

**Institute of Modern Languages  
Department of English  
University of Dhaka  
Bangladesh**



**Causes for the Failure of Students in Developing Writing Skills at the HSC  
Level in Bangladesh**

By

**Sukanto Roy, M. A. in ELT**

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Supervisor:

**A.M.M. Hamidur Rahman**

**Professor, Department of English**

**Institute of Modern Languages**

**University of Dhaka**

**Bangladesh**

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# Abstract

This dissertation presents the actual causes of students' failure in developing writing skill at the higher secondary level. To perform this research, the researcher selected four institutions to observe classes, interviewed students and teachers and to collect sample writings. In relation to this, the researcher has analyzed HSC question paper and syllabus. The researcher discovered a contradictory picture between the statements of students and teachers and the real scenario in classrooms. Guidelines given in the text-book are hardly followed. Many teachers are still unable to come out of their traditional outlook of teaching-learning process. The researcher observed no writing tasks or activities which match Communicative Language Teaching Approach and it results in students' poor writing competence. Lack of motivation, inadequate training facility, poor socio-economic set up and large classrooms – all these deteriorate the condition further. Nevertheless, the researcher concludes this dissertation with an optimistic view regarding writing skill, provided that proper initiatives are taken by authorities concerned.

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# Chapter: 1

## Introduction

### 1. Introduction:

English is more than a language: it is a technology which we must master to compete in the present globalised world and ‘writing’ plays an important role here. Besides, among the four skills, writing is the most difficult and most important skill not only in the academic sector but also in a professional field which requires accuracy and a standard level of writing.

#### 1.1 Why Writing is Difficult:

Writing is the most difficult skill because it takes continuous effort along with rigorous practice to reach a standard level. It involves a lot of techniques and skills which one acquires with conscious effort. As writing is a productive skill, one has to be familiar with many things such as different genres, formal or informal language, etc. So developing writing skill involves some more sub skills which make it more difficult to acquire. Bell and Burnaby (1984) point out that writing is an extremely complex cognitive activity in which the writer is required to demonstrate control of a number of variables simultaneously. A writer has to take care so that his sentences express intended meaning clearly, correctly and effectively. For this reason, the knowledge of probable errors in writing and their causes are essential. So learning to write fluently and expressively is the most difficult of the skills for all language users regardless of first, second or foreign.

#### 1.2 Why Writing is Important:

Writing is important because usually in examinations, the examinees are evaluated on the basis of their writing performance. So, students exhibit their depth of knowledge through writing and they are assessed by their competence in writing rather than speaking. Apart from this, writing has a far reaching impact on practical life as it is required in real life situations. Therefore, it is really important for learners of any language to learn how to write.

#### 1.3 Why the researcher has chosen this topic and level:

The researcher has chosen this topic because one of the greatest problems lies in writing skills in academic fields. Many students are fluent in speaking, but they are not fluent in writing. Here it is mentionable that English is introduced in Bangladesh at the primary level and its teaching continues till the tertiary level. Even then, learners in Bangladesh still find formal writing troublesome. The same common errors which they make during early school reoccur even at college level. Therefore it requires further investigation why after ten years of formal instruction in English learners fail to

develop their writing skill. Here the researcher has chosen students of XII class as his sample because he is currently involved in teaching at this level.

#### **1.4 Importance of writing in the present HSC Syllabus:**

In the present HSC syllabus writing is emphasized to a great extent. Our students take an exam of 200 marks in English. (English 1<sup>st</sup> paper 100, English 2<sup>nd</sup>-100) In English First Paper, Part “C” is the writing part containing 40 marks and in English Second Paper, writing comprises 60 marks. So, in total, students at the H.S.C level take an exam of 100 marks of writing which is 50% of total English marks. (i.e. 200)

#### **1.5 How far writing matters in the Success or Failure at the HSC level:**

Writing matters a lot in the success or failure at the HSC level, because 50% of the total English marks are allocated to writing. As a result, students who are not competent in writing skill do not get good marks in English or they fail in English. Similarly, students having a good command in writing skill usually get higher marks or can face the challenge of writing on any topic in the examination. Apart from the assigned 50% marks, a student’s overall performance greatly depends on his/her writing performance as students are mostly tested on writing skill.

#### **1.6 Importance of writing skill in real life situations:**

Apart from the academic importance, writing skill has a great significance in real life situations. Lack of competence in this skill leads to communication problems in real life as writing is sometimes extremely important or the only media to communicate. Since many students enter higher study after the HSC, they need to have a good command English particularly in writing skill as they have to take examinations in English. A sound competence in writing skill is sometimes mandatory in some professions. Therefore, students should be given opportunities in class to practise those types of writing that they need in the real world beyond the boundary of the classroom. Hammond (1989 in Nunan, 1991) opines that young writers and readers should have orientation towards different types of texts.

#### **1.7 How writing should have been taught at the HSC level:**

Writing should have been taught communicatively. In this connection it is relevant to mention that in 1996 the communicative approach was introduced in classes six, seven and eight and in 2001 the communicative approach was introduced from class six to class twelve. The communicative approach is basically concerned with the development of communicative competence of students in English through the practice of the four skills, listening, speaking, reading and writing. So, writing should be taught in a communicative way. Teachers should encourage and help students to overcome fear and anxiety in writing. Students should be encouraged to write in pairs or groups, so that they can correct each other and hence learn better.

#### **1.8 How writing is taught at the HSC level:**

Even today, writing is taught in a very traditional way at the HSC level. Almost all the teachers want writing from students as a product. They hardly go through the process oriented way. In fact writing is mysteriously neglected at the higher secondary level. Sultana (2007-2008) remarks that teachers

usually make students write on a given topic and correct the product, i.e. the compositions, identifying errors in grammar, spelling, sentence structures and vocabulary selection. However, this does not necessarily help students to develop the writing skill and ultimately this system fails to lead students to a higher level of competence.

## **1.9 Writing should no more be neglected:**

Writing, at the HSC level, should no more be neglected as this is the last level after which students enter into specialized branches of education. Therefore, competence in writing should be developed at this level. The researcher, in this dissertation, takes an initiative to discover the actual causes of students' failure in developing writing skill at the HSC level.

# Chapter 2

## Literature Review

### 1. WRITING:

Writing is one of the most important productive skills. For a second language learner, it is so important to learn how to write in the target language that without knowing it learning that language is an incomplete effort. According to Anita Pincas, the author of “Writing English” (1982), writing is an instrument of both communication and self-expression. Most people, however, especially when writing in a foreign language or second language use it primarily to communicate with other members of their own community or the wider world.

### 2. THE IMPORTANCE OF TEACHING WRITING:

It is really important to teach writing as it is generally more difficult to learn how to write than how to speak. As we see that children in every language automatically learn to speak gradually as they are exposed to the particular linguistic environment, but learning to write takes a more conscious effort. To be proficient in writing in a second language is a matter of long practice. International Teacher Trainer Jeremy Harmer in his book “How to Teach English”(1998: 79) opines that the reasons for teaching writing to the students English as a foreign language include reinforcement, language development, learning style and most importantly development of writing as a skill in its own right.

#### **Reinforcement:**

Some students acquire languages in a purely oral/aural way, but most of us benefit greatly seeing the language written down. The visual demonstration of language construction is invaluable for both our understanding and how it all fits together and as an aid to committing the new language to memory. Students often find it useful to write sentences using new language shortly after they have studied it. (Harmer 1998:79)

#### **Language Development:**

We cannot be sure, but it seems that the actual process of writing helps us to learn as we go along. The mental activity we have to go through in order to construct proper written texts is all part of the ongoing learning experience. (Harmer 1998:79)

#### **Learning Style:**

Some students are fantastically quick at picking up language just by looking and listening. For the rest of us, it may take a little longer. For many learners, the time to think things through, to produce language in a slower way, is invaluable. Writing is appropriate for such learners. It can also be quiet reflective activity instead of the rush and bother of interpersonal face to face communication. (Harmer 1998:79)

#### **Writing as a skill:**

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By far the most important reason for teaching writing, of course, is that it is a basic language skill, just as important as speaking, listening and reading. Students need to know how to write letters, how to put written reports together, how to reply advertisements and increasingly, how to write using electronic media. They need to know some of writing's especial conventions (punctuation, paragraph construction etc.) just as they need to know how to pronounce spoken English appropriately. Part of our job is to give them that skill. (Harmer 1998:79-80)

### 3. TYPES OF WRITING / CLASSIFICATION OF WRITING:

There are many types of writing. Initially writing can be classified into two kinds. Formal writing and Informal writing. (Here our main focus is on formal and academic writing.) Examples of formal writing are writing essays, official letters, job applications, answers to question in exam papers etc and examples of informal writing are personal writing, diary, personal notes etc. Again formal writing can be classified into different genres (different types of literary discourse) such as:

- (i) Narrative
- (ii) Descriptive
- (iii) Procedural/Process
- (iv) Argumentative

Let us discuss each of them with examples.

#### Narrative Genre:

Evelyan Hatch in his book *Discourse ad Language Education* (1992:165) says that narration is thought to be the most universal Genre, because all cultures have storytelling traditions. Storytelling episodes have been collected in many languages and based on such data researchers claim that there is some basic universal template for the narrative. In order to inform listeners or readers about the world of the story, Narratives usually begin with an orientation. This includes the **time** of the story (e.g., “Once upon a time...”) and its spatial **setting** (e.g., “in the kingdom by the sea...”). In addition to the setting of the story world, the **characters** and there roles must be set up (e.g., “there lived an old, old woman named Omi...”)

#### Descriptive Genre:

Hatch (1992:175) says that description does not appear to have a set template. Components could be described for certain types of descriptions – for example, descriptions of objects are usually in terms of their parts and the functions and appearance of these parts. Linde and Labov (1975) analysed apartment descriptions and found that many of their subjects gave listeners a walking tour, pointing out their own likes and dislikes in terms of layout and furnishing as they went along. In descriptions, we expect to find certain types of syntactic structures. For examples we expect to see many copula (be link) sentences, relative clauses and prepositional and adverbial phrases. Presentatives (there is /there are sentences) and descriptive adjectives of shape, size, colour, and number are also common in this genre. Example: There are two pictures on the left wall of the classroom.

The differences between narrative and descriptive genre are given below:

<b>tive</b>	<b>ptive</b>
tive in style	ptive in style
ine is mentioned	he line is mentioned

line is mentioned	ice line is mentioned
acter line is mentioned	aracter line is mentioned
y in past tense	y in present tense

(Evelyn Hatch, 1994)

### Procedural/Process Genre:

The main features of process genre are given bellow:

- Deals with ‘**how to**’ do things
- Imperative sentence
- Passive construction
- No tense marking
- The actors are neutral
- There is a high frequency of linking words used as connective for sequencing
- Modals are used to indicate what should or should not be done and to what extent

Example:

Open the box first. Then bring out the cartridge. It should be placed in the middle of the printer. You should not touch the drum and ...

### Argumentative Genre:

Argumentation has often been defined as the process of supporting or weakening another statement whose validity is questionable or contentious. The structure of argumentative text is even more flexible than the rhetorical modes presented thus far. However, there is a classical description of the structure of this genre that includes introduction, explanation of the case under consideration, outline of the argument, proof, refutation and conclusion.

#### Structure of argumentative genre:

Introduction--→Explanation of the case under the consideration→ Outline of the arguments→Proof of refutation→Conclusion

(Evelyn Hatch, 1994)

Example:

“Do you think money is the only motivating factor for the teachers to teach well? Show logic in favour of your argument.”

