

CHAPTER – ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 General Background

Language is the most widely used means of communication among people. It is especially human possession. It is the distinctive property of mankind because of which human being seems to be extraordinary and superior to all the species in this earth in every respect. It is defined as a system of conventional spoken or written symbols by means of which human beings as members of a social group and participants communicate in their cultural settings. Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary (2000,p.721) defines language as "The use by humans of system of sound and words to communicate" To Block and Trager (1942,p.5) "A language is a system of arbitrary vocal symbols by means of which a social group co-operates." Similarly, Encyclopedia Britannica 2009 defines language as "a system of conventional spoken or written symbols by means of which human beings, as members of a social group and participants in its culture, communicate."

Language is not an end in itself. It is a way of connection between souls, a means of communication. It has mainly two aspects, primary and secondary. Speech is primary and writing is secondary aspect of language. People speak when they express their ideas, opinions, desires, and establish social relationships and friendship. Generally, it does not take place in isolation. On the other hand, writing is far different from speech. It is secondary manifestation of language. It is the finest product and involves manipulation of structuring and communicating. Writing is conveying meaning through the use of symbols that represent a language. Language contains different skills. A skill means to do something well and expertly. Writing is one of the most important skills for learning a language. It is a productive skill, which

needs proper handling of the mechanics of writing to make sensible sentences and paragraphs. Writing is an activity by which we communicate with one another and transmit our culture, ideas and thoughts from one generation to another. It provides us chances to acquire other's ideas, feelings and thoughts. Among the four skills of language, writing is the output of listening, speaking and reading.

Generally, writing is the most difficult as well as an important skill in our context. The writing proficiency plays a vital role in securing good marks in the examinations. Writing is a means through which we can obtain knowledge and experience, and it can spread our knowledge and experience to others.

Thus, writing is an act of transmitting thoughts, feelings and ideas from past to present and from present to future. That is why, it demands caution in using it. It is a transparent mirror, which can present our knowledge as well as experiences. White and Arndt (1993,p.3) say

Writing is far from a simple matter of transcribing language into written symbols. It is an activity through which human being communicates with one another and transmits their accumulated cultures from one generation to another generation. It equally provides us with possibilities to discover and articulate ideas in many ways.

The English language before being English as the native language of the British residents in identity had to travel through different channels due to invasion from foreign elements such as vocabulary and structures. Factually, it is said to be originated from Germanic root (Tall, 1977) and need not be exaggerated in the context when the world trade and education sector along

with international ties have entered the sphere of globalization for better civilization in the view of the reality that English has already been adopted by millions of people as the international language under use as a lingua-franca. Since English is used by approximately more than 300 million people as the second language and other 300 million as the first language, it can be deduced that the use of English is not confined to a single field. It is now useful for the students who study abroad and also not less useful for the education in the countries like Nepal, where it is brought into use at university level. Many books published internationally are now in English, too. Its importance can be justified from the evolution history of this language and its domination over the foreign land from the long past itself. In this regard, it would be relevant to refer to what Tall(1977) states 'English is Germanic Language.' This root becomes evident here with reference to World Book Encyclopedia(1995,p.278) that states:

The earliest known language in what is now Great Britain was spoken by a people called, the Celts. The Romans started to conquer the Celts in 43 AD and ruled much of Britain until the early 400 AD when they returned to Rome. During this period, Germanic people who lived along the north of sea invaded Britain. The invaders belonged to three main tribes Angles, The Jutes, and the Jutes became known as English.

The widespread popularity and dominance of English community and its growing popularity due to its simple structure that enable foreign learners to catch up the language faster have contributed to the new attractions in the field of English learning in the educational institutes. The emerging nations like America and Britain along with other European and American countries

along with Australia where English is used as a first language are without break leading ahead in the educational and commercial sectors too.

The importance of the English language can be realized from the fact that globalization in the commerce and industry, international companies for services and manufacture, international level education exchange programmes along with the chances of job opportunities in the European and American world due to growing unemployment in the third world countries like Nepal, exchange of military expertise, peace keeping campaigns and force supplies to the nations passing by internal and international conflicts, need to making unity and supply of casual and subsistence aids by the United Nations due to natural and man made catastrophes, all force non-native English speaking population to take help of this language to tackle with the above mentioned conditions.

From the curricular perspectives in the field of language and literature, science and technology, in the field of geography and history, in the field of journalism and media and in all the disciplines of study in the current situations, most of the teaching / learning materials have been prepared in English. All international level information and data along with the researches take place in this language. The dominant and scholarly works of many subjects have been translated or written in English. Thus, in the current context in many countries that rely on English materials for study, trade and other transitions for survival, the individuals not having command over English are ranked as being uneducated or third grade citizens. In the countries like Nepal, India, Pakistan and such other countries, English speaking is symbolic to being highly educated. Even though regional and local dialects are being sought for their identity and movements for modernization of the local language is taking place in many countries,

advance studies and university level education is still being disseminated in English, since international studies are being introduced.

Chomsky (1959,p.211 as cited in Ellis 1992,p.28) says "the ability to learn language is innate". This stress on language learning as an innate capacity is borne by human species only; his focus would have been on the capacity of learning language which he does not mean that it is same as acquisition that the child acquires unconsciously, on the other hand learning is a conscious process that takes place under the guidance of a teacher or in a formal setting where input is artificially granted to the learners. Learning after all, is different from language acquisition as learning is output of the conscious study. Ellis (1992,p.87, as cited in Joshi 2004,p.79) states in this regard "Acquisition and learning are different" On the basis of processes, the term acquisition is used to refer to picking up a language through the exposure whereas the term learning is used to refer to the conscious study of a language.

People are wired to learn languages. In other words, imitations and linkages of learning components and situation are the influencing factors which determine the degree of speed of learning language. Under the wired conditions of learning, aptitude levels of the individuals that also differ from person to person, either bar or upgrade learning with varying speeds. These varying aptitude levels can be seen in the forms as, for some learners beginning days of learning may cause complexes such as resistance of the sound and unnatural ways of acting. Some learners seem to tolerate ambiguity and can catch up with the speed of learning. Similarly, some learners show greater intelligence and some learners show better aptitude to learn faster if learning is facilitated in the styles of their own interest but there are other types of learners who show slow intelligence or slow speed in learning the target language. While learning the target language learners

show a different kind of anxiety as they are not confident upon the forthcoming rules due to lack of exposure and practice as compared to the level of exposure of their L1.

Writing being secondary and dependent on speech makes use of graphic symbols to present spoken sounds. Richards et al. (1985,p.313) say, "Writing is a system of written symbols which represents the sounds, syllable or words of language." It means all languages of the world, which have their written form, use graphic symbols that represent spoken sounds. Byrne (1993,p.1) says, "The symbols have to be arranged, according to certain convention to form words, and words have to be arranged to form a sentence."

Writing uses not only linguistic resources but also makes us of graphological devices to the same time. Further, writing is a process and involves several elements. The writer follows a systemic approach. He thinks about the content, audience, purpose, grammar, lexis and overall organization of the text. At the same time, he also thinks and uses some graphological devices like punctuation spelling and rhetorical devices (Rivers; 1972,p.241)

Writing is an act of transmitting thoughts, feelings and ideas from 'up here' in the head to 'down there' on paper since writing is a thinking process in its own right, it demands conscious intellectual efforts. Thus, transmitting thoughts, feelings and ideas from past to present and from present to future is presented in writing. That is why, it demands caution in using it. It is a transparent mirror, which can present our knowledge as well as experiences. White and Arndt (1993,p.3) say, "writing is far from a simple matter of transcribing language into written symbols. It is a thinking process in its own." Similarly, Harmer (1991) says "Writing is an activity through which

human being communicates with one another and transmits their accumulated cultures from one generation to another generation. It equally provides us with possibilities to discover and articulate ideas in many ways."

1.1.1 Writing

Writing is conveying meaning through the use of graphic symbols that represent a language. Pictures also convey meaning in some way, but drawing pictures is not writing as pictures do not represent language units. Similarly, merely drawing letters, which represent the units of language, is not writing. An artist might draw Chinese letters without difficulty, but it is not writing unless he understands Chinese. Thus, writing is the partial representation of the language that the writer knows and that he uses to express his meaning to the people who can read it.

Writing can be looked at in two levels. In its simplest form writing can be the act of putting down something, which has been spoken in conventional graphic form. In this sense, writing is nothing more than the correct association of conventional graphic symbols with sounds, which have no significant importance for the writer. Writing, thus, is clearly much more than the production of 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 its highly developed form, writing refers to the expression of ideas in consecutive way according to the graphic conventions of the language. Writing involves encoding of a message of some kind or translating our thoughts into language in graphic form.

Writing, like speaking, is a productive skill. So it is more difficult than both listening and reading. Besides, writing is the secondary manifestation of language, speech being the primary one. Therefore, the teaching of writing

should follow that of the other skills. One should hear the speech sounds before he sees their graphic representation and one should see the graphic symbols before he writes them. Thus, the other three skills, viz, listening, speaking and reading, form the basis for this skill.

