtained by them 31.25(out of 40) and 24.3.The average percentage were 78.12% and 47% respectively.

15. As a whole in community schools, The students of JMSS were most proficient and PPSS were least. The average marks were 18.8 and 10.35(out of 40) which contains average percentage 47% and 28.87% respectively.

CHAPTER- FIVE

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Over view

This chapter is devoted to the presentation the conclusion and recommendations of the study. It is presented in the following sub-sections:

5.2 Conclusions

The following conclusions were drawn from the analysis of the data.

1. The researcher found the students were seen average in letter writing. Most of the students below average were not able to write correct spelling, format of letters, structures and they were weak to construct ideas in English.

2. The proficiency in letter writing of the students of the institutional schools was found better than that of the students of community schools. The students of institutional school had written well formed structure, format of letters, contents in comparison to community school

3. The length of letter writing written by the students of community schools was shorter than the students of institutional schools. It shows that the students of community schools should increase their writing activities in the comparison of institutional schools' students.

4. The students in community schools were found poor at grammar, spelling and construction of sentences in comparison to the institutional school students. Some of the students from institutional school and many students from community school had not attempted the full task.

5. Letter writing proficiency of girls was found better in totality than boys.

6. In community schools, boys were found better than girls comparatively in letter writing. The volume of writing, grammar, contents of topic were better of the boys as a whole.

7. In institutional schools, girls were found better than boys in letter writing.
8. Among all the students, girls were seen most proficient than boys in formal letter writing.
9. Among all the students, boys were seen most proficient than girls in informal letter writing.
10. As a whole, students had seen more proficient Informal letter writing in the comparison of formal letter writing. The students were more familiar with personal letters than formal letters. They were able to write informal English than formal English used in letter writing.
11. In the case of ethnicity, the other caste students were seen most proficient. In regard of passed and failed students, The performance of the students of different ethnicity ranked in the given order: other caste, Janajati, and Dalit . The performance of the students of different ethnicity ranked in the given order: Other caste, Janajati and Dalit. It shows that dalit should be encouraged in study.

5.3 Recommendations

From this study, the researcher has provided the following recommendations and suggestions to policy related authority, practice related persons and administrations.

5.3.1 Policy Related

Policy level refers to the level from where the rules, regulations, conduction and execution of any issue of subject take place. The researcher found that the students of community schools are weaker than that of the students of institutional schools in writing letter-writing proficiency test. Because, in the institutional schools, all subjects except Nepali are taught in English medium but in community schools all the subjects are taught in Nepali medium except compulsory English. In the period of compulsory English, they also use the grammar-translation method which does not provide the students enough

exposure for learning English. In institutional schools, teacher focuses on the free writing part as well as guided writing and grammar. But, in the community schools, most of the students as well as teachers are also seen active for teaching and learning grammar and guided writing but they are seen passive in free writing especially in essay writing.

The following implications can be drawn from the research in policy level:

1. The students should be made habitual in letter writing activities. They should be given concept of letter writing of formal and informal types of letters.
2. To improve the students' free writing proficiency level, the government should make the policy that the students must be passed in free writing part to pass as a whole in English subject. In other words, free writing must be obligatory part in appearing exam. If this is not applied, the students should hold only the guided writing and grammatical part to pass in exam. Different model of letter writing should be included in textbooks.
3. In institutional schools, the teachers write model letters and students copy those writing then they read and read many times and try to write in their copy. It makes them like as a parrot and their learning becomes like a parrot-learning. So, this type of policy should reduce from the teachers as well as students concept.

5.3.2 Practice Related

The rules and regulations are made at the policy level but they become effective only if they are applied at the practice level. The research has the following implications in practice level:

1. Teacher should motivate and encourage their students in writing various kinds of texts.
2. English speaking environment should be created in every school so that students will be habituated to express their ideas in English. Model

writing on different topics should be presented to the students in order to encourage them in writing assignments

3. The students studying in community schools should be provided with more English environment. In the institutional schools, boys should be encouraged more and in community schools girls should be encouraged more to participate in writing activities.
4. The main concerned persons at the practice level are teachers, students and the guardians. Teachers help the learners to practice in free writing by giving some model writings and s/he should motivate the learners to be self dependent about their learning.
5. Teachers should also encourage the guardians to invest in providing the learning materials such as practice books, different essays and letters collections etc. Students practice to write text.
6. Likewise, the parents should also help their children by providing good environment for their study. So, these related persons at the practice level should be informed about the importance of fluent writing or writing free writing proficiency text.
7. Inter-schools and intra-school essay writing competitions should be conducted frequently to encourage them.
8. Teacher should encourage the students to write leave application, different job-applications and other kinds of personal letters which help the students to improve their letter writing proficiency.
9. The teacher should enter in the class with different format of letters to teach letter writing.

5.3.3 Further Research Related

No research is a complete research. After the completion of a research, there come many new things to be researched in the related areas. This research will not be an exception. This research will help other researchers in many ways. It provides them guidelines from the beginning to the end of their research work. It helps the other researchers in designing the conceptual and theoretical

framework of the research. It also helps them to formulate research hypothesis as well as state the problems of the research. So, this is not the final research on this topic, with the help of this research other researchers can also research something in modified form. The current research has the following implications for the further research:

1. Any other research which will be conducted about proficiency of students in different textual writing.
2. Other researchers are needed in searching the different activities and methods to improve the students of community schools.