## 4. WHAT KIND OF WRITING SHOULD STUDENTS DO AT H.S.C LEVEL IN BANGLADESH.

At the H.S.C level our students take exam of 200 marks in English. (English 1<sup>st</sup> paper 100, English 2<sup>nd</sup> -100) In English First Paper, Part – “C” is the writing part containing 40 marks and in English Second Paper, writing comprises 60 marks. So, in total students at the H.S.C level take an exam of 100 marks of writing which is 50% of total English marks. (i.e. 200)

### 4. APPROACHES TO WRITING /WRITING AS A PRODUCT OR PROCESS:

There are several ways to approach writing in the classroom. According to Vanessa Steele it should be said that there is not necessarily any right or best way to teach the writing skill. The best practice in any situation will depend on the type of student, the text type being studied, the academic system and many other factors.

## **A PRODUCT APPROACH:**

This is a traditional approach in which students are encouraged to mimic a model text. This is usually presented and analysed at an early stage. A model for such an approach is outlined below:

### Stage 1:

Model texts are read and then features of the genre are highlighted. For example, if studying a formal letter, students' attention may be drawn to the importance of paragraphing and the language used to make formal requests.

### Stage: 2

This consists of controlled practice of the highlighted features, usually in isolation. So if students are studying a formal letter, they may be asked to practice the language used to a make formal request, practicing the structures.

### Stage3:

Organization of ideas. This stage is very important. Those who favour this approach believe that the organization of ideas is more important than the ideas themselves and as important as the control of language.

### Stage 4:

The end result of the learning process. Students choose from a choice of comparable writing tasks. Individually, they use the skills, structures and vocabulary they have been taught to produce the product: to show what they can do as fluent and competent users of the language.

## **A PROCESS APPROACH:**

Process approaches to writing tend to focus more on the varied classroom activities which promote the development of language use: brain storming, group discussion, rewriting. Such an approach can have any number of stages, though typical sequence of activities could proceed as follows:

### Stage1:

Generating ideas by brain storming and discussion. Students could be discussing qualities needed to do a certain job, or giving reasons as to why people take drugs or gamble. The teacher remains in the background during this phase, only providing language support if required, so as not to inhibit students in the production of ideas.

### Stage 2:

Students jot down ideas into note form, and judge quality and usefulness of ideas.

### Stage 3:

Students organize ideas into a mind map, spidergram, or linear form. This stage helps to make the (hierarchical) relationship of ideas more immediately obvious, which helps students with the structure of their texts.

### Stage 4:

The students write the first draft. This is done in class and frequently in pairs or groups.

### Stage 5:

Drafts are exchanged, so that students become the readers of each others work. By responding as readers, students develop an awareness of the fact that a writer is producing something to be read by someone else, and thus can improve their own drafts.

Stage 6:

Drafts are returned and improvements are made based upon peer feedback.

Stage 7:

A final draft is written.

Stage 8:

Students once again, exchange and read each others' work and perhaps even write a response or reply.

**A summary of differences:**

Process driven approaches show some differences with task based learning, in that students are given considerable freedom within the task. These are not curbed by pre-emptive teaching of lexical or grammatical items. However, process approaches do not repudiate all interest in the product, (i.e. the final draft). The aim is to achieve the best product possible. What differentiates the process approach from a product centered one is that the outcome of the writing, the product, is not preconceived.

**5. WHAT ARE CHARACTERISTICS OF A GOOD WRITTEN TASK:-**

When we speak to somebody, the listener can express his/her reactions to us but when anybody reads a piece of writing the speaker is not in front of him/her. That is why a piece of writing should be such that a reader can get the message. So a good written task should be explicit and it has to make clear the context and all references – says Penny Ur in *A Course in English Teaching* (1996:160)

Penny Ur (1996:161) also opines that a good written task should be wellorganized and carefully formulated. A written text should conform more to conventional rules of formal than oral text. Writing should usually use a generally acceptable standard variety of the language.

Here mainly our focus is on the formal academic which the students perform in the examination. So in the context of the criteria of a good written task it can be said that it a student presents his theme in a reasonable, intelligible logical manner and if he writes with complete accuracy except for slips, and in the appropriate style, it will be considered as a good written task. In a good piece of writing the writer demonstrates a sense of mastery of the language and of the ability to handle the topic with complete competence.

At the Higher Secondary level, a good written task refers to a well- ordered, well supported details of the concerned topic. It is to be admitted that the performance of the students at the Higher Secondary level in writing is not quite up to the mark in accordance with the standard of a good written task.

**6. HOW TO TEACH WRITING:**

Harmer (2004:2) says that English writing has changed considerably over the centuries. Spoken language for a child is acquired naturally as a result of being exposed to it, whereas the ability to write has to be consciously learned. Since writing is used for a variety of purposes, it is produced in many different forms. Generally, writing process has four main elements:

- i. Planning
- II. Drafting
- III. Editing
- IV. Final version

The elements are discussed in details bellow:

**Planning:**

When planning, writers have to think about three main issues. In the first place they have to consider the purpose of their writing since this will influence (amongst other things) not only the type of text they wish to produce, but also the language they use, and the information they choose to include. Secondly, experienced writers think of the audience they are writing for, since this will influence not only the shape of the writing (how it is laid out, how the paragraphs are structured, etc) but also the choice of language whether, for example, it is formal or informal in tone. Thirdly, writers have to consider the content structure of the piece – that is, how best to sequence the facts, ideas, or arguments which they have decided to include.

**Drafting:**

We can refer to the first version of a piece of writing as a draft. This first go at a text is often done on the assumption that it will be amended later. As the writing process proceeds into editing, a number of drafts may be produced on the way to the final version.

**Editing:**

Once writers have produced a draft they then, usually, read through what they have written to see where it works and where it does not. Perhaps the order of the information is not clear. Perhaps the way something is written is ambiguous or confusing. They may then move paragraphs around or write a new introduction. They may use a different from of words for a particular sentence. More skilled writers tend to look at issues of general meaning and overall structure before concentrating on detailed features such as individual words and grammatical accuracy. The latter two are, of course, important and are often dealt with later in the process.

**Final version:**

Once writers have edited their draft, making the changes they consider to be necessary, they produce their final version. This may look considerably different from both the original plan and the first draft, because things have changed in the editing process. But the writer is now ready to send the written text to its intended audience.

**Stages in teaching writing:**

CONTROLLED WRITING → GUIDED WRITING → FREE WRITING

Types of Controlled and Guided Writing Exercise:

Activity 1:

**i. Coping from substation table**

Example:

dow cream s esta		ide. made of leather. with a red circle. old. ong with small heads.
---------------------------	--	---

shi flag		pf glass.
----------	--	-----------

This is a copying exercise, but the students have a choice of words to copy and therefore have to think about which is the correct choice for each sentence they write. They will not be able to do this exercise if they do not understand what they are copying from the table

**ii. Writing from a Model (with pictures)**

In this kind of exercise, the students are given a model text to guide them and a set of picture prompts to provide the new information. The prompts need not necessarily be in the form of pictures rather they could be in the form of a table of notes.

**iii. Gap Filling**

Gap-filling writing exercises are useful for focusing on particular points of grammar or vocabulary which have recently been taught.

**iv. Writing from Notes**

In this kind of exercise, the students are given information in the form of notes which they have to expand and link together to make a paragraph or a series of paragraphs

**v. Reordering a text**

The main purpose of this type of exercise is to increase the students' awareness of the importance of cohesion in writing.

**Implications for learning and teaching:**

A consideration of the writing process, and of how speaking and writing are related to each other – especially in a world of changing communication media – is not only of academic interest. It also has implications for the way we teach writing. Many traditional approaches, for example, failed to incorporate the kinds of insight into the writing process that we have been discussing. In some teaching, for example, students write a composition in the classroom which the teacher corrects and hands back the next day covered in red ink. The students put the corrected pieces of work in their folders and rarely look at them again. For many years the teaching of writing focused on the written product rather than on the writing process. In other words, the students' attention was directed to *what* rather than the *how* of text construction. Product approaches expected the student to only analyse texts in terms of what language they used and how they were constructed. Such a focus can be highly beneficial for many students. However, we also need to concentrate on the process of writing, and in this regard, there are a number of strategies we need to consider. (Harmer 2004:11)

**The way we get students to plan:**

Before getting students to write we can encourage them to think about what they are going to write – by planning the content and sequence of what they will put down on paper (or type into the computer). There are various ways of doing this including, at one end of the scale, **brainstorming** (where students in pairs or groups come up with as many ideas as they can through discussion) to more guided tasks where the teacher or the course book includes a number of activities which lead



students to plan for a forthcoming task. When students are planning we can encourage them to think not just about the content of what they want to say but also about what the purpose of their writing is, and who the audience is they are writing for.

### **The way we encourage them to draft, reflect, and revise:**

Students who are unused to process writing lessons will need to be encouraged to reflect on what they have written, learning how to treat first drafts as first attempts and not as finished products. We may want to train them in using and responding to correction symbols. We may offer them revision checklists to use when looking through what they have written with a view to making revisions.

One way of encouraging drafting, reflection, and revision is to have students involved in collaborative writing. A pair or group of students working together on a piece of writing can respond to each other's ideas (both in terms of language and content) making suggestions for changes, and so contributing to the success of the finished product. (Harmer 2004:11)

### **The task of the teacher in writing:**

When helping students to become better writers, teachers have a number of crucial tasks to perform. This is especially true when students are doing writing for writing activities where they may be reluctant to express themselves or have difficulty finding ways and means of expressing themselves to their satisfaction.

Among the tasks which teachers have to perform before, during, and after student writing are the following: (Harmer 2004:41)

### **Demonstrating:**

Since, as we have said, students need to be aware of writing conventions and genre constraints in specific types of writing, teachers have to be able to draw these features to their attention. In whatever way students are made aware of layout issues or the language used to perform certain written functions, for example the important issue is that they are made aware of these things – that these things are drawn to their attention. (Harmer 2004:41)

### **Motivating and provoking:**

Student writers often find themselves lost for words especially in creative writing tasks. This is where the teacher can help provoking the students into having ideas enthrusting them with the value of the task and persuading them what fun it can be. It helps for example if teachers go into class with prepared suggestions so that when students get stuck they can immediately get help rather than having themselves to think of ideas on the spot. Time spent preparing amusing and engaging ways of getting students involved in a particular writing task will not be wasted. Students can be asked to complete tasks on the board or reassemble jumbled texts as a prelude to writing. They can be asked to exchange virtual e- mails or discuss ideas before the writing activity starts. Sometimes teachers can give them the words they need to start a writing task as a way of getting them going. (Harmer 2004:41)

### **Supporting:**

To be closely allied to the teacher's role as motivator and provoker is that of supporting. Students need a lot of help and reassurance once they get going, both with ideas and with the means to carry them out. Teachers need to be extremely supportive when students are writing in class, always

available (except during exam writing), and prepared to help students overcome difficulties. (Harmer 2004:42)

### **Responding:**

The way we react to students' written work can be divided into two main categories, that of responding and that of evaluating. When responding, we react to the content and construction of a piece supportively and (but not always) make suggestions for its improvement. When we respond to a student's work at various draft stages, we will not be grading the work or judging it as a finished product. (Harmer 2004:42)

## **7. HOW TO GIVE FEEDBACK:**

No matter what kind of writing students undertake students will need feedback regarding its acceptability, quality and accuracy (Jordan, 1997). The product approach to writing which is the traditional approach to writing sees writing as a polished product. It sees writing as a liner and a one-shot approach. The focus is on error correction and the awarding of a final grade/ number on the written work. On the other hand, the process approach to writing which has been around since the 1970s sees writing as a process of discovery and a multi-draft approach. "Feedback is a fundamental element of the process approach to writing. Feedback can be defined as input from the reader to the writer with the effect of providing information to the writer for revision" (Keh, 1996: 295)

Generally, in traditional approaches to teaching and learning (as well as writing) the teacher is supposed to be the ultimate source of all knowledge and authority. The teacher performs two roles. "The first is that of knower: the teacher is a source of knowledge in terms of both the target language and the choice of methodology. The second role is that of activity organizer: the teacher sets up and steers learning activities in the right direction... and provides authoritative feedback on students 'performance'" (Tudor, 1996: 273-274).