Byrne (1991,p.1) states that when we write, we use graphic symbols: that is letters or combinations of letters which relate to the sound we make when we speak. On one level then, writing can be said to be the act of forming these symbols: making marks on a flat surface of some kind. But writing is clearly much more than the production of graphic symbols have to be arranged, according certain convention, to form words, and words have to be arranged to form sentences, although again we can be said to be 'writing' if we merely making lists of words, as in inventories of items such a shopping lists. Rivers (1978,p.243) views it as, "Writing becomes a more complicated process when it involves putting in graphic form, according to the system accepted by educated native speakers, combinations of words, which might be spoken in specific circumstances (that is, which convey certain elements of meaning)".

Chastain (1976, quoted in Phyak and Sharma 2006,p.84) writes

The goal in writing is two fold. Psychologically students are more impressed by exercises that are to be written and handed in than by those that are to be learned. Realistically the teacher knows that writing homework exercises other written activities help the students to acquire the vocabulary and the grammar of the lesson. Practically the students' minimum contact with the language in the classroom must be expanded as much as possible. The overall objectives then will be to help the learners express their ideas in written form.

It has been remarked that writing is the most difficult of the language abilities to acquire. It is a skill in which we produce a sequence of sentences arranged in a particular order and linked together in certain ways. Munby, (2006, as cited in Phyak and Sharma 2006,pp.254-55) says. "It is a productive skill which involves manipulating, structuring and communicating. This can be further looked at in terms of sub skills of writing. The sub skills of writing are;

1. Manipulating the script of a language,
 - (i) forming the shapes of letters
 - (ii) using the spelling system
 - (iii) using punctuations
2. Expressing information explicitly.
3. Expressing information implicitly through
 - (i) inference and
 - (ii) figurative language
4. Expressing the communicative value of sentence and utterances.
5. Expressing relations within a sentence using,
 - (i) elements of sentence structure
 - (ii) modal auxiliaries
 - (iii) intra-sentential connectors.
6. Expressing relations between parts of a text through lexical cohesion devices.
7. Expressing relations between parts of a text through grammatical cohesion devices.
8. Using indicators in discourse for
 - (i) introducing on idea
 - (ii) developing an idea
 - (iii) transition to another idea

- (iv) concluding an idea
- (v) emplacing a point
- (vi) explanation of point already made
- (vii) anticipating and objection

9. Reducing the text through avoiding irrelevant information"

1.1.2 The Essential Characteristics of Good Writing

Writing is an art of using language. But it is a very complex task to write clearly and explicitly. In this context, Richards,(1990,p.100) says

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

Correct and effective writing in logical sentence structure is the most desired thing. Simplicity and directness are the most useful properties of good writing. In fact, making a simple and clear writing is difficult from the syntactic and semantic point of views. It requires good imagination and logical sequence of thoughts. The following is a short account of the main elements of good writing.

1.1.2.1 Simplicity

The second quality of a good writing is reducing the complexities and expressing ideas or thoughts in a natural way. It avoids the extra stylistic words, genres, jargons, flourishing and ambiguous words and so on.

Simplicity and smoothness make writing understandable and readable which never disturb the readers to understand the gist of the writing.

1.1.2.2 Clarity

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

1.1.2.3 Continuity

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

1.1.2.4 Economy

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

1.1.2.5 Coherence

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

1.1.2.6 Complete

A good writing must be complete. A good piece to writing completes topic it deals with. Good writing should avoid exaggeration and hyperbolically and self-contradictory statements.

1.1.3 Free from Errors

As writing is the permanent record of one's thoughts or ideas. It must be accurate. Every written piece has to be free from orthographic, semantic, grammatical, idiomatic, punctuation and other errors. Besides, every good writing must have examples and illustrations to explain abstract and difficult ideas and new information. There should be appropriate direction, adequate facts and figures, depth of knowledge, specificity and maximum objectivity in every piece of effective writing.

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

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

1.1.4 Stages of Development of Writing

There are different stages for developing writing skills. Rivers (1968,p.245) says "To be able to write in a foreign language, the student must be trained systematically throughout five stages of development: copying, reproduction, recombination, guided writing and free writing." Similarly, Rai (1998:79) say "Writing starts from copying and ends in free writing."

1.1.4.1 Copying

This is the first stage of writing, in which students are required to copy the model given by the teacher or in the textbook. Copying is essential and useful for the recognition and production of letter shapes, for improving hand writing and spelling and for fixing the words and sentences firmly in their memory. Letters to be copied should be given in contrastive pairs or groups such as d b p q, A X Y M W, C G O S U, etc. So that the students can see the finer distinctions and similarities between them. The teacher should get them to copy those words, phrases and sentences with which they are already familiar orally. The objective is to cultivate a good hand writing, the handwriting that gives no trouble for the reader to read. To achieve this purpose, attention should be paid to make sure that there is proper spacing and right proportion in size and that the lines are kept straight. Discussing the significance of this stage in learning writing skills, Rivers(1968 p.246) says,

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

1.1.4.2 Reproduction

At this stage students are required to write sentences that they have mastered orally from their memory without seeing a model. Reproduction is a bit more challenging than copying as students have to remember the shapes of letters, words and sentences without reference to their written form. This helps them to improve their memory. Here, too, attention should be paid to proper punctuation, size and spacing. The easiest form of reproduction is to ask students to reproduce the words and sentences they have copied without seeing the exercise book. Then they should be asked to reproduce the words and sentences they have memorized orally by means of drills, dialogues, etc.

1.1.4.3 Recombination

Recombination involves writing sentences that students have learnt previously with slight changes. Completing sentences seeing pictures or using alternative words given, producing drilled patterns with slight changes on some parts of them, transforming sentences on the basis of given clues, etc are some examples of recombination. Other examples involve producing sentences from a substitution table, expanding sentences to include given words or information, etc. This stage of writing is particularly useful to train students in manipulating language forms and to develop their ability to write correct sentences. Although recombination is more challenging than reproduction as it requires thinking on the part of the hearer, it is still mechanical as it focuses on the form of language rather than expression of one's ideas or personal meanings. Thus, recombination exercises are primarily for the manipulation of grammatical patterns rather than for the communication of new ideas.

1.1.4.4 Guided Writing

At this stage students are required to write sentences in combination to produce a text, keeping to the subject matter and guidelines given by the teacher. Guided writing exercises take various forms: they can be information-transfer exercises such as transforming information from a chart, table, graph, etc into orthographic texts, or may involve developing notes into coherent text, or can be exercises based on the texts that students have dealt with as part of their reading lesson, etc. Other forms of guided writing exercises would be a series of questions the answer of which can form a unified text, outlines that can be developed into the form of a text, a dialogue for the students to report, etc. To make students' transition from the strictly controlled writing exercises mentioned above (that is copying, reproduction and recombination) to much freer paragraph writing, teacher's guidance is necessary and guided writing serves this purpose.

To facilitate the process of guided writing, the teacher often provides guidance in the form of a short text as a model or by doing oral preparation. This reduces the chances of committing errors. However, guided writing has the limitation that it lacks creativity, for the learner expresses not the ideas that are of his own, but the ones given by the teacher.

1.1.4.5 Free Composition

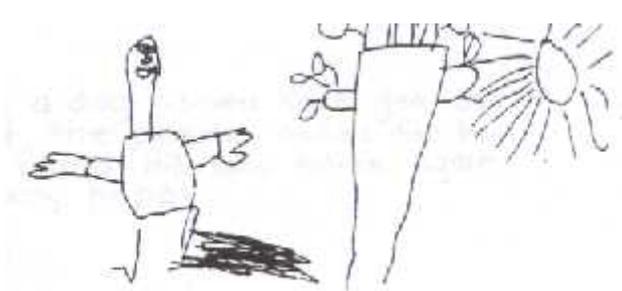
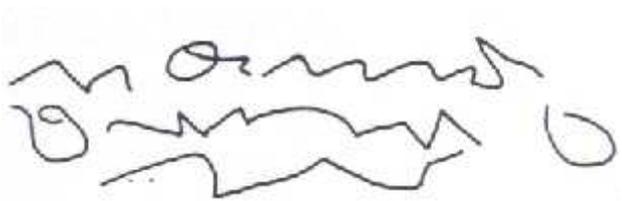
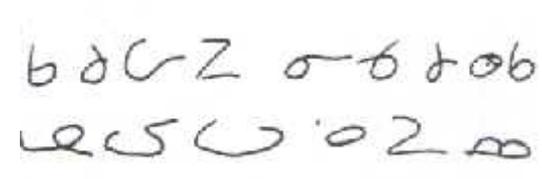
Free composition is the final stage in the development of the writing skill. It should, therefore, be practiced only after students have done sufficient guided writing practice. Thus, the appropriate level to practice free composition writing extensively is the secondary level although its teaching can start much earlier. Marica and Mc Intosh (1979,p.189) say, "It involves the production and arrangement of written sentences in a manner appropriate

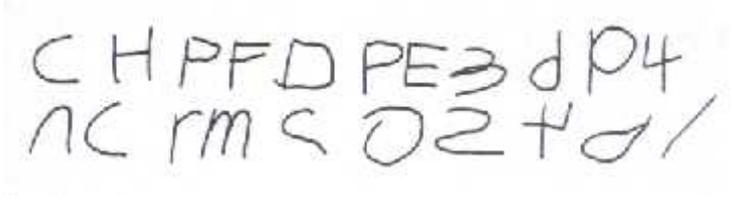
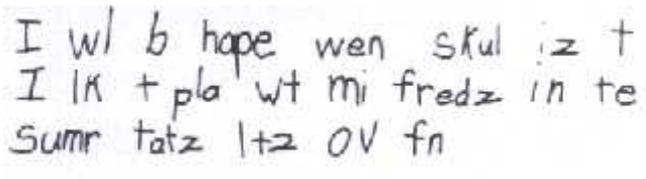
to the purposes of the writer, the person or persons, address, and function of what written."

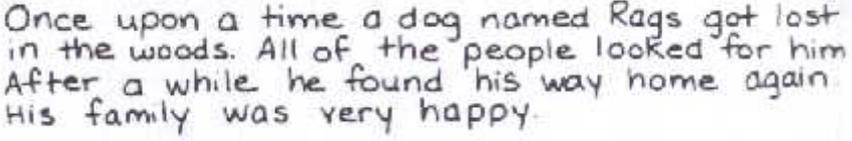
Writing free composition requires a careful planning and a stage-by-stage procedure. Therefore, students should be helped here, too. However, the help required here is of indirect sort. The teacher should help the students with choice of topics, which should be based on their interest, their familiarity with the subject matter and the usefulness of the ideas. To begin with, free compositions can be profitably based on the themes of the reading texts that the students have dealt with, but they should be required to express ideas related to the texts, not simply the ideas that the texts contain. The teacher should also discuss and remind the students of the key vocabulary and sentence structures if this seems necessary. Above all, the teacher should help them with procedural information, that is information on what is involved in the writing process. As discussed above, a writer proceeds through several stages such as brainstorming, outlining, drafting, revising and rewriting to produce a piece of writing. The students should be asked to follow these stages to produce a well organized and effective piece of composition. If a student can write a good composition without going through this process, he will write a better one if he carefully follows the process.

Following stages represent a way of looking at writing development in children. All stages overlap and children progress and reach writing stages at many different ages. The development of early writing skills is another aspect of a child's emergent literacy development. Regardless of which stage the child is at, writing development can be enhanced through being encouraged to write on a regular basis. Children should never be discouraged from exploring writing by the means they are able to do,

whether it be scribbling, letter strings, invented spelling, or conventional spelling.

Stage	Example
<p>Preliterate: <i>Drawing</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ uses drawing to stand for writing ✓ believes that drawings / writing is communication of a purposeful message ✓ reads the drawings as if there were writing on them 	
<p>Preliterate: <i>Scribbling</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ scribbles but intends it as writing ✓ scribbling resembles writing ✓ holds and uses pencil like an adult 	
<p>Early Emergent: <i>Letter-like forms</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ shapes in writing actually resemble letters ✓ shapes are not actually letters ✓ look like poorly formed 	

<p>letters, but are unique creations</p>	
<p>Emergent: <i>Random-letters or letter strings</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ↳ uses letter sequences perhaps learned from his/her name ↳ may write the same letters in many ways ↳ long strings of letters in random order 	
<p>Transitional: <i>Writing via invented spelling</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ↳ creates own spelling when conventional spelling is not known ↳ one letter may represent an entire syllable ↳ words may overlay ↳ may not use proper spacing ↳ as writing matures, more words are spelled conventionally ↳ as writing matures, perhaps only one or two letters invented or omitted 	

<p>Fluency: <i>Conventional spelling</i></p> <p>) usually resembles adult writing</p>	
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(Source: <http://www.ecps.us/DocumentView.aspx?DID=1443>)

1.1.5 Importance of Writing

Writing is superior to other language skills because of its quality of being permanent and accurate. There is no doubt that writing is the most difficult skill for language learners to master. It is an activity by which we communicate with one another and transmit our culture, ideas and thoughts from one generation to another. It provides us a chance to acquire other ideas, feelings and thoughts.

In Nepal, English has been taught and learned as a foreign language. It is being taught as a compulsory subject from grade one to bachelor level. The objectives of English curriculum of secondary level in Nepal focus on the cultivation of communicative ability and proficiency in listening, speaking, reading and writing. The Secondary level curriculum gives 25% weightage to listening and speaking and 75% to reading and writing. This weightage shows that writing is one of the most important skills of language for the students to master.

The writing proficiency plays a vital role in securing good marks in the examinations, and it can spread our knowledge and experience to others. The goal of written language is to convey information accurately, effectively and appropriately. We come to know that, students who learn the English language can not be completed without writing skill. They can express their ideas correctly and appropriately when they are efficient in it. In the

Nepalese context, for the development of general proficiency in the English language, reading and writing skills should be given emphasis. The best way to develop writing is to get the learners write. Secondary school students extensively use the written form of language. They make use of written language in their day to day learning activities. They occasionally write personal or official letters and participate in many writing contexts, such as essay writing, story writing, poetry writing, report writing and guided writing etc. Besides, they appear in their unit or monthly tests, or final examination and they are required to answer all the questions in writing.

In conclusion, we can say that the students who learn the English language can not be perfect without the knowledge of writing skill. Their English language competence is considered better if they can write well.

1.1.6 Purposes of Writing

The purposes of writing are as follows:

1.1.6.1 Writing for Reinforcement

The purposes of writing for reinforcement refer to reinforce something that students have just learned to understand. It is to reinforce a grammatical concept that has just been introduced drills language forms.

1.1.6.2 Writing for Training

Writing for training is similar to writing for reinforcement but differs in that it is not limited to reinforcement of grammatical structures previously presented in another mode and it presents students with patterns of linguistic and rhetorical forms that might be new to them and gives them practice in using and manipulating these new patterns. Students work with units of discourse longer than the sentence, but within parameters strictly prescribed

by the teacher or textbook. This focus of training is on the manipulation of rhetorical and grammatical structures, particularly through the use of transformations.

1.1.6.3 Writing for Imitation

Writing for imitation uses models of content or form as a stimulus for writing. Students become familiar with rhetorical and syntactic forms by following carefully chosen models. Purpose, relying on models of rhetoric and syntax, is to familiarize non-native speakers with rhetorical forms perceived as specific to the target language, weaning them from patterns in their first language.

1.1.6.4 Writing for Communication

It consists of more recent interest and awareness of the importance of the writer's purpose and audience for writing even though teachers postulate new audiences; the audience is most often fictional, the teacher will read the final product and comment on it, probably by correcting linguistic errors. It is sometimes a context for writing what is given through guidelines as to content and purpose. Not only an information gap exists, but task dependency - one student has the information that another does not and has to convey that information so that the receiver can use it. Journal writing is a good activity for authentic communicative writing.

1.1.6.5 Writing for Fluency

Writing for fluency consists of ongoing discussion concerning fluency vs. accuracy, content vs. form, product vs. process - be concerned with both but not necessarily sequentially. Writing assigned for developing fluency does not necessarily require certain standards of social acceptability, particularly if the writing is a draft, a journal, listing, brainstorming, revisions, or free

writing, in which accuracy is not a issue for the teacher. Students are free to generate their own content; they are urged to concentrate on ideas and not be concerned about spelling and grammar (accuracy) until they are satisfied enough with their content to work on editing. Other types of writing for fluency are final drafts, examination essays, etc. and call for accuracy but that does not mean that content and ideas are less important, only that accuracy is as necessary as content and ideas for the reader.

1.1.6.6 Writing for Learning

If consists of the governing philosophy for the five purposes above, which are presented in a developmental order. The five purposes above tend to be discrete, they do not include all the other purposes within them. Writing for learning is comprehensive and cumulative; it can replace all the other purposes, yet at the same time include them. When this is the framework for writing, all activities are seen as a way to learn a language as well as to learn more about the subject matter being written about.

Writing is wasted if we use it just for testing and skill practice. A main characteristic of writing: its ability to be available for scrutiny and revision. Writing for learning emphasis is now on all three points of the communication triangle: writer, reader, and text, and writing thus becomes truly interactive and communicative. Writing is the ideal medium for getting it wrong. It is also the ideal medium for eventually getting it right.

1.1.7 Testing of Writing

A test is a measuring device which we use when we want to compare an individual with other individuals who belong to the same group. Van et al (1984,pp.313), say, "In the context of teaching, tests do not only have the purpose of measuring the language behavior of individual, but they are also useful instruments of an entire group of students." Khaniya (2005,pp.1-2)

describes, "Testing is used as a process of scrutinizing how far learners have learned what the teacher wishes them to learn." He further says,

It is widely accepted that testing offers useful inputs to the teacher to be aware of the effect of his teaching, and also some insights on whether he should continue the way he teaches or change it in order to make his teaching more effective.