In traditional writing classrooms the role of the teacher has been very limited, namely to set the task, maybe with a brief discussion, and then to examine the work (written task) handed in as product. The teacher's role has primarily been to evaluate learner performance (Little wood, 1981). Over the last two decades teachers' roles have been redefined, broadened and made more flexible to accommodate new changes. Littlewood (1981), Harmer (1983) and Richards, (1990) have classified teacher roles in terms of motivator, controller, assessor, organizer, prompter, participant, resource, tutor, manager, instructor, researcher, learner, counsellor and friend and provider of accurate models. Some of these are traditional and well established e.g. controller and organizer and assessor. Some, however, are reflective of the changes in recent methodology e.g. participant, counsellor, and tutor.

### **Various Forms of Feedback:**

Feedback in general is a response or reaction from another person to something one does. This information can be used to help one assess and improve his/her performance. Feedback is an indispensable tool for improving the teaching and learning of writing, by providing information to students on the performance of their written work. "Through feedback, the writer learns where he or she has misled or confused the reader by not supplying enough information, illogical organization, lack of development of ideas or something like inappropriate word-choice or tense" (Khe, 1996: 295). Some major forms of feedback are discussed below:

Table 1: Major Forms of Feedback



Forms of Feedback
Or Correction
Written Correction
References
Formulation
Edited Commentary
Text Approximation
Written Comments
Codes and Numbers

**Error Correction** (Allwright, 1975; Norrish; 1983; Hendrickson, 1984; Chaudron, 1988):

Feedback on errors is perhaps one of the oldest and most widely reported forms of feedback (Chaudron 1977, 1988; Celce Murcia, 1993) Oral or written correction or both may be provided. In written work, typical ways used by the teacher are either to underline, indicate and correct the errors in the text or simply to indicate them by means of a code in the margin about the kind of error. Sometimes teachers correct everything; sometimes they underline errors and do not correct them; sometimes they tell the students the kind of error they have made but they do not correct it and sometimes they do all three.

For feedback and evaluation purposes, the teacher may in advance give correcting codes (a typed sheet of paper i.e. a key to students consisting of symbols and abbreviations along with their meaning which will be used to indicate the type of error made).

Table 2: Symbols for Correction of Written Work

violation	ng
	tense, i.e. the wrong tense has been used
	form e.g. active /passive, singular/plural
	e usage, i.e. wrong usage of articles
	sition, i.e. wrong usage
	laneous grammatical errors, e.g. countable/uncountable
	class
	formation, i.e. wrongly formed word
	ropriate use of word/phrase

	order, i.e. word/phrase in wrong position in sentence
	omatic expression, i.e. not 'English'
	ice structure, e.g. no verb, two verbs without connective
	ng
	tation
	ion
	ng unclear, rewrite
	i.e. word phrase may be unnecessary

(White & Arndt, 1991; Jordan, R, 1997)

The above chart is only an example. Teachers can test the existing chart by trying it in the classroom and make further modifications as necessary. Based on their students' level, teachers may devise their own code of abbreviations or set of symbols for drawing attention to grammatical features. The teacher while correcting students work may underline or cross out the errors. The above symbols and abbreviations may be used to indicate the type of error made and will appear in the margin. This method helps the students to develop an awareness of their particular areas of weakness. The student may also use the chart for peer correction. Most importantly, this correcting code technique may also assist students to engage in self-correction. In general it helps them to improve accuracy in writing and is effective for grammatical errors.

(Fathman and Whalley, 1990; Makino, 1993 and Jordan, 1997).

The feedback arising from the above method may consist of any of the following: locating errors, coding errors, treatment of errors (Norrish, 1983).

With regard to treatment of errors an important distinction is made between local and global errors (Burt & Kiparsky, 1992; Heaton, 1988). Those which do not hinder the readers' comprehension of the sentence (e.g. misuse of articles, omission of prepositions) are considered local errors. Those which affect overall sentence organization and result in failure to understand the message are referred to as global errors (e.g. order, misuse of connectives). This distinction between local and global errors seem most useful to teachers for deciding which errors to prioritize for correction and also suggests different treatments for each kind. For example, local errors, if often repeated, may well be the result of carelessness and thus may sometimes be ignored by teachers. Global errors require more fundamental treatment by teachers. In line with this argument, Hendrickson (1984) and Bryne (1988) recommend that errors should be corrected selectively. Hendrickson further suggests that three kinds of errors should be dealt with a) errors that impair understanding b) errors that have negative effect on the reader c) errors that occur frequently. This reinforces the importance of attending to global errors more than local errors.

### **Peer Feedback** (Lynch, 1988; Robinson, 1991; Arndt, 1993; Keh, 1996):

Peer feedback is referred to by different names e.g. peer response, peer editing and peer evaluation. In this method students read each others writing in pairs and groups and offer comments and do corrections. Students may use a similar list for correction as the one given above. Peer feedback takes place in the classroom under the guidance of a teacher. This activity is a good exercise for the students as it involves them in communicating with their classmates. The opportunity to discuss each other's essay and writing gives valuable feedback. Students write with more specific focus because

they know that their peers will also be reading their paper. Keh (1996:305) feels that “peer feedback is versatile, with regard to focus and implementation along the ‘process’ writing continuum”. Peer evaluation is helpful because it can raise the analytical power of students. For example, when students read their classmates’ essays they can find their mistakes and at the same time, this helps to remind them to correct and avoid similar mistakes in their own work. It also helps to provide a wider sense of audience and saves teachers’ time (Mendonca and Johnson, 1994)

### **Conferences (Freedman & Sperling, 1985; Hedge, 1988; Keh, 1996; Arndt, 1993):**

Conferences are one to one or face to face meetings between teacher and students which can be arranged individually or in groups. “Conferences can be used at the pre-writing stage, in process stage, evaluation stage or post product stage.” (Keh, 1996:305)

Some student responses to the advantages of conferences are given below:

- i. Students can ask questions
- ii. Students can have a chance to talk more in

## **8. ASSESSING WRITING:**

Assessing is to measure or evaluate something with some certain standard. According to Oxford Advanced Dictionary, to assess means to make an opinion or to judge the nature or quality of something. Khan (1999) says that the teaching and assessment of writing are inextricably linked. Whenever we teach writing we almost always have to assess it. Hence the issue of evaluating students’ writing is an important factor in teaching writing. Especially, at the HSC level assessing writing is extremely important as this level is regarded as a preparatory stage for entrance into the university and at the end of the two year period a public examination is held.

### **SCORING PROCEDURE FOR WRITING ASSESSMENT:**

There are two major approaches to scoring writing samples. One is the familiar holistic scoring in which a global score based on the overall impression of a work is assigned to the scripts. Another main approach to assessing writing is analytic scoring which involves isolating one or more characteristics of writing and writing and scoring them individually. Let us discuss these matters in detail.

#### **Holistic scoring:**

In a typical holistic scoring session, each script is read quickly and then judged against a rating scale, or scoring rubric, that outlines the scoring criteria. The existence of a scoring rubric distinguishes holistic scoring from its earlier, less reliable predecessor, general impression marking, in which criteria are never explicitly stated. The rubric is complemented by a set of anchor or benchmark scripts at each level that are intended to exemplify the criteria for that level, and raters are carefully trained to adhere to the rubric, benchmark scripts, and rater training is not limited to holistic scoring, on the contrary, these features are recognized as good practice in writing assessment, regardless of the type of scale used.

Holistic scoring has become widely used in writing assessment over the past 25 years and has a number of positive features. From a practical standpoint, it is faster (and therefore less expensive) to read script once and assign a single score than to read it several times, each time focusing on a different aspect of the writing. However, as White (1984, 1985), one of the leading proponents of holistic scoring, notes, there are also other advantages to holistic scoring. White maintains that

holistic scoring is intended to focus the readers' attention on the strengths of the writing, not on its deficiencies, so that writers are rewarded for what they do well. Holistic scoring rubrics can be designed to focus readers' attention on certain aspects of writing, depending on what is deemed most essential in the context, and thus can provide important information about those aspects in an efficient manner. White also argues that holistic scoring is more valid than analytic scoring methods because it reflects most closely the authentic, personal reaction of a reader to a text, and that, in analytic scoring methods, too much attention to the parts is likely to obscure the meaning of the whole (White, 1984:409)

On the other hand, holistic scoring has several disadvantages, particularly in second language contexts. One drawback of holistic scoring is that a single score does not provide useful diagnostic information about a person's writing ability, as a single score does not allow raters to distinguish between various aspects of writing such as control of syntax, depth of vocabulary, organization and so on. This is especially problematic for second language writers, since different aspects of writing ability develop at different rates for different writers: some writers have excellent writing skills in terms of content and organization but may have lower grammatical control, while others may have an excellent grasp of sentence structure but may not know their writing in a logical way.

Another disadvantage of holistic scoring is that holistic scores are not always easy to interpret as raters do not usually use the same criteria to arrive at the same scores.

### **Analytic Scoring:**

In analytic scoring, scripts are rated on several aspects of writing or criteria rather than given a single score. Depending on the purpose of the assessment, scripts might be rated on such features as content, organization, cohesion, register, vocabulary, grammar or mechanics. Analytic scoring schemes thus provide more detailed information about a test taker's performance in different aspects of writing and for this reason preferred over holistic schemes by many specialists.

One of the best known and most widely used analytic scales in ESL was created by Jacobs et al (1981). In the Jacobs et al. scale, scripts are rated on five aspects of writing: content, organization, vocabulary, language use and mechanics. The five aspects are differentially weighed to emphasize first content and next language use with organization and vocabulary weighed equally and mechanics receiving very little emphasis. This scale has been adopted by numerous college levels writing programmes, and is accompanied by training materials and sample compositions so that users can fairly quickly learn to apply the scale. A slightly different approach to analytic scoring for second language writing assessment is a set of scales developed for the Test in English for Educational purposes (TEEP) by Cyril Weir (1988). A third example of an analytic scoring system is the Michigan Writing Assessment Scoring Guide (Hamp-Lyons, 1990; 1991a) for grading an entry level university writing examination. Hamp Lyons (1991b) states that the assessment has had a positive reception among students, faculty, advisors and other community members because it reflects the concerns of and is easily interpreted by these varied constituencies.