(2005,pp.2-3)

Spencer (1983,p.79 as cited in Khaniya 2005,p.150) points out that "learning to write is such a complicated and still inadequately researched process that is not easy to identify simple categories of teacher behavior which indubitably constitute good teaching of writing."

The best way to test people's writing ability is to get them to write. This is not an unreasonable assumption. Even professional testing institutions are unable to construct indirect test which measure writing ability accurately. Our assessment/examination systems depend on the written expression and scoring of the students. Writing is a process not product, and the process of writing can be studied and understood. Weir (1990,p.58) describes two different approaches for assessing writing ability.

Firstly writing can be divided into discrete levels eg. Grammar, vocabulary, spelling and punctuation, and these elements can be tested separately by the use of objective test. Secondly, more direct extended writing tasks of various types should be constricted. These would have greater construct, content, face and wash back validity but would require a more subjective assessment.

In this connection, Khaniya (2005) cited from Bachman and Palmer 1996) argues that the primary purpose of testing writing is to make inferences

about the language ability of the learners and the secondary purpose is to make decision on the basis of these inferences. Khaniya (2005,p.14) defines the best way to test writing is to get the learners write. He further considers three problems in testing writing as:

- i) Setting writing tasks properly representative (operations, test types; address, topic) of the population of tasks that students should be able to perform.
- ii) The tasks that elicit samples of writing (set as many as possible) which truly represents the student's ability.
- iii) The writing should be scored reliably (Holistic impressionistic, Analytic and a combination of both).

Weir (1990,p.60, as cited in Khaniya 2005) argues that integrating and using direct approach to the testing of writing, we can incorporate items which test a candidate's ability to perform certain of the functional tasks required in the performance of duties in the target situation.

1.1.8 Components of Writing

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

a) Mechanics (Graphological system)

The mechanics refers to the aspects of writing such as spelling, use of punctuation marks, capitals, abbreviations and members which are often dealt within the revision or editing stage of writing. The mechanics of writing is very basic concept in writing process.

Although incorrect spelling does not often prevent the understanding of a written message, it can adversely affect the readers' judgment.

However, at times slight change in spelling of words can bring drastic change in the meaning they express. Overuse or under use of

punctuation is often formed on by many writers or editors of English. Though punctuation is frequently a matter of personal style, violation of well-established customs makes a piece of writing look awkward to many readers. The mechanics of writing is a very basic concept in writing process.

b) Coherence

Coherence refers to the relationship between an utterance and the meaning it conveys. It is the semantic relationship of different sense units between and among the utterances. These links may be based on the shared knowledge between the writer and the readers. Generally a paragraph has a coherence if it is a series of sentences that develop main ideas (that is with a topic sentence and supporting details which relate to it). Ideas and thoughts should be connected logically in a piece of writing. The writing should be so connected that one sentence leads on naturally to the next.

c) Cohesion

Cohesion refers to the grammatical and or lexical relationships between different elements of a text. This may be the relationship between different sentences or between different parts of sentence. Sentential cohesion occurs within a sentence whereas textual cohesion occurs across sentences.

d) Orthographic and Para-orthographic Texts

The orthographic system deals with linguistic symbols such as spelling, words, phrases, clauses, sentences, etc. and para-orthographic text is related to the use of diagram, figure, symbols etc.

Besides these components of writing mentioned above care has be taken in the following as well:

- J **Choosing the right word:** Words are often confused so, prefixes, suffixes, synonyms, antonyms, homonyms, adverbs vs. adjectives, sensory words, similes, metaphors, and double negatives should be chosen carefully.
- J **Making mechanics and usage work for the written:** Apostrophes, hyphens, end marks, commas, semicolons, colons, quotation marks, titles, and misplaced modifiers are to be used properly in writing.
- J **Writing sentences:** Subjects and predicates, subject-verb agreement, simple and compound sentences, complex sentences, sentence fragments, run-on sentences, and sentence types are chosen carefully for writing.
- J **Writing paragraphs:** To write a paragraph, one should follow writing a topic sentence, writing a concluding sentence, developing the topic, using tense consistently, using transitional words, and staying on the topic.
- J **Essay-writing techniques: It consists of brainstorming, clustering, outlining, writing an introductory paragraph with a question or a surprising statement, developing the topic using examples, avoiding irrelevant details, writing a concluding paragraph, and proofreading.**

1.1.9 Mechanics of Writing

Writing is a complex activity, which includes various skills. In order to produce an effective piece of writing, the learner must have the knowledge of mechanical skills, stylistic skills and judgment skills. Emphasizing the importance of mechanism of writing, Bowen et al say "the 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." (1985,p.254). Under mechanism of writing the learners should learn the alphabet, the left and right direction of English writing script, upper and

lower case letter, rules of capitalization, basic spelling patterns of English and rules for word and sentence formations.

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

1.1.9.1 Punctuation

It is an art or practice or system of inserting marks or points in writing or printing in order to make the meaning clear (Webster Dictionary, 1988, p.124). The punctuation marks are used to mark boundaries and relationships between words or sentences. The proper use of punctuation marks such as comma, colons, semi-colon, hyphen, full stop, dash, parenthesis, quotation marks, exclamation marks, apostrophe and so on help the writer organize written language and clarify relation between words, phrases and clauses. Punctuations are used mainly to convey the meaning and to make the expressions explicit or unambiguous. The different punctuation marks are full stop, question mark, exclamation mark, quotation mark, apostrophe, colon, semi colon, dash, hyphen, and parenthesis.

1.1.9.2 Capitalization

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

however, is a matter of style rather than convention. While capitalizing for stylistic purposes, writers usually do so to emphasize a key word or a concept.

1.1.9.3 Spelling

Writing is achieved by correct spelling of individual words. Spelling errors are nuisance to the reader. 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 can not write properly what the speaker says. It is a great problem for learners. Spelling is mainly a mastery of convention.

1.1.10 Action Research

The problem solving method of Dewey (1929/1984) and fieldwork in the 1930's by Collier (1945), the Commissioner of India Affairs, are clear antecedents. However, it was Kurt Lewin, a social psychologist of Fled Nazi Europe, who coined the phrase action research to describe a process researchers could use in communities working to address intractable problems.

Hult and Lennung (1980) define

Action research simultaneously assists in practical problem-solving and expands scientific knowledge, as well as enhances the competencies of the respective actors, being performed collaboratively in an immediate situation using data feedback in a cyclical process aiming at an increased understanding of a given social situation, primarily applicable for the understanding of change processes in social systems and undertaken within a mutually acceptable ethical framework.

Action research has been used for the practical problems or issues. It is a form of self reflective inquiry undertaken by practitioners in order to improve their own educational practice"(Kemmins, 1988,p.113). The process of action research is a means of remedying problems diagnosed in specific situation, or of improving in some way a given set of circumstances. It is a means of in-service training, thereby equipping teachers with new skills and methods, sharpening their analytical powers and heightening their self-awareness. As suggested by the name itself, this is an experimental study cum-action directed to solve the existing or forthcoming problems in course of action. Hence, a researcher has to give it a module of reflective process on the situations objectively and invent the strategies to combat the problems. In this regard, action research is a systematic study and problem solving procedure. This notion can be verified from what Wallace (1998,p.1 as cited in Phyak, 2007,p.93) opines "Action research is the systematic collection and analysis of data relating to the improvement of some aspects of professional practice."

1.1.10.1 Steps of Action Research

Different scholars have suggested less or more steps of action research individually, depending on their experiences in language teaching context however, four steps can be suggested to be practicable; they are:

-) Identifying a Research Problem
-) Planning
-) Conducting the Action
-) Analyzing the data

i) Identifying a Research Problem

The process starts by clearly identifying the problems. Where a researcher wants to study he/she should consider what possible methods will affect a solution. Then he chooses the method he wants to test. The issues with this research is to find out the better tools, means and methods of teaching writing in Nepalese context and to invent the better techniques of teaching it.

ii) Planning

The next step is to devise an experiment to test researcher's tools for teaching. In doing so, the researcher must consider several factors. For example, entire population, teaching methods, tests and results. This will determine how simple or complex the experiment will be. The amount of time and funding he has will also determine the size of his experiment. In this research, lesson will be planned for teaching and testing.

iii) Conducting the Action

In this research, at the start of an action, students will be observed by the pre-test and the lessons will be taught regularly. In every 5th lesson a test will be conducted. Out put of the tests will be observed to find out the progress in teaching and learning periodically.

iv) Analyze the Data

The fourth step is to collect and analyze the data. This is not solely a step where the researcher collects the papers, reads them, and says his/her methods were a success but also shows how successful the researcher is. In this research, the students' writing skill is first tested, then lessons will be taught, again tests will be conducted periodically

and evaluated for a change in sentence complexity, syntactical and grammatical errors, and overall length.