The major disadvantage of analytic scoring is that it takes longer than holistic scoring, since readers are required to make more than one decision for every script. An additional problem with some analytic scoring schemes is that, if scores on the different scales are combined to make a composite score, a good deal of information provided by the analytic scale is lost. It may also be the case that raters who are experienced at using a particular analytic scoring system may actually rate more holistically than analytically if scores are combined into a single score: experienced raters may target

their ratings towards what they expect the total score to come out to be, and revise their analytic scores accordingly (Charlene Polio, 1998)

The choice about the kind of rating scale to use is not always clear-cut. A useful approach to making a decision is to appeal to the Bachman and Palmer (1996) framework of test usefulness presents a comparison of holistic and analytic scoring based on the six qualities of test usefulness: reliability, construct validity, practicality, impact, authenticity and interactiveness. As Bachman and Palmer notice, the choice of testing procedures involves finding the best possible combination of these qualities and deciding which qualities are most relevant in a given situation. For example, if large numbers of students need to be placed into writing courses with limited resources, a holistic scale may be the most appropriate based on considerations of practicality. In this case, issues of reliability, validity and impact can be ameliorated by the possibility of adjusting placements within the first week of the class. On the other hand, a test of writing used for research purposes may have reliability and construct validity as central concerns, and practicality and impact may be of lesser significance. These issues must be resolved by the test users in considering all aspects of the situation.

## **PROBLEMS OF TEACHING AND LEARNING WRITING AT THE HSC LEVEL:**

There are a lot of problems in teaching and learning writing at the HSC level. Almost all the classrooms are unusually large where it is really very difficult to teach writing. Even if some teachers give some writing tasks, they cannot check and give an effective feedback to students. The duration of a class is very limited, so it is not possible to conduct a writing class in such a short time. Particularly class on writing is not usually arranged. Moreover the classes consist of multi-level of learners, as a result the teaching of writing is little effective. Many students especially in the rural areas are unable to learn how to write English properly due to poverty as it hampers their overall progress. Sometimes the teachers try to escape writing as it takes much time and labour. In some cases the teachers cannot teach writing effectively as they do not know how to apply an effective technique for teaching writing. In fact, very few teachers are trained to teach writing. Even the teachers having training cannot implement their knowledge due to the lack of environmental support. Some students come to the college with a very poor level of English knowledge particularly in writing. Even many students having a good academic record in English are very weak in writing. This is of course due to our defective testing system where there is no proper testing of writing ability.

## **CONCLUSION:**

As a skill writing is extremely important not only in the examinations but also in practical life. So, proper care should be taken to improve writing skill at the HSC level as this level plays a vital role in a learner's life. If the learners at the HSC level can develop their writing skill, they will be able to do well in all walks of life.

# Chapter: 3

## Research Methodology

### 3.1 Introduction

This research tries to discover the causes of HSC students' failure in developing writing skill. So, logically it requires empirical investigation of the present condition of teaching writing and the effectiveness and suitability of the current testing system used at the HSC level in Bangladesh. The researcher is interested in making a thorough investigation of the present teaching method of writing and testing system of English at the HSC level. The design and construction of the research instruments, the sampling plan of the empirical analysis, the process of administration of the empirical study and the method of processing and analyzing the collected data have been described in details in this chapter.

### 3.2 Purpose of the Empirical Investigation

The aims and objectives of the empirical investigation of this dissertation are to study and discover the actual causes of the students' failure in developing writing skill at the higher secondary level with a view to bringing about some effective solutions. For this purpose, an empirical investigation of the likings and dislikings of students, beliefs, mentalities, experiences, achievements of teachers, teaching learning environments and teaching techniques were considered as all these factors are related to both the language teaching and language learning situation. The results of the discovery can bring a positive change by removing the unnecessary fear in writing.

### 3.3 Research Question:

This research had the following research question:

What are major factors associated with students' failing to develop the writing skill at the HSC level?

### 3.4 Research Hypotheses

This research had four hypotheses which are as follows:

1. Lack of motivation and opportunities on the part of learners to improve their writing ability.
2. Lack of expertise and opportunities on the part of teachers to impart this skill effectively.
3. Testing system of HSC Examination is not conducive to the development of writing skill and it leads to memorization.
4. Students in general are not able to write English freely and correctly.



### **3.5.1 Reasons for these hypotheses:**

Students at the higher secondary level fail to develop the writing skill because of their lack of motivation. At the same time, the learners get fewer opportunities than they deserve. More over lack of expertise is another main reason of our students' failure in developing writing skill. In many cases teachers do not get enough opportunity to impart this skill effectively. Even the testing system of HSC examination does not compel the learners to be creative in the writing rather it paves the way of memorization. This research was based on hypotheses that if students are taught the techniques of writing, they will be able to develop their writing skill.

### **3.6 Methodology of the Empirical Investigation:**

The nature and purpose of this study matches basically with those at a descriptive study. Considering this fact the survey method was chosen for the empirical study. Three main techniques of the survey method-questionnaire survey, interview and observation were adopted for the study. Therefore, the methods for data collection employed for the study were – 1) Students` Questionnaire Survey, 2) Students` Interview, 3) Teachers` Questionnaire, 4) Teachers` Interview and 5) Classroom Observation. These methods being kept in mind, instruments for the dissertation were designed and administered with care.

In this research, data were collected from different sources through the use of different methods for corroborating the findings. Particularly, the questionnaire survey, interview and observation methods were used for the survey to ensure triangulation and to enhance the accuracy, authenticity, validity and reliability of the data collected.

### **3.7 Instruments Used for the Empirical Investigation:**

The instruments used in this study included: 1) Questionnaire for students, 2) Questionnaire for Teachers and 3) A classroom Observation Schedule. However, interviews of students and teachers were taken on the basis of their opinions and reflections on the subject matter. Hence the interviews of the teachers and the students were semi-guided.

### **3.8 Construction of the Instruments Used for the Empirical Investigation:**

The instruments used in the research were constructed in accordance with the purposes of the study. As the main objectives of this dissertation are to reveal the causes of failure of the writing skill, the empirical study attempted to investigate the factors related to the teaching-learning system of writing skill in different institutions. In this regard, several books on research methodology in English language teaching, education, sociology and psychology were modelled on previous instruments used by other researches in similar kinds of research. In constructing the questionnaires, the intelligibility of the statements used in the questionnaires was taken into consideration because the students were to answer them. Questionnaires for teachers were prepared in such a way that they would not cause any confusion or misunderstanding. Sometimes, questions in both the questionnaires – the students` and the teachers` - were the same and sometimes different depending on their relevance. However, difficult words and technical terms were avoided and if used, they were

explained before administering the questionnaires, the instruments were piloted and necessary changes were made.

### **3.9 Detailed Description and Discussion of the Students` Questionnaire:**

The students` Questionnaire included two sections. There were 12 questions. Description of the two sections is given here.

#### **3.9.1 Section – I: Personal Information:**

It is a brief section for collection the personal details of respondents. The personal details included the name of the institutions, place and class status of the respondents. The date of the survey was also included in this section. The option for participants` name was willingly omitted so that they do not feel embarrassed to express their genuine feelings.

#### **3.9.2 Section-II: Students` Beliefs, Choices, Opinions, Achievements, Experiences and Expectations Regarding Learning English:**

This section includes 12 questions. They were set to gather information about students` beliefs, choices, opinions- achievements, experiences and expectations regarding the learning of English and various factors related to them.

Of the 12 questions, questions 2,3,4,7,8,10, and 11 were concerned with the students, personal beliefs, choices, experiences, opinions and expectations. Questions 1, 5, 6,8,11, and 12 are set regarding the role of the teacher in the classroom. However all the questions were close ended to avoid any sort of confusion and misunderstanding and the interview was a complementary to the questionnaire.

Questions were constructed on the basis of the research topic and the aims of the research. The questionnaire was constructed to investigate the actual practical situation of teaching writing skill at the higher secondary level.

### **3.10 Detailed Description and Discussion of the Teachers` Questionnaire:**

The teachers` questionnaire includes two sections. There are 15 questions in this questionnaire. Description of the two sections is given here.

#### **3.10.1 Section-I Personal Information:**

It is a brief section which describes the personal details of the respondents. The personal details included the name of the institutions, teaching experience, designation, and place. The date of the survey is also included in this section. The option for participants` name was willingly omitted so that they did not feel embarrassed to express their genuine feelings.

#### **3.10.2 Section – II:**

This section included 15 questions. Questions were set to gather information about the teachers` beliefs, opinions, choices, achievements, experiences, expectations and activities regarding the



teaching-learning of writing skill and various factors related to them. Of the 15 questions, question # 6 revealed the teachers' training. Questions 1,2, and 3 were concerned with classroom activities of teachers. Questions 5,8,10 and 13 are concerned with teachers techniques applied in the classroom. Question # 4 and 15 were about the timing of the class. Question # 7 was about the environment of the classroom. Question # 9 was about the relationship of the teacher with students. Question #12 is concerned with the teachers' opinion about the prevailing exam system. Question # 14 was about students' attitude towards writing.

### **3.11 Detailed Description and Discussion of the Instrument for teachers' Interview:**

There were fourteen questions for teachers' interview. Of them eleven questions were close ended and three were open ended. The open ended questions were constructed to obtain the opinion of teachers rather than confining them to any presumed opinions. The interviews were semi-guided.

### **3.12 Detailed Description and Discussion of the Instrument for students' interview:**

Ten open ended questions were set to obtain a complete picture of teaching – learning of writing skill. Most of the cases group interviews of the students' were conducted.

### **3.13 Instruments for classroom observation:**

A classroom observation schedule (see Appendix E) was made for observing classrooms. It included statements on various aspects of teaching writing skill in the classroom. It also included statements on teacher's role and students' participation. The main points considered for classroom observation were the number of students, size and condition of the classroom, medium of interactions of students, method of teaching used in the classroom, classroom activities, teaching of the writing techniques.

### **3.14 Sampling Plan:**

In this study, the cluster sampling method was used because the same curriculum, syllabus, textbooks and teaching methods were followed in all secondary schools except English medium schools. However, in all districts, the number of the government schools is less than the number of non-government schools. Hence, any district of the country can be considered a microcosm of the whole country.

In this study, Dhaka was chosen only because it was convenient for the researcher to conduct the research there. Two Missionary colleges and two private colleges were visited. The English medium schools were not included in this study as they are not representative of the mainstream of the secondary educational system of Bangladesh.

For the questionnaire survey and interview of the students, students of class twelve were particularly chosen because they were at the final stage of the higher secondary level and they were matured enough to express their problems more specifically. However, these respondents were chosen from the Science, Arts Commerce background to get an overall idea about their writing performance. As for teachers, an attempt was made to choose two teachers from each college one, experienced and the other young.

### **3.14.1 Sampling Plan for Students' Interview:**

For interview, a different survey questionnaire was used. Discussion with the same students took place. In this section, they gave some more information, not thought of earlier. However, sometimes, they tried to give answers in English and many of them were good at speaking.

### **3.14.2 Sampling Plan for Teachers' Questionnaire Survey:**

The teachers' questionnaire survey was conducted on 8 teachers selected from the four colleges. As mentioned earlier, teachers were selected randomly only on the basis of experience. One from the young teachers and one from the experienced teachers were chosen.

### **3.14.3 Sampling Plan for Teacher's Interview:**

The same teachers were interviewed on the basis of the same questions. But in the interview some newer information came out. Interestingly, sometimes, other English teachers, who were not respondents of the survey questionnaire, gave their opinions.

### **3.14.4 Sampling Plan for Classroom Observation:**

Classroom observation was done in all the four colleges. Four lessons by the four responding teachers were observed. The same observation schedule was used in every observation.

## **3.15 Administration of the Empirical Work:**

The empirical investigation was conducted according to the sampling plan of this study. Brief accounts of the administration process of the empirical investigation i.e. administration of the students' questionnaire survey and their interviews, those of the teachers, and finally classroom observations are presented here.

### **3.15.1 Administration of the Students' Questionnaire Survey and Interview:**

After taking the permissions of the concerned English language teachers and the Principals of selected colleges, the date and time of the survey and interview were fixed. Following the schedule, colleges were visited and an introductory speech on this study was given. Questionnaires were given to the students and classified and explained for their convenience in Bangla. Questionnaires were collected after the answers were given. Then some questionnaires were read and the students were asked for further clarification. Some more information came out and the researcher took notes. The interview section began and proceeded thus.

### **3.15.2 Administration of the Teachers' Questionnaire Survey and Interview:**

The teachers' questionnaire survey was conducted through personal contact with them. Most of the questionnaires were handed to them and collected on the spot. At the time of collection some

questions were asked to them again, and they gave some more information that the researcher noted down. Sometimes, the Principals of the institutions were interested in English and hence their responses were taken. During the interview some other interested teachers made their valuable comments as well.

### **3.15.3 Process of Classroom Observation:**

Classroom observation was done in four lessons of four different teachers who were the respondents of the survey. For this, their permission and the permission of the Principals of the colleges were taken. The researcher sat at the back of the classroom and filled in the classroom observation schedule and checked list and took important notes.

### **3.16 Processing and Analyzing Data:**

Most of the questions set in the questionnaires were administered to collect qualitative data as the paper basically attempts to analyse opinions and views of the people involved; the number of respondents is not considered to be important. However, some closed questions were asked and the results are presented qualitatively. Qualitative data are discussed and analyzed elaborately.

### **3.17 Limitations:**

While conducting the research, the researcher personally faced many problems. The institutions did not want to allow the researcher even though the researcher tried his best to make them understand. When the survey needed for the research was conducted, students were busy with their preparations for the first semester examination. Despite these difficulties, the researcher tried his best to maintain the validity and reliability of the research and hence, every detail is provided. However, some more colleges could be visited because the four colleges which were visited are not typical.

### **3.18 Conclusion:**

This chapter presents the design and administration of the research work. It provides the details of the sampling plan, questionnaire construction, questionnaire administration and survey, interviews, classroom observation and the method of data collection and analysis. Research questions and hypothesis are also mentioned to show the relevance of the activities of the research to its objectives.

# Chapter 4

## Data Analysis & Presentation

This chapter presents the analysis of the data collected through questionnaire, interview, observation checklist and sample writing. The analysis of the data is presented chronologically which is as follows:

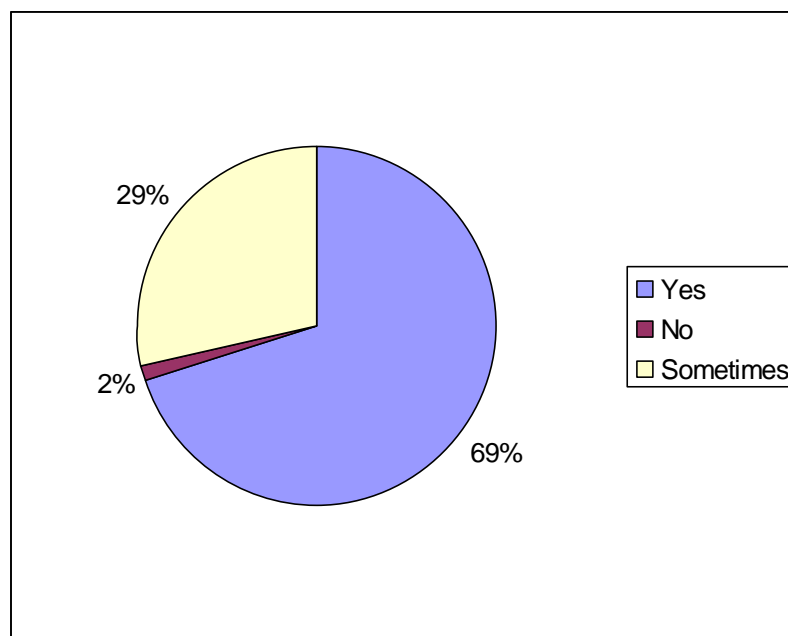
1. Result of the Survey of Questionnaire for Students
2. Result of Students' Interview
3. Result of the Survey of Questionnaire for Teachers
4. Result of the Survey of Teachers' Interview
5. Result of Observation Checklist
6. Analysis of Sample Writings

## Result of the Survey of Questionnaire for Students

The first question was “Do you practise writing in your classroom?” Out of two hundred students one hundred and forty said “yes”, only three students said “no” and fifty seven students said “sometimes”. The percentages are shown in the following table and pie chart:

name of the Institutions	Yes	No	Sometimes
Sheswari Girls’ College	36.36%	10.90%	52.72%
Notre Dame College	88.33%	1.66%	10%
Holy Cross College	77.77%	22.22%	0%
Parunnisa Noon College	80.26%	0%	19.74%
Average	70%	1.5%	28.5%

Table: 1.1



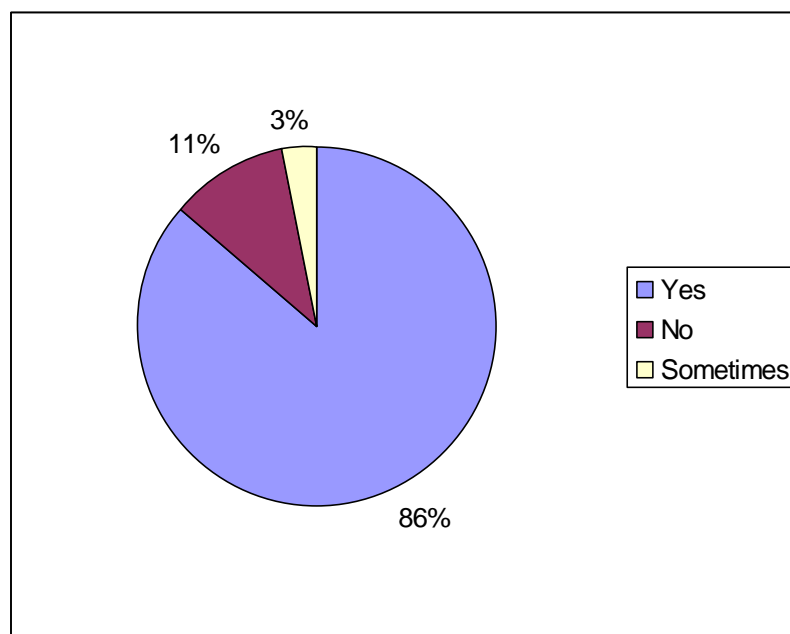
Pie chart: 2.1

The pie chart shows students’ practice of writing in the classroom. According to the chart most students do writing activities in the classroom. However, during the observation the researcher did not find that.

The second question was “Do you think writing in English is interesting?” Out of two hundred students, one hundred seventy three said “yes” and twenty one said “no” but only six students said “sometimes”. The percentages are shown in the following table and pie chart:

Name of the Institutions	Yes	No	Sometimes
dhesawari Girls’ College	72.72%	7.27%	20%
re Dame College	95%	1.66%	3.33%
ly Cross College	77.77%	0%	22.22%
quarunnisa Noon College	89.47%	1.32%	9.21%
Average	86.5%	10.5%	3%

Table: 1.2



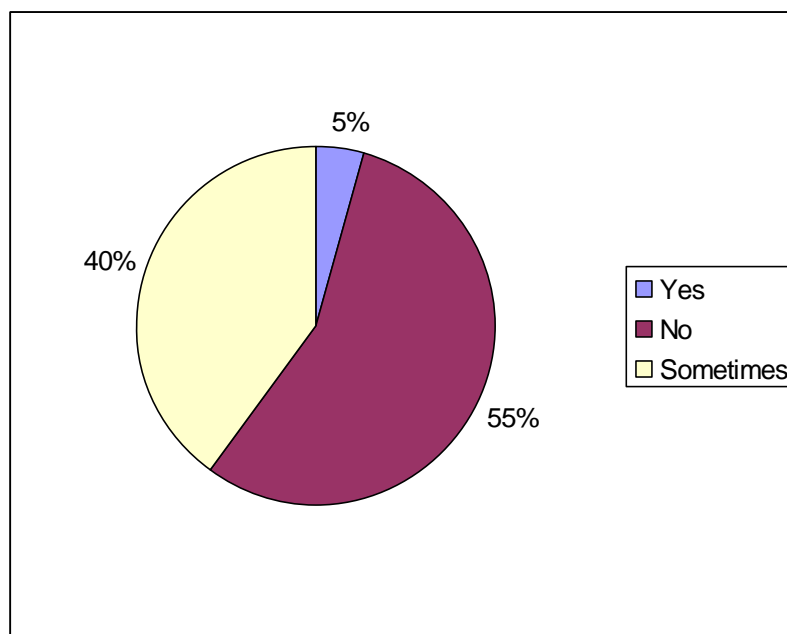
Pie chart: 2.2

The pie chart gives us statistics related to students’ opinion whether they enjoy writing in English or not. According to the chart majority of students enjoy writing in English. However, during the interview with teachers the researcher was reported that students did not enjoy writing in English that much.

Question no. 3 was “Do you fear writing activities in English?” Out of two hundred students, only nine said: yes”, eighty students said “sometimes” but one hundred eleven said that they did not fear writing activities. The percentages are shown in the following table and pie chart:

of the Institutions	Yes	No	Sometimes
dheshawari Girls’ College	3.63%	38.18%	60%
re Dame College	6.66%	65%	28.33%
ly Cross College	0%	88.88%	11.11%
quarunnisa Noon College	3.95%	56.58%	39.47%
Average	5%	55%	40%

Table: 1.3



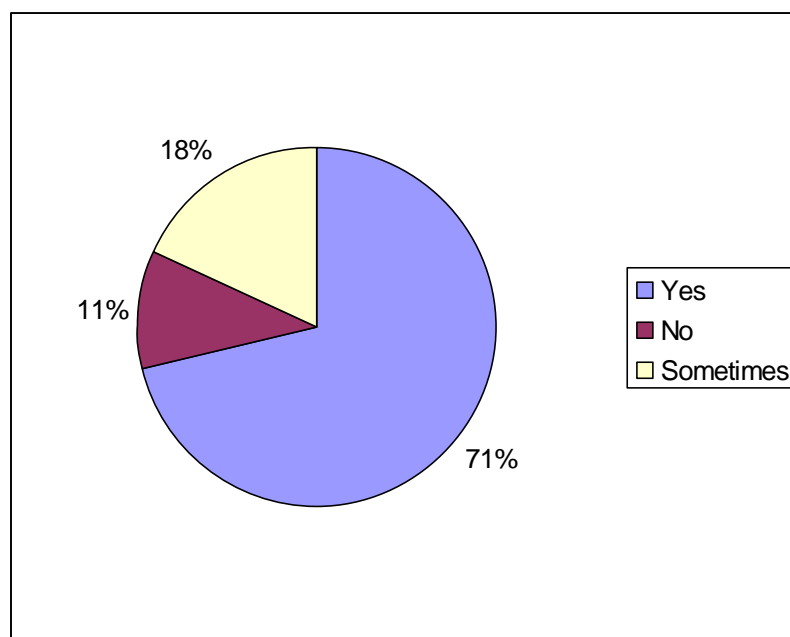
Pie chart: 2.3

The pie chart shows students’ attitude towards writing activities. According to the chart the students are not afraid of writing activities in English. However, during the interview with teachers, they said that many students were afraid of writing activities in English.