Having passed through the stages suggested here, the researcher will have to come up with the judgment to evaluate, whether his problem will be solved, if not, what alternative measures can be applied and if solved what the next problem will be. Thus, action research keeps on uncovering the solutions and in return leads toward the new problems to be called progressive problem solving process.

1.1.11 Project work

The project work is aimed at helping the teachers in establishing the causes of the reduced progress in writing proficiency and developing methods and techniques for improving it. Both school and home environment, in order to compensate the social influence, create conditions for enhancing the motivation to learn and improve the attainment of pupils. Purposes of the project work are encouraging the unmotivated pupils to engage and participate in competitions, projects, events, non-standard lessons or research work, enhancing the awareness of every pupil of his important role in solving problems, providing conditions for their self-expression and self-realisation, and fostering their motivation to learn.

Project work is one of the learner-centered education techniques which is based on involving the learners in the learning process. This is a technique where learners can be given a topic to do some studies on. The topic can be chosen by the teacher or by the learners depending on the school subject or the desired topic. It has been introduced in 1970s as a part of communicative language teaching. A project work integrates all language skill involving a number of activities. Therefore, project work is a technique through the use of which we can ensure genuinely communicative uses of written language.

It can be used as an individual work, a pair work or a group work. It involves research or investigation and preparing and presenting the report of investigation.

In the case of an English composition a teacher can get pupils to choose a topic and then write a composition using different resources. This approach is learner-centered as learners would use their own initiatives to gather and analyze information and demonstrate their writing skills in the learning process through the project they would do. The use of prior knowledge, skills, interests and understanding derived from previous experiences is an aspect that is done to address learner-centered education. The learners' own knowledge on an issue must be appreciated and taken into consideration as a starting point in understanding issues. This allows the teacher to assess the proficiency of the students in writing on a specific issue.

Project work, being time consuming task, extends learning period or time and gets students to do something original and worthwhile in target language. It is an in-depth study of a topic of interest to the individual students. A writing project can be better understood by dividing it into several stages. Generally we can think of five stages which are mentioned below:

- i) Setting the goal or deciding or choosing the topic of the project.
- ii) Making a plan
- iii) Development of tools for gathering information that is writing questionnaires.
- iv) Collecting information or data by making use of tools
- v) Writing a report and presenting it.

1.1.11.1 Features of Project Work

The main features of the project work are as follows:

- i) Project work is a group centered activity.
- ii) It encourages the students to do something original and worthwhile.
- iii) It integrates all language skills.
- iv) It consists of a sequence of several activities from investigation to reporting.
 -) planning
 -) preparing the questionnaire
 -) collecting the data
 -) writing a report
 -) presenting the report
- v) Project work is used as a classroom activity as well.
- vi) Project work makes use of authentic language because the students collect information from native speakers of their target language and all other materials used as secondary sources are authentic ones.
- vii) It promotes cooperative language learning by demanding collaborative effort from the members of the group.
- viii) This is research oriented activity.
- ix) This makes the students think a lot and generate ideas.
- x) It requires commitment and dedication from the students.
- xi) It reflects the principle of learner-centered teaching.

In a project work, the students choose their project or project topic in the presence of the teacher. But sometimes the student may be given topic by the teacher. The student then makes a plan about what information they might want to obtain and the kind of questions they could use to elicit the information. They may also talk about the secondary sources of information if any. They prepare different questionnaire or make a list of secondary

sources to elicit necessary information. Students then collect all the information and data by interviewing orally the people in a target language community or by reading authentic language materials like books, pamphlets and magazines etc. After collecting the necessary information, they study it, analyze it and build up a document of some sort, usually with text, diagrams and pictures, and occasionally supported by a poster, a map, a brochure, realia or even a cassette recording. All the research and writing is done in free periods or at home. However, the students can contact their teacher at any time when they face some difficulties from the very beginning to the end of the project.

In this research, the researcher uses a project work as a classroom activity to develop learner's writing proficiency. For this purpose, lessons were designed on the project work based activities. Tests related to some issues were given to the learners and they completed them. Then researcher evaluated the tasks particularly the mechanics of writing such as punctuation, spelling, capitalization and grammar

1.2 Review of Related Literature

Some studies carried out in “Writing proficiency” in the department of English Language Education are somehow more or less related to this study can be observed as follow:

Giri, (1981) carried out a study on "A comparative study of the English language proficiency of the students studying in grade ten in secondary schools of Doti and Kathmandu." The finding was that the study intended to see if the urban, and the rural schools differ in the language proficiency, Kathmandu students of secondary level were found better than there of the Doti students.

Adhikari (1986) carried out a study on "Difference in written English corrections of English teacher." The finding of this study was that boarding school teachers were found weaker than their government schools because boarding school teachers were found weaker in writing than government school teacher.

Dahal (1998) carried out a study on "The tenses and aspects in free writing of the 11th grades." This study concentrated on the problems, causes and solutions in using tenses and aspects in free writing. Findings of this study was that students were found competent in tense than in aspect.

Poudyal (1999) carried out a study on "Comparative study of English language writing proficiency in higher secondary schools of Gulmi and Kathmandu." He found the students of higher secondary schools of Kathmandu had better in English writing proficiencies than the students of Gulmi. They committed less errors in constructing sentences than the students of rural areas.

Barakoti (2001) carried out a research study on "Errors committed by PCL second year students in writing competitions." It was found that the students had committed errors in sentence construction, spellings, and organization of thoughts. It shows that students do not give proper attention to writing compared to other language skills.

Bhattarai (2001) in his work "The use of punctuation in free writing" has found eleven items among the thirteen punctuation items were erroneous. The study has not covered only single punctuation marks but all.

Bhattarai (2002) carried out a study on "A Comparative Study of the Writing Proficiency of the Bachelor's Level Students". He observed that the students of institutes have greater proficiency in writing than the students of faculties.

Sah (2003) carried out a study on "Writing Proficiency of Grade Nine Student" He found that the students committed mistakes in the use of comma than in the use of other specific punctuation marks, that is capital letter, full stop, apostrophe, question mark and so on.

Paneru (2009) carried out a research on "use of Computer for teaching English Grammar" He shows how an action research was conducted to solve the problems in language teaching. It shows that the students give proper attention to learning through the help of computer.

Websites listed below introduce teaching technique about the project works with some examples. It claims that teaching with project work is best method for teaching writing proficiency rather than just giving lecture in front of the students in the class.

<http://www.pprc.lt/ScienceOnStage/en/annotacijos/mat/davainiene.htm> was reviewed on 29 July 2009.

The website given below introduces about action research with different models and experimental researches on Teaching.

www.nied.edu.na/publications/journals/journal9/Journal%209%20Article%2009.pdf was reviewed on 5 August 2009.

The website given below represents a way of looking at writing development in children. All stages overlap and children progress and reach writing stages at many different ages. Children should never be discouraged from exploring writing by the means they are able to do, whether it be scribbling, letter

strings, invented spelling, or conventional spelling. <http://www.ecps.us/DocumentView.aspx?DID=1443>

Though 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. Nepalese people also emphasize that listening and speaking have low priority while reading and writing have high priority for language learning programme. Therefore, it is necessary to emphasize on writing skill in Nepalese context. The researcher has made an attempt but has analyzed both cause and solution of grade eight students (boys and girls). At the end, the researcher comes to the conclusion that his study will provide actual reinforcement for causes and remedies of eighth graders (boys and girls) in terms of writing proficiency and improve the proficiency in a balanced way.

1.3 Objective of the Study

The objectives of this research were:

- a) to find out writing proficiency of students of grade eight on the basis of spelling, use of punctuation marks, and capitals.

- b) to suggest some pedagogical implications of the writing proficiency.

1.4 Signification of the Study

This study will be useful for those who are involved in the field of language teaching especially in English Language Teaching (ELT). It will also be very important for teachers, students and researchers. This will have remarkable contribution to the areas of teaching writing skill. This study will be significant in the light that it will focus on the emerging trends of teaching writing through innovative teaching techniques. It will be an experimental

study, therefore, the out come of the study will be useful for language teaching and learning.

CHAPTER- TWO

METHODOLOGY

A systematic research study needs to follow a proper methodology to achieve the predetermined objectives. "Research methodology is a sequential procedure and methods to be adopted in a systematic study" Kothari (1993,p.19). The present research focuses on finding out the role of project work for improving writing proficiency of grade eight students. The working plan used in carrying out the study from its beginning to the final stage was more or less descriptive. The researcher has come to the concrete facts by visiting schools, administering tests and analyzing the collected data and great care was taken to develop and select research tools considering validity, objectivity and reliability as far as possible.

2.1 Sources of Data

The researcher used the following source of data:

2.1.1 Primary Sources of Data

The students of grade eight of Ashirbat Boarding School, Balwatar, Kathmandu were the primary sources of data for this research. The primary data of the study was collected through the planning and teaching of the lessons and administration of tests.