Question no 4 was “Do you like the way in which you are taught writing in the classroom?” Out of two hundred students one hundred forty two said “yes”, twenty two students said “no” and thirty six students said “sometimes”. The percentages are shown in the following table and pie chart:

of the Institutions	Yes	No	Sometimes
dhesawari Girls' College	29.09%	36.36%	34.54%
re Dame College	90%	3.33%	6.66%
ly Cross College	<b>88.88%</b>	0%	11.11%
quarunnisa Noon College	81.58%	3.95%	14.47%
Average	71%	11%	18%

Table: 1.4



Pie chart: 2.4

The pie chart presents students' opinion about the procedure of teaching writing in the classroom. According to the chart, most of students like the way in which they are taught writing in the classroom. However, during an open discussion with students many of them said that they did not like teachers' way of teaching writing in the classroom.

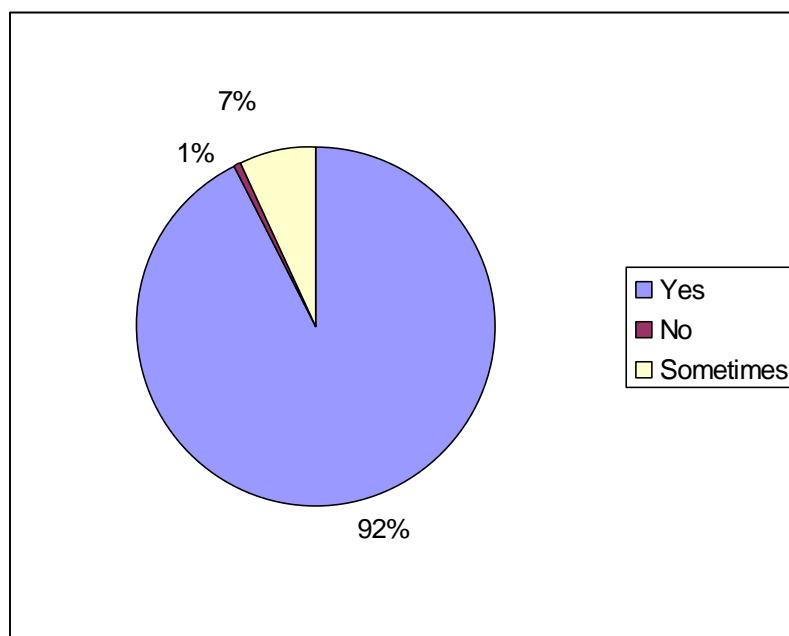
Question no. 5 was "Does your teacher encourage you to practise writing in classroom?" Out of two hundred students, one hundred eighty five said "yes", fourteen students said "sometimes" and only one student said "no". The percentages are shown in the following table and pie chart:

of the Institutions	Yes	No	Sometimes
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dhesawari Girls' College	83.63%	0%	16.36%
re Dame College	95%	0%	5%
ly Cross College	100%	0%	0%
quarunnisa Noon College	96.05%	0%	3.95%
Average	92.5%	0.5%	7%

Table: 1.5



Pie chart: 2.5

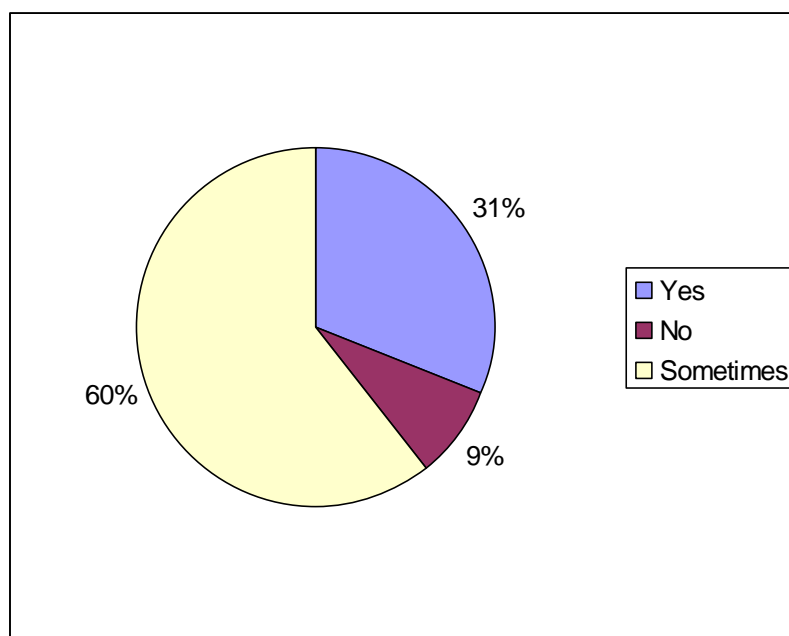
The pie chart gives us statistics related to teachers' encouragement in writing practice in classroom. According to the chart, although majority of students supported teachers' encouragement in writing practice in classroom, in reality the researcher found a different picture during his classroom observation.

Question no. 6 was "Does your teacher correct your error individually in the classroom? Out of two hundred students, sixty two said "yes", One hundred twenty one students said "sometimes" and seventeen students said "no". The percentages are shown in the following table and pie chart:

of the Institutions	Yes	No	Sometimes
dhesawari Girls' College	29.09%	16.36%	54.54%
re Dame College	36.66%	3.33%	60%
ly Cross College	0%	22.22%	77.77%

quarunnisa Noon College	35.52%	13.16%	51.32%
Average	31%	8.5%	60.5%

Table: 1.6



Pie chart: 2.6

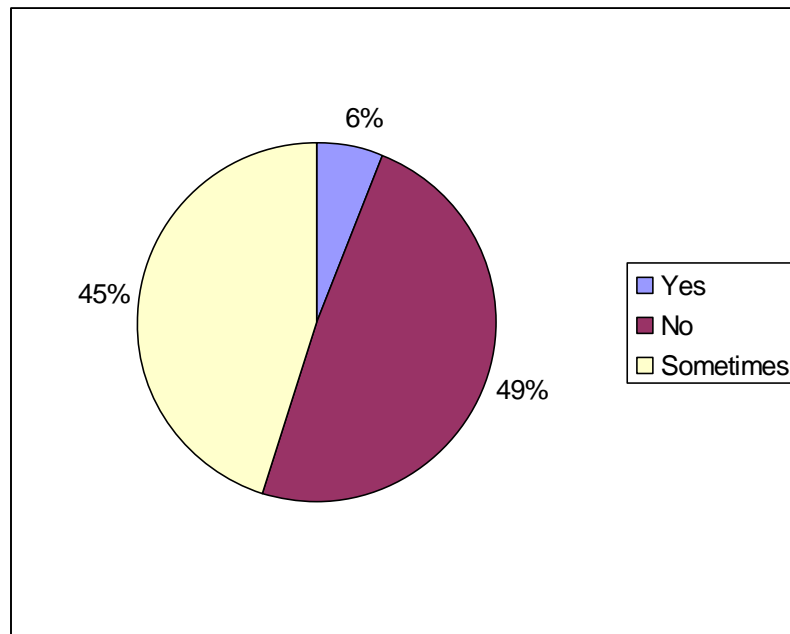
The pie chart shows teachers' correction procedure in the classroom. According to the chart, teachers sometimes correct students' error individually in the classroom. Similar opinions came from teachers also and they said that it was not possible to correct error individually in an unusually large classroom.

Question no. 7 was "Do you depend on memorization to pass your writing examination? Out of one hundred and ninety four students, twelve said "yes", eighty eight students said "sometimes" and ninety four students said "no". The percentages are shown in the following table and pie chart:

of the Institutions	Yes	No	Sometimes
dheshawari Girls' College	3.70%	40.74%	55.55%
re Dame College	3.44%	44.82%	51.72%
ly Cross College	0%	83.33%	16.66%
quarunnisa Noon College	9.21%	55.26%	35.53%

Average	6.18%	48.45%	45.36%
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Table: 1.7



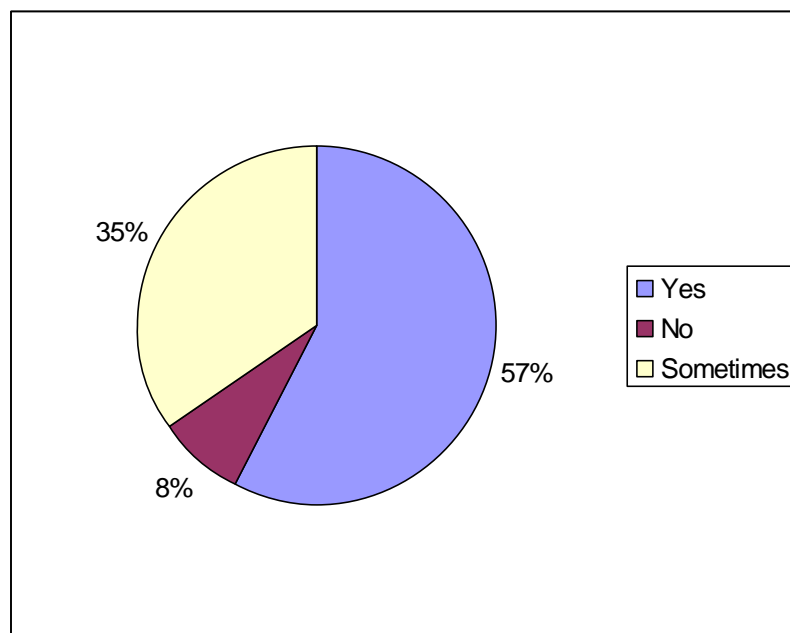
Pie chart: 2.7

The pie chart gives us statistics related to students' dependency on memorization to pass writing examination. According to the chart, very few students depend on memorization. However, teachers said that students were dependent on memorization to a great extent.

Question no. 8 was "Can you write freely on any topic?" Out of one hundred and eighty students, one hundred four said "yes", sixty two students said "sometimes" and fourteen students said "no". The percentages are shown in the following table and pie chart:

of the Institutions	Yes	No	Sometimes
dheshawari Girls' College	16.66%	25.92%	57.40%
re Dame College	10.34%	29.31%	60.34%
ly Cross College	16.66%	16.66%	66.66%
quarunnisa Noon College	31.58%	9.21%	59.21%
Average	57.7%	7.77%	34.4%

Table: 1.8



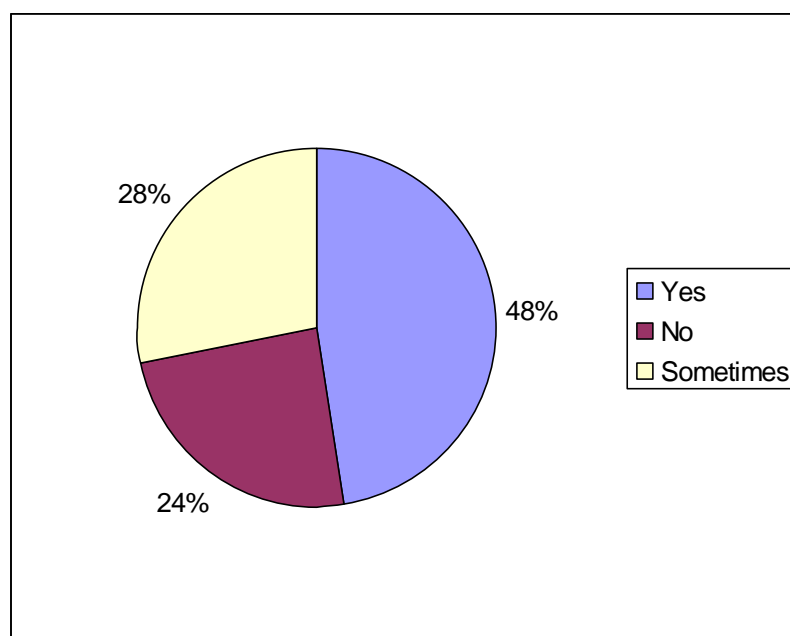
**Pie chart: 2.8**

The pie chart presents students' ability to write freely on any topic. According to the chart, majority of students have the ability. However, in the sample writing (See Appendix F), the researcher found a different picture as a large number of students could not perform well.

Question no. 9 was "Does your teacher discourage you to memorize?" Out of one hundred and ninety four students, ninety two said "yes", fifty five students said "sometimes" and forty seven students said "no". The percentages are shown in the following table and pie chart:

of the Institutions	Yes	No	Sometimes
dheshawari Girls' College	61.11%	16.66%	22.22%
re Dame College	74.13%	20.68%	5.17%
ly Cross College	83.33%	16.66%	0%
quarunnisa Noon College	25%	21.05%	53.95%
Average	47.42%	24.22%	28.35%

**Table: 1.9**



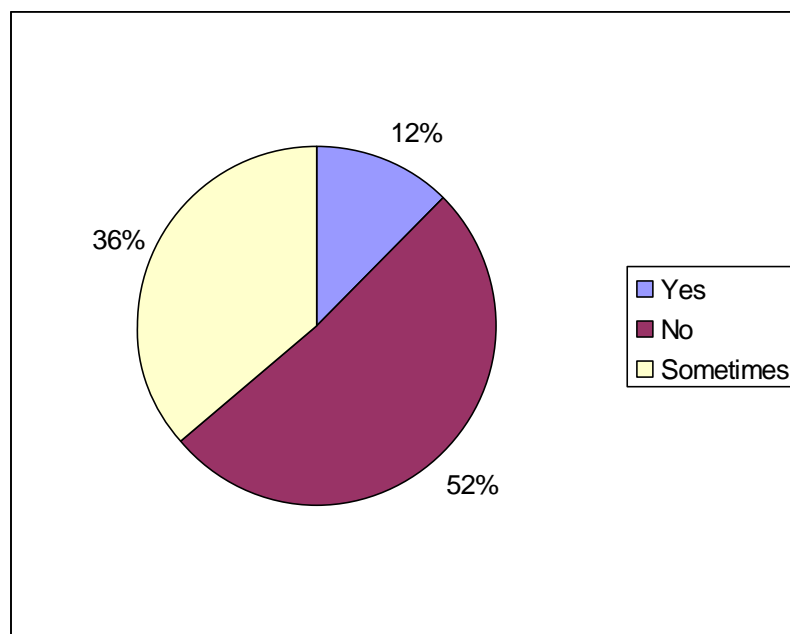
Pie chart: 2.9

The pie chart shows the teachers' role in discouraging students to memorize. According to the chart a large number of students said that teachers discourage them to memorize. However, during an open discussion with students, many of them said that the teachers gave them some selected topics to memorize for the examination.

Question no. 10 was "Do you think you have enough scope to improve writing skill in your class?" Out of one hundred and ninety-six students, one hundred and twelve said "yes", thirty five students said "sometimes" and forty nine students said "no". The percentages are shown in the following table and pie chart:

of the Institutions	Yes	No	Sometimes
dheshawari Girls' College	20.37%	55.55%	24.07%
re Dame College	91.37%	5.17%	3.44%
ly Cross College	83.33%	0%	<b>16.66%</b>
quarunnisa Noon College	57.89%	22.37%	19.74%
Average	57.15%	25%	17.85%

Table: 1.10



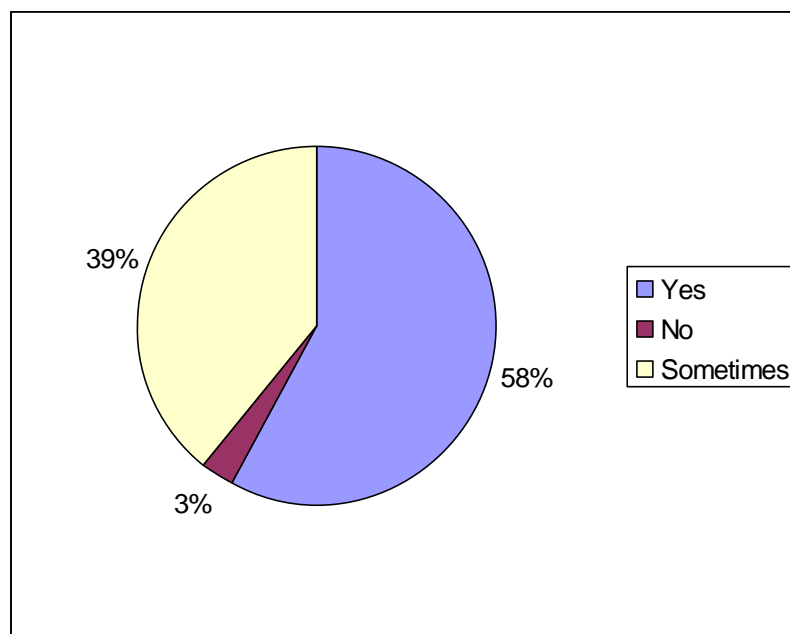
Pie chart: 2.10

The pie chart gives us statistics related to how far students have congenial atmosphere to improve writing skill in there class. According to the chart, most students agree that they have sufficient scope to improve writing skill. However, during the classroom observation the researcher discovered that it was not true.

Question no. 11 was “While writing do you ever feel that you do not have enough vocabulary for writing?” Out of one hundred and ninety-four students, one hundred twelve said “yes”, seventy six students said “sometimes” and six students said “no”. The percentages are shown in the following table and pie chart:

of the Institutions	Yes	No	Sometimes
dhesawari Girls’ College	79.62%	1.85%	18.51%
re Dame College	65.51%	5.17%	29.31%
ly Cross College	16.66%	16.66%	66.66%
quarunnisa Noon College	32.89%	1.32%	65.79%
Average	57.73%	3.09%	39.17%

Table: 1.11



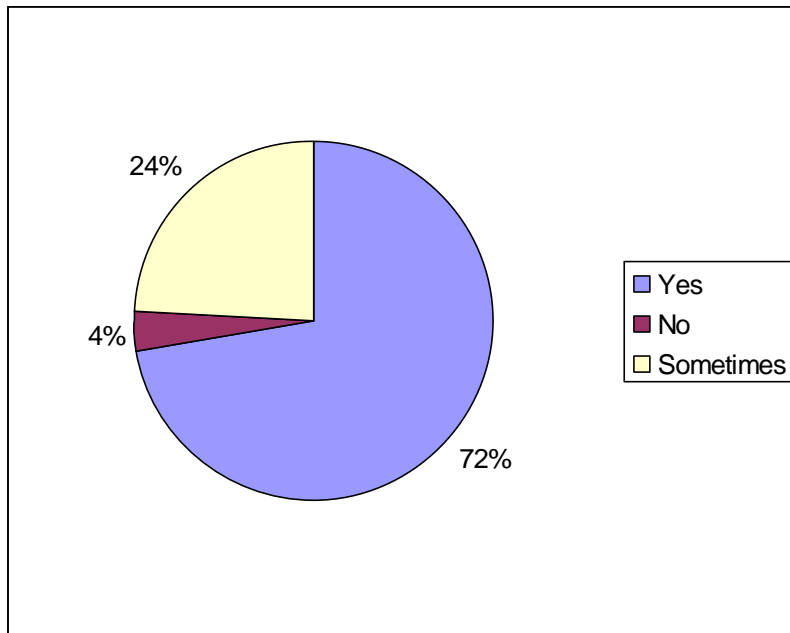
Pie chart: 2.11

The pie chart indicates students' feeling about their adequacy of word stock for writing. According to the chart, very few students think their word stock is sufficient. However, in the sample writing the researcher did not find remarkable use of standard vocabulary.

Question no. 12 was "Does your teacher help you in doing your writing task?" Out of one hundred and ninety-four students, one hundred and forty said "yes", forty seven students said "sometimes" and seven students said "no". The percentages are shown in the following table and pie chart:

of the Institutions	Yes	No	Sometimes
Adhesawari Girls' College	40.74%	5.55%	53.70%
Immaculate Mary College	91.37%	0%	8.621%
St. Mary's Cross College	66.66%	0%	33.33%
Shaharunnisa Noon College	82.89%	5.27%	11.84%
Average	72.16%	3.60%	24.22%

Table: 1.12



Pie chart: 2.12

The chart gives us statistics related to teachers' help in doing students' writing task. According to the chart most students admitted teachers' help in writing task. However, during an open discussion with teachers, they said that it was not always possible for them to help students in doing the writing task due to time constraint.



# Interview

There were ten close-ended questions for students' interview. About four hundred students were interviewed on the basis of random selection. It was a group interview. The questions were asked by the researcher and the answers were noted down by an average estimation.

The first question was "Do you do any writing activity in your class? What types of writing tasks do you do? How often?" In response to the question, all students replied in affirmative. They said that they write short essays, stories, paragraphs, dialogues, reports, compositions, applications and summaries. However, they said that they did not have any fixed particular class for writing.

The second question was "How do you do your writing task?" Individually or in pairs/groups? In response to this question, most students said that they do the writing task individually. They have very little idea about pair work or group work.

The third question was "Does the teachers discuss the topic of writing with you in class before asking you to write? What does the teacher do?" In response to the question, majority of students said that the teacher discusses the topic of writing with them in class before asking them to write. However, during the observation, the researcher did not find that.

The fourth question was "Do you know how to write a paragraph or an essay? What do you know?" In response to the question, all students replied in the affirmative. They said that they knew the procedure and technique of writing paragraph or an essay. However, when the researcher asked them if they knew about topic sentence of a paragraph, most students replied in the negative.

The fifth question was "Do you have any problems with grammar and vocabulary?" In response to the question, about 50% students said that they had problems with grammar and vocabulary while the rest of students were confident about their competence and vocabulary.

The sixth question was "Does the teacher give you feedback on your writing? How does he do that?" In response to the question, about 60% students said that the teacher gives them feedback on their writing, and another 40% remarked that the teacher cannot give them feedback on their writing due to time constraint. They also said that teachers were reluctant in giving them feedback.

The seventh question was "Do you memorize paragraphs or essays for your exam? Why do you do that?" In response to the question, majority students said that they do not memorize paragraphs or essays for their examination. However, some students said that they memorize paragraphs or essays for their examination and they do so because they cannot write freely in their own words and teachers give them some selected topics to memorize.

The eighth question was "What other problems do you have with the development of your writing skill?" In response to the question, students said that they do not know how to start writing and how to conclude. One student said, "I do not know how to organize my thought." While another student said, "I feel problem with spelling and choosing the appropriate word." An interesting comment came from another student who said, "If I write wrong, my teacher scolds and that is why I do not write."

The ninth question was “What would you like to do in a writing class? What would you like your tasks to do?” In response to the question, students said that they like story writing and dialogue in a writing class. They also said that they can write well if the teacher gives them some pre-writing activities. However, the researcher found pre writing activities only in one institution out of four institutions.