2.1.2 Secondary Sources of Data

The books related to the 'writing proficiency' such as English text books of grade eight, Secondary School level curriculum, questions asked in final examinations, researches, articles, journals such as English Teaching Forum, NELTA Journal(2007), magazines, online articles, online journals, online

researches, information related to this research which are available in different university's and educational institution's websites in the internet and the theses approved by the department of English Education T.U. related to this research were secondary sources of data.

2.2 Population of the Study

The population of the study was students of grade eight of Ashirbad Boarding School, Balwatar, Kathmadu.

2.3 Sample Population of the Study

Thirty students of grade eight of Ashirbad Boarding School were sample population of the study.

2.4 Sampling Procedure

The researcher used purposive (judgmental) sampling procedure to select the required number of students. Sample population of the study consists of 30 students from grade eight of Ashirbad Boarding School, Balwatar, Kathmandu for teaching and testing purposes as the sample and research population. Both girls and boys studying in co-education system class were selected. All the students were informed of the purpose of the study and the required attention as well as co-operation from their part. The purpose of selecting all the students was to mark problems of the learners in the case of writing proficiency.

2.5 Tools for Data Collection

The researcher designed test items and planned lessons for teaching writing according to the class eight English syllabus. The researcher conducted a

pre-test and taught 25 lessons, and in every fifth lesson, he administered a progress test to collect data from the students. The tasks were:

- (i) Skeleton for writing stories
- (ii) Paragraph writing using hints (write a short paragraph about yourself based on the given hints)
- (iii) Letter writing (write a letter to your friend describing about your city).
- (iv) Newspaper report writing (write a newspaper report with the help of given hints).
- (v) Write an essay on the given topic (free writing)

Each item was targeted to elicit appropriate use of punctuation marks, spelling and capitals in writing. Those items for writing were chosen on the basis of the secondary level curriculum of English. The informants were allowed to use their own vocabulary and structures appropriately where possible.

2.6 Allotments of the Marks

The researcher distributed marks to each item. The test items from the first to fifth carried 8, 8, 10, 12, 12 marks respectively. To make marking more objectives and systematic the researcher distributed marks of each item on the basis of the following criteria:

Table No. 1
Allotment of the Marks

S.N.	Variables	Items				
		1 st	2 nd	3 rd	4 th	5 th
1.	Content	2	2	3	4	3.5
2.	Grammar	1.5	1	1.5	1	1.5
3.	Format	0.5	1	1.5	1	2
4.	Vocabulary	1	1	1	1	1
5.	Spelling	0.5	0.5	0.5	1	1
6.	Punctuation	1	1.5	1	2	1
7.	Cohesion/ Coherence	1.5	1	1.5	2	2
Total		8	8	10	12	12

2.7 Process of Data Collection

The researcher adopted the following process for data collection:

- a) The researcher visited the selected school and asked the concerned authority for their permission to take the class for testing and teaching purposes.
- b) The researcher consulted the students and informed them of the research that is teaching writing.
- c) Class was smoothly handled. Twenty five lessons were planned for both teaching and testing activities and tests were conducted in every fifth lesson. Teaching and testing will be daily kept in to table for data analysis.
- d) All questions were related to writing and full marks of those items were fifty. The researcher has collected the data consisting of 5

questions for writing. The first item was writing story using given clues. The second one was developing paragraph and third was writing letter. The fourth item was report writing and the fifth item was writing essay.

The data for this study were collected from the written works of the students. With the help of principal and English teacher, the researcher gathered the students of grade eight from purposive (Judgmental) sampling procedure as per the required number for conducting the tests and he planned the lesson and administered the test items in the allocated time (that is 1.50 hour). The students were asked to answer the questions and they were also asked to attempt all the questions within the given time. Being aware of the possible halo effect, the researcher tried his best to maintain the atmosphere effect less. In the course of data collection, the researcher requested the principal and the English language teacher of the selected school to help in the process of data collection.

2.8 Limitation of the study

The study had the following limitations:

- a) The study was limited to the grade eight students.
- b) The population of study was selected only from the students of thirteen or fourteen year's age group.
- c) Only writing proficiency of grade eight students was measured.
- d) The primary data was collected only from teaching writing lessons and test items.
- e) Only the teaching writing lesson was used to find out students' improvement in writing proficiency.
- f) Only the teaching technique 'Project work' was used to teach the lesson for the improvement of the writing proficiency.

CHAPTER - THREE

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

This chapter is the heart of this research report, which consists of all the main aspects of the research study. It includes the interpretation of data collected from teaching writing to thirty students of class eight from a secondary school and suggestion for the pedagogical implications of this kind of teaching and the problems so far faced by the professionals in this field, who have ever been haunted by the fear of sub-standard results and the ambiguous opinion upon the effectiveness of the role of project work for improving writing proficiency of the students. The researcher in everyday class supervised the activities of the students for the twenty five days and prepared the report using the class room records. Besides this, oral speaking, and debate activities were conducted in the class to motivate the students. The following analysis is based on the same reports.

- Analysis of the pre-test result
- Test-wise analysis
- Item-wise Analysis
- Analysis of the post-test results

Class was smoothly handled. Twenty five lessons were planned for both teaching and testing activities and test was conducted after every fourth lesson. Teaching and testing was kept everyday into table for data analysis. Data were collected with the help of test-items which are given in appendix-I.

The researcher has distributed mark to each item to make marking more objective and systematic according to the allotment of the mark which is given in table no. 1.

3.1 Analysis and Interpretation of the Data Obtained through Test Result

This section deals with the test results which were based on the daily lessons taught in the classroom. The researcher conducted five tests at the interval of fifth class work, tenth class work, fifteenth class work, twentieth class work and final writing test for an assessment of writing proficiency as to see how far students were able to write correctly in given writing tasks.

The test results have been analyzed from various perspectives of test items, score analysis of individual students, which were represented in the tables with obtained marks of the students. The data have been given in figures in the tables and their percentage has been drawn for the statistical description. Scores obtained from the tests were used for representation, analysis and interpretation of data.

3.1.1 Analysis of the Pre-test Result

The researcher administered a pre-test to find out writing problems of the students before teaching the lesson. Four items were included with the full marks 30 in where pass mark was 10. Pre-test question is given in appendix-I

Table No. 2
Pre-test Score of Students

Scores	No. of Students	Percentage
10 Below	3	10
11 - 15	20	66.67
16 - 20	6	20
21 - 25	1	3.33
26 Above	0	0
Total	30	100

The pre-test result in this table depicts that 10 % students did not score pass mark. Majority of students that is 66.67 % students scored 11-15 out of 30 full marks. Few students that is 20 % students scored 16-20. Only 3.33% students scored 21 - 25 marks as the highest mark and no one scored above 26. In this way, the score distribution here makes it clear that more students scored less mark and some students did not get pass mark too.

Four items were analyzed to judge the proficiency of the students in writing story, paragraph, letter and essay. Most students had problem in writing that is spelling error, use of punctuation mark and capital so number of students scored less marks.

3.1.2 Individual Students' Scores in the First Writing Test

This was the first test administered after the fourth lesson. The test was administered to assess the level of competence on the presented lesson. The variation was seen in the scores of the students. The score variations are shown in the table below:

Table No. 3
Score Variations of Students

Scores	No. of Students	Percentage
15 Below	0	0
16 - 20	2	6.66
21 - 25	13	43.33
26 - 30	15	50
31 Above		0
Total	30	100

The table depicts that students came up with scores at varying rate, as shown on the table, majority of students that is 50 % scored 26 - 30 out of 50 full marks. The figure is approximately the mean point of the total participants. Only 6.66% students scored 16 - 20 marks as the lowest and further 43.33% students could score 21-25 marks as the highest. In this way, the score distribution here makes it clear that none scored below the pass mark out the 50 marks nor any percent of the students reached the highest marks above 31.

3.1.3 Item wise Errors of Students

Item wise scores were analyzed in order to understand the status of the students in writing story, writing paragraph, writing letter, writing essay and writing report which is more difficult than the other items. The student's errors in different items showed that the number of students having problem in one item may not have problem in other items at the same level. The item wise errors are shown in the table below:

Table No. 4
Item wise Errors of Students

Test Items	Errors	No. of students	Percentage
Writing story	Content	9	30
Writing paragraph	Spelling	4	13.33
Writing letter	Format	7	23.33
Writing essay	Vocabulary and Grammar	12	40
Writing report	Format and Punctuation	10	33.33

The table here presents that students faced problems according to the test items that is content error in writing story, spelling in writing paragraph, format in writing letter, vocabulary in writing essay and format and punctuation in writing report. Thirty percent (30%) students faced problems of content in writing a story. Only about 13.33% students were not able to write correct spelling in paragraph writing and about 23.33% students committed errors of format in letter writing. Similarly, 40% students committed vocabulary and grammar errors in writing essay and about 33.33% students did not follow the format and punctuation in report writing. The result presented by the table shows that most of students faced problem in vocabulary and grammar in essay writing and the least number had problem in spelling. The score analysis of this test can be concluded to be positive toward learning of writing.