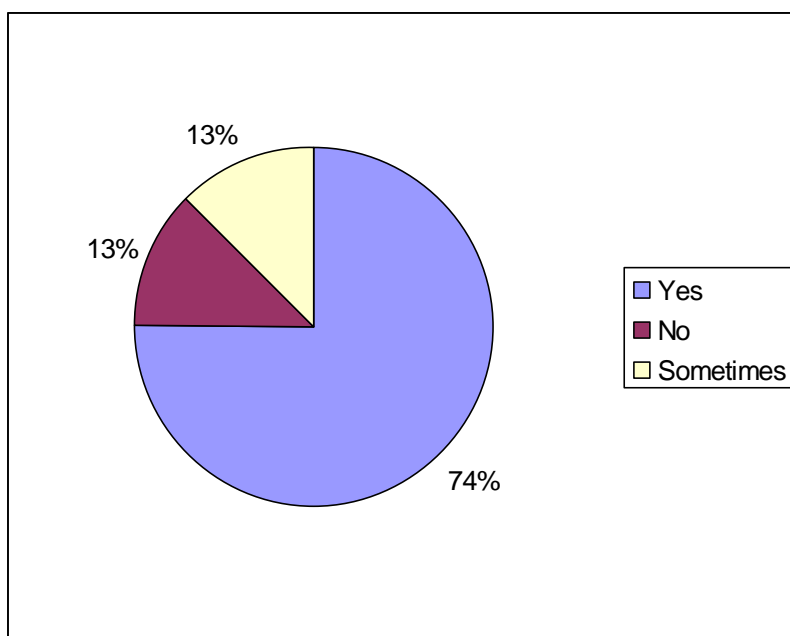
The tenth question was “Do you feel that you cannot write because of your inability to write sentences correctly?” In response to the question, about 50% students replied in the affirmative whereas rest of students said that their sentences are correct but sometimes they do not have any idea about the given topic.

# Result of the Survey of Questionnaire for Teachers

Question no. 1 was “Do you emphasize writing activities in your class?” Out of eight teachers, six answered ‘yes’, one answered ‘no’ and one answered ‘sometimes’. The percentages are shown in the following table and pie-chart:

Name of the Institutions	Yes	No	Sometimes
Madheswari Girls' College	100%	0%	0%
Sacred Heart College	50%	0%	50%
St. Mary's Cross College	50%	50%	0%
Shaharunnisa Noon College	100%	0%	0%
Average	75%	12.5%	12.5%

Table: 1.1



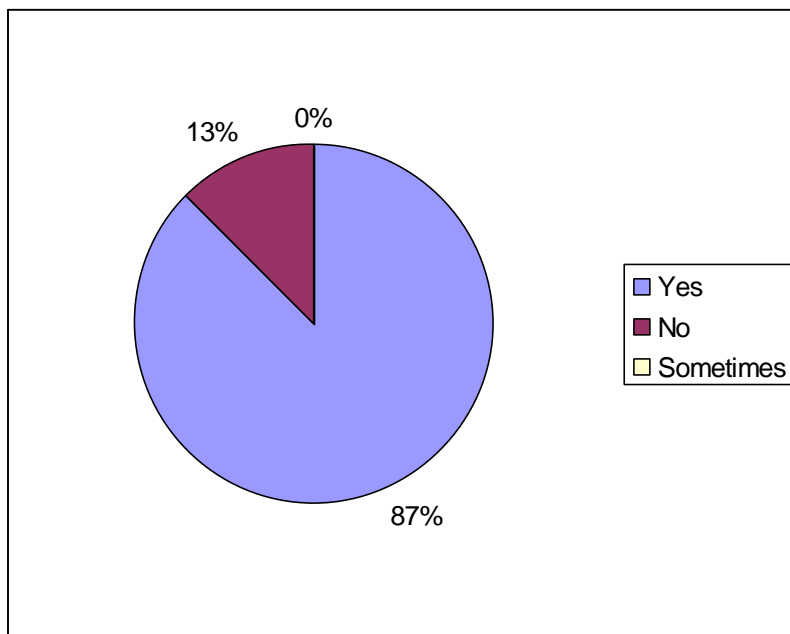
Pie Chart: 2.1

The pie chart shows teachers' emphasis on writing activities in class. According to the chart, most teachers emphasize writing activities in class. However, during an informal interview with guardians, they said that teachers were more careful in their coaching centers than in class.

Question no. 2 was “Do you have your own lesson plan for classroom activities?” Out of eight teachers, seven answered ‘yes’, one answered ‘no’ and none answered ‘sometimes’. The percentages are shown in the following table and pie-chart:

Name of the Institutions	Yes	No	Sometimes
Madheswari Girls' College	100%	0%	0%
Sacred Heart College	100%	0%	0%
Saintly Cross College	50%	50%	0%
St. Ignace's Noon College	100%	0%	0%
Average	87.5%	12.5%	0%

Table: 1.2



Pie chart: 2.2

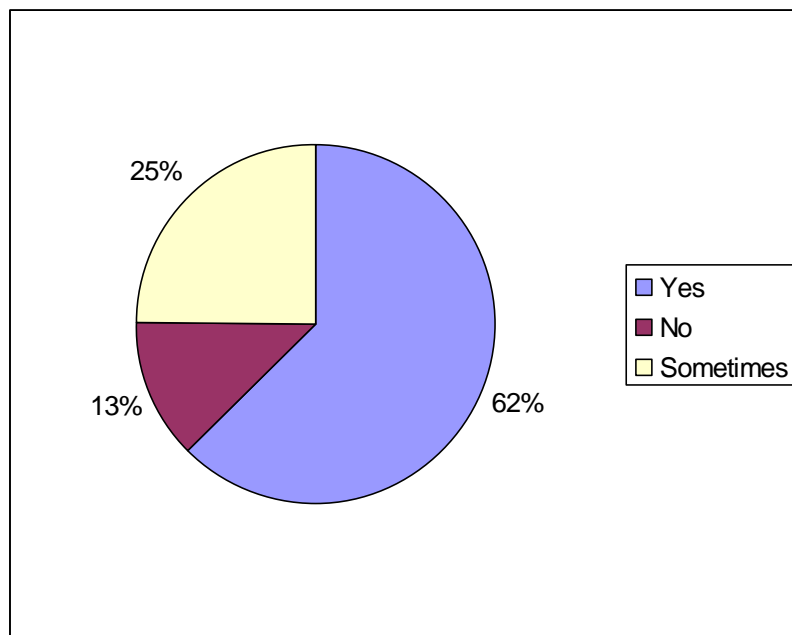
The pie chart gives us statistics related to teachers' own lesson plan for classroom activities. According to the chart, majority of teachers have their own lesson plan.

However, during classroom observation, the researcher found none of the teachers using their own lesson plan.

Question no. 3 was “. Do your students get feedback on their classroom writing activities?” Out of eight teachers, five answered ‘yes’, one answered ‘no’ and two answered ‘sometimes’. The percentages are shown in the following table and pie-chart:

of the Institutions	Yes	No	Sometimes
ldhesawari Girls’ College	100%	0%	0%
tre Dame College	50%	0%	50%
oly Cross College	50%	50%	0%
quarunnisa Noon College	50%	0%	50%
Average	62.5%	12.5%	25%

Table: 1.3



Pie chart: 2.3

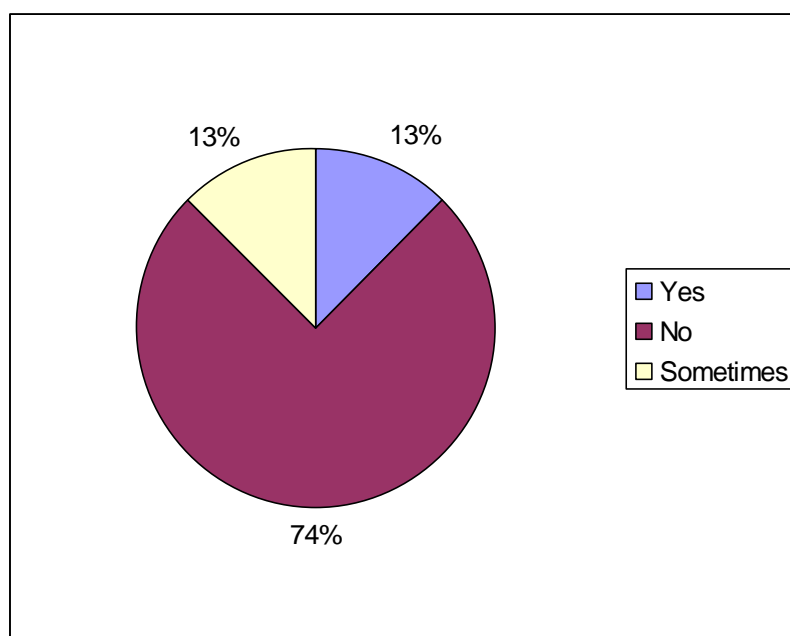
The pie chart shows the percentage of feedback received by students on their classroom writing activities. According to the chart, 62% teachers give students feedback on their

classroom activities. However, in the interview, most teachers said that the duration of class was not sufficient enough to provide students with feedback.

Question no. 4 was “.Do you think the duration of class time is enough for practising writing?” Out of eight teachers, one answered ‘yes’, six answered ‘no’ and one answered ‘sometimes’. The percentages are shown in the following table and pie-chart:

of the Institutions	Yes	No	Sometimes
ldhesawari Girls’ College	50%	50%	0%
tre Dame College	0%	100%	0%
oly Cross College	0%	50%	50%
quarunnisa Noon College	0%	100%	0%
Average	12.5%	75%	12.5%

Table: 1.4



Pie chart: 2.4

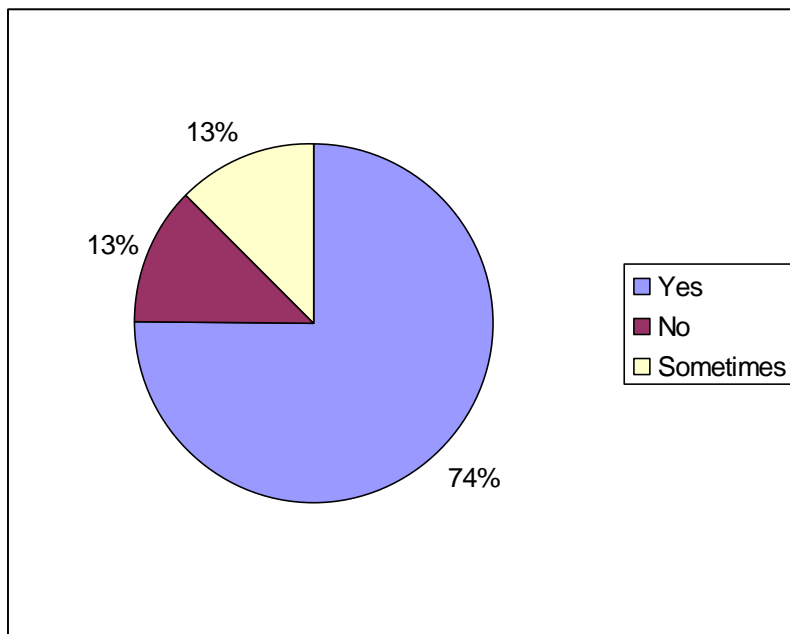
The pie chart gives us statistics related to teachers’ opinion about the adequacy of the duration of class time for practising of writing. According to the chart, most teachers think

the duration of class time is no enough. Similar opinions came from students during an open discussion with the researcher.

Question no. 5 was “In your teaching do you follow the communicative approach which is suggested in the text book?” Out of eight teachers, six answered ‘yes’, one answered ‘no’ and one answered ‘sometimes’. The percentages are shown in the following table and pie-chart:

of the Institutions	Yes	No	Sometimes
ldhesawari Girls’ College	100%	0%	0%
tre Dame College	100%	0%	0%
oly Cross College	0%	50%	50%
quarunnisa Noon College	100%	0%	0%
Average	75%	12.5%	12.5%

Table: 1.5



Pie chart: 2.5

The pie chart is related to whether teachers follow communicative approach or not. According to the chart, majority of teachers said that they follow communicative approach