3.1.4 Individual Students' Scores in the Second Writing Test

After teaching nine different lessons containing various topics of writing to assess the level of competence on the presented lessons, individual students scored variedly in many cases, as in case of the lowest score, only one student obtained twenty five marks out of fifty and the variation was seen in the scores of the students. The score variations have been shown in the table below:

Table No. 5
Score Variations of Students

Scores	No. of Students	Percentage
20 Below	0	
21 - 25	1	3.33
26 - 30	21	70
31 - 35	7	23.33
36 Above	0	0
Total	29	100

The figure in the table shows that students scored at varying rate, as shown in the table the majority of students that is 70 % scored 26 - 30 out of 50 full marks. The figure is approximately the mean point of the total participants. Only about 3% students scored 21 - 25 marks as the lowest and further about 23% students could score 31-35 marks as the second highest. In this way, the score distribution here makes it clear that none scored below the pass mark and no one reached the highest marks above 35.

3.1.5 Item wise Errors of Students

Item-wise scores were analyzed in order to understand the status of the students' proficiency in writing story, writing paragraph, writing letter, writing essay and writing report which item is more difficult than others. The students' errors in different items showed that the number of students having problem in one item do not have problem in other items at the same level. The item wise errors have been shown in the table that follows:

Table No. 6
Item wise Errors of Students

Test Items	Errors	No. of students	Percentage
Writing story	Content	6	30
Writing paragraph	Spelling	3	13.33
Writing letter	Format	5	23.33
Writing essay	Vocabulary and Grammar	10	40
Writing report	Format and Punctuation	8	33.33

The table here presents that students faced problems according to the test items that is content error in writing story, spelling in writing paragraph, format in writing letter, vocabulary in writing essay, format and punctuation in writing report, vocabulary and grammar in writing essay. Likewise format and punctuation error was committed in writing report. Thirty percent (30%) students faced problems of content in writing story. Only 13.33% students could not write correct spelling in paragraph writing and 23.33% students committed errors of format in letter writing. Similarly 40% students committed vocabulary and grammar errors in writing essay and 33.33% students did not follow format and punctuation marks in report writing. The result presented by the table is, therefore, most students faced problem in vocabulary and grammar in essay writing and the least had problem in spelling. The score analysis of this test then can be concluded to be progress toward learning of writing.

3.1.6 Individual Students' Scores in the Third Writing Test

On completion of the 14th lesson, the third writing test was conducted to see progress with the learning speed and their evaluation as well as documentation. Various writing items had been taught and test was conducted to assess the level of competence on the presented lesson. The variation was seen in the scores of the students. The score variations have been shown in the table below:

Table No. 7
Score Variations of Students

Scores	No. of Students	Percentage
25 Below	0	0
26 - 30	3	10.71
31 - 35	14	50
36 - 40	11	39.28
41 Above	0	0
Total	28	100

The figures in table shows that students scored in various ranging of scores, as shown in the table majority of students that is 50 % scored 31 - 35 out of full marks 50. The figure is approximately the mean point of the total participants. Only 10.71% students scored 26 - 30 marks as the lowest and further 39.28% students scored between 36-40 marks as the highest. In this way, the score distribution here makes it clear that none scored below the pass mark or 25 out of full marks nor any percent of the students reached the highest full marks or above 41.

3.1.7 Item wise Errors of Students

Item wise scores were analyzed in order to see the nature of the students in different writing items. The students' errors in different items showed that the number of students having problem in one item do not have problem in other items at the same level. The item wise errors have been shown in the table no. 10.

Table No. 8
Item wise Errors of Students

Test Items	Errors	No. of Students	Percentage
Writing story	Grammar	5	17.85
Writing paragraph	Content	4	14.28
Writing letter	Format	5	17.85
Writing essay	Vocabulary and Spelling	9	31.14
Writing report	Punctuation	8	28.57

The table here presents that students faced problems according to the test items that is grammar error in writing story, content error in writing paragraph, format error in writing letter, vocabulary in writing essay and format and punctuation in writing report, vocabulary and spelling in writing essay. Likewise punctuation error in writing report was committed. About 17.85% students faced problems of grammar in writing a story. Only 14.28% students did not follow correct content in paragraph writing and 17.85% students committed errors on format in letter writing. Similarly, 31.14% students committed vocabulary and spelling errors in writing essay which

was shown as most problematic item among them and 28.57% students did not use punctuation marks in report writing. The result presented by the table is, therefore, most students faced problem in vocabulary and spelling in essay writing and least had problem in content.

3.1.8 Individual Students' Scores in the Fourth Writing Test

Having taught various items of writing for 18 days, the fourth test was conducted to assess the level of writing proficiency on the presented lessons. The variation was seen in the scores of the students. The score variations are shown in the table that follows:

Table No. 9
Score Variations of Students

Scores	No. of Students	Percentage
35 Below	0	0
36 - 40	22	81.48
41 - 45	5	18.51
46 - 50	0	0
Total	27	100

The table shows that students scored at varying rate, as shown in the table, majority of students that is 81.48 % students scored 36 - 40 out of 50 full marks. Similarly, 18.51% students scored 41 - 45 marks as the highest. In this way, the score distribution here makes it clear that none scored below 35 out the 50 marks nor any percent of the students reached the highest marks above 46.

3.1.9 Item wise Errors of Students

Item wise score were analyzed in order to understand among different writing items. The student's errors in different items showed that the number of students having problem in one item do not have problem in other items at the same level. The item wise errors have been shown in the table below:

Table No. 10
Item wise Errors of Students

Test Items	Errors	No. of students	Percentage
Writing story	Grammar	4	14.81
Writing paragraph	Content	3	11.11
Writing letter	Format	4	14.81
Writing essay	Vocabulary	7	25.92
Writing report	Spelling	6	22.22

The figures in the table above presents that students faced problems according to the test items that is grammar errors in writing story, content error in writing paragraph, format error in writing letter, vocabulary in writing essay and format and punctuation in writing report, vocabulary and spelling in writing essay. Likewise punctuation error in writing a report was committed. About 14.81% students faced problems of grammar in writing story. Only 11.11% students were not able to follow correct content in paragraph writing and 14.81% students committed errors on format in letter writing. Similarly, 25.92% students committed vocabulary and spelling errors in writing essay which was shown as most problematic item among

them and 22.22% students did not use punctuation marks in report writing. The result presented in the table is therefore, the most students faced problem in vocabulary and spelling in essay writing and the least had problem in content. This analysis shows that students committed fewer errors than the previous tests. The score analysis of this test then can be concluded to be progress toward learning of writing.

3.1.10 Individual Students' Scores in the Fifth Writing Test

The fifth test, conducted after the 25th lesson, was entirely final writing test designed to assess the learner's productive skill from the perspective of writing proficiency. The above mentioned items had been taught and test was conducted to assess the level of competence on the presented lesson. The variation was seen the scores of the students. The score variations have been shown in the table below:

Table No. 11
Score Variations of Students

Scores	No. of Students	Percentage
40 Below	0	0
41 - 45	25	86.20
46 - 50	4	13.79
Total	29	100

On the basis of the figure represented by the table above shows that students scored at varying rate, as shown on the table majority of students that is 86.20 % students scored 41 - 45 out of 50 full marks. About 13.70% students scored 46 - 50 marks as the highest. In this way, the score distribution here makes it clear that none scored below 40 out of 50 mark and number of

students scored higher marks. So, this post-test showed that writing proficiency of the students came to the better position.

3.1.11 Item wise Errors of Students

This test aimed at assessing the writing skills along with various items listed for their errors were; content errors, capital and small letter, punctuation marks, grammar errors, format errors and choice of right words. The list of the errors with the numbers of students has been given table below:

Table No. 12
Item wise Errors of Students

Test Items	Errors	No. of students	Percentage
Writing story	Grammar	2	6.89
Writing paragraph	Content	1	3.44
Writing letter	Format	2	6.89
Writing essay	Vocabulary	3	10.34
Writing report	Spelling	4	13.79

It is obvious from the table that spelling was the major problem among the other items listed above. In this item 13.79% students came up with spelling errors in writing report. Others had minor errors in different items like grammar, content, format and vocabulary. The second major problem noticed with the students was choice of vocabulary in which 10.34% students committed errors. In the third rank fall the errors of grammar and format in writing story and writing letter that is 6.89% each respectively.

Thus, this distribution and item wise errors analysis shows that improvement of the students' writing skill is found in progressive order.

3.1.12 Analysis of the Post-test Result

The researcher administered a post-test to find out students' progress on writing after completion of the fifth test. Four items were asked with the full marks 30. Post-test question is given in appendix-I

Table No. 13
Post-test Score of Students

Scores	No. of Students	Percentage
20 Below	0	0
21 - 25	12	40
26 - 30	18	60
Total	30	100

The post-test result in above table depicts that majority of students that is 60 % students scored 26-30 out of full marks 30 as the highest mark and no one scored below 20. Forty percent students scored 21-25. In this way, the score distribution here makes it clear that more students scored highest mark. Four items were analyzed to judge the proficiency of the students in writing story, paragraph, letter and essay. Most students improved their problem in writing that is spelling, use of punctuation mark and capital so 60% students scored highest marks.

3.2 Item wise Analysis and Interpretation of Total Proficiency

This part mainly contains the data taken from twenty five writing lessons taught to thirty students of class eight with the help of project work as a

teaching method and data were kept on the daily reporting frame. The analysis and interpretation is a conclusive form of teaching writing. The test results have been analyzed in the second section of this chapter. This section thus, is concerned with analyzing and interpreting the item-wise writing lessons taught. The statistical tools such as tables, and percentage were used to interpret the data. Data were taken from five different test items that is writing story, writing paragraph, writing letter, writing essay and writing report. Five tests were conducted in every fifth lesson and most students were attended in the test, one student in second test, two students in third test, three students in fourth test and only one student in fifth test were absent. First item was writing story with given clues carrying eight marks and second was writing paragraph with the help of clues carrying eight marks. Third question, writing a letter, was carried out ten marks and last fourth and fifth question was writing essay and writing report carrying out twelve marks respectively. Test items are given in appendix-I

The following table presents the total proficiency of the test results.

Table No. 14
Total proficiency of test result

Test	1 st	2 nd	3 rd	4 th	5 th
Average Marks of each test	25	29	35	39	44

The above table shows all the students' average test score of all tests out of full marks 50. The scores are different in each test. The result presents that there is progress of student's writing from first test to second test, second test to third, third to fourth and fourth to fifth. The average score of previous test to next test is increased in which the average score of first test is 25, second

is 29, third is 35, fourth is 39 and fifth is 44. Individual score of the test item presents increasing of the students' proficiency level in all items of the writing test. Individual scores are given in the appendix-II

Item wise analysis shows the item wise proficiency of the tests in which the students were asked to write five items that is writing story, writing paragraph, writing letter, writing essay and writing report. The first item was writing story with the help of given clues, second was writing paragraph with the help of given clues, third one was writing letter, fourth item was writing essay and fifth item was writing report with the given heading in every tests. Among five test items, first and second items carried 8 marks each, third test item carried 10 marks and fourth and fifth items carried 12 marks each. Some item's answers are given in appendix-IV.

Table No. 15
Total Proficiency in item No.1

Tests	Average Marks	Obtain Marks (%)		
		Average Marks	Above Average Marks	Below Average Marks
First	4	67	7	27
Second	4	52	48	0
Third	6	71	0	29
Fourth	6	70	4	26
Fifth	7	62	7	31

The above table depicts that total proficiency of item no. one of the students in each test where as 67% students scored average marks, 27% students scored below the average marks and only 7% students scored the above

average marks in the first test. In the second test, majority of the students scored average marks that is 52% of students, 48% students scored above the average marks and none scored below the average marks. Similarly, 71% students scored average marks and 29% students scored below the average marks in the third tests. Likewise, 70% students scored average marks, 4% students were able to cross over the average marks and 26% students could not cross the average marks. Sixty two percent (62%) students scored average marks. Twenty seven percent (27%) students scored below the average marks and only 7% students scored average marks in the first test. In the second test, majority of the students scored above the average marks that is 52% of the student, 48% students scored above the average marks and none were scored below the average marks. Similarly, 71% students scored average marks and 29% students scored below the average marks in the third tests. Likewise 70% students scored average marks, 4% students were able to cross the average marks and 26% students could not cross the average marks. Sixty two percent (62%) students scored average marks, above the average marks scored by only 7% of the students and 31% could score below average marks. this figure clearly shows that majority of the students scored average marks in each tests.

Table No. 16
Total Proficiency in item No. 2

Test	Average Marks	Obtain Marks (%)		
		Average Marks	Above Average Marks	Below Average Marks
First	4	67	10	23
Second	4	52	48	0
Third	6	68	0	32
Fourth	6	74	11	15
Fifth	6	62	10	28

The average mark was scored by 67 % of the students, 10% crossed the average marks and 23% could not score average marks in the first test. In the second test, majority of the students scored average marks that is 52% of students, 48% students scored above the average marks and none scored below the average marks. Similarly, 68% students scored average marks and 32% students scored below the average marks in the third tests. Like wise 74% students scored average marks, 11% students were able to cross the average marks and 15% students were under the average marks in the fourth test. Sixty two percent (62%) students scored average marks, above the average marks were scored by only 10% of the students and 28% could score below average marks. This figure clearly shows that majority of the students scored average marks in five tests.

Table No. 17
Total Proficiency in item No. 3

	Obtain Marks (%)			
Test	Average Marks	Average Marks	Above Average Marks	Below Average Marks
First	5	43	20	37
Second	6	52	7	41
Third	6	43	46	11
Fourth	7	74	0	26
Fifth	9	62	14	24

The majority of the students scored average marks in 4 tests but 46% students were successful to score above the average marks in the third test. No one could get above the average marks in the fourth test.

Table No. 18
Total Proficiency in item No. 4

	Obtain Marks (%)			
Test	Average Marks	Average Marks	Above Average Marks	Below Average Marks
First	6	43	33	23
Second	7	62	31	7
Third	8	29	54	18
Fourth	10	74	4	22
Fifth	11	66	0	34

The majority of the students scored average marks in 4 tests but 54% students were successful to score above the average marks in the third test. No one could get above the average marks in the fifth test. The least number of students were score below the average marks.

Table No. 19
Total Proficiency in item No. 5

Test	Average Marks	Obtain Marks (%)		
		Average Marks	Above Average Marks	Below Average Marks
First	6	47	43	10
Second	7	41	41	17
Third	8	32	43	25
Fourth	10	67	30	4
Fifth	11	79	0	21

Most of the students scored average marks in 3 tests but 43% students scored above the average marks in the third test. Similarly, 41% students obtained average marks and above the average marks in the second test. No one got above the average marks in the fifth test. Comparatively, the least number of students scored below the average marks.

CHAPTER – FOUR

FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The purpose of the study was to find out the writing proficiency of grade eight students. The students were taken from Ashirbad Boarding School, Balwatar, Kathmandu. The data was taken from thirty students, equal number of boys and girls. The researcher especially focused on project work to find the progress on students' writing, and the ability in writing skill. Twenty five lessons were planned and five tests were taken in every fifth lesson to analyze their progress periodically with the help of modern teaching technique. This analysis shows the following findings and recommendations.

4.1 Findings

On the basis of the study and interpretation the findings are summarized below:

1. It was found that 40% of the students could not write correct spelling in the essay and correct sentences using appropriate vocabularies. Format and grammar were found problems in essay and letter writing.
2. Tests results revealed that 33% of the students showed problems in the sentences and use of punctuation marks as well as choice of appropriate vocabularies in the report and paragraph writing.
3. Students committed many errors in their writing that is spelling, plurals, and use of punctuation marks in where 30% students committed content errors in story writing due to the absence of proper teaching techniques of writing. Lecture method was found dominant medium of teaching.
4. More students that is 20.8% could not attempt item no. 4 and 15.4% could not attempt item no. 5 well in where students had been asked to

write essays and newspaper report. It was found that they had problems in free writing.

5. Comparatively, students' writing proficiency was found unsatisfactory in free writing because they were not encouraged to participate in writing activities.
6. There were not found sufficient writing materials in the library.
7. More teachers that is 75% were found untrained because their qualification was B.A and M.A.
8. Writing proficiency of girls was found better than boys. In every test girls scored better marks than the boys.
9. From the perspective of varying levels of aptitude, general differences in level of understanding were noticed in students while teaching the lessons. Girls were able to understand better than boys.

4.2 Recommendations

On the basis of the findings of the research work, the following recommendations have been made.

- 1 As reflected by the findings, spelling and vocabularies should be taught while teaching essay. Teacher should teach format and grammar while teaching essay and letter.
- 2 Developing skeleton into fuller text should be encouraged while teaching story and paragraph.
- 3 The school should manage visual aids. It helps to develop the writing skill of the students.
- 4 Teacher should carry out different practices of writing and correct the students' work
- 5 Teacher should encourage students to participate in writing activities.

- 6 The written materials promote writing habit, increase interest and motivate the students to learn to write so there should be sufficient writing materials in library.
- 7 School should appoint trained teacher and manage training for the untrained teachers. The teaching load of teachers should be reduced so that they can prepare their lessons on writing skill and they should be given attractive facilities and to motive them towards their works.
- 8 Boys should be encouraged to participate in writing skill's class. They should be involved in participating in writing contests.
- 9 New technology of teaching using machine such as computer and projector that aim at engaging the attention of the students through indirect learning process should be integrated to writing skills.

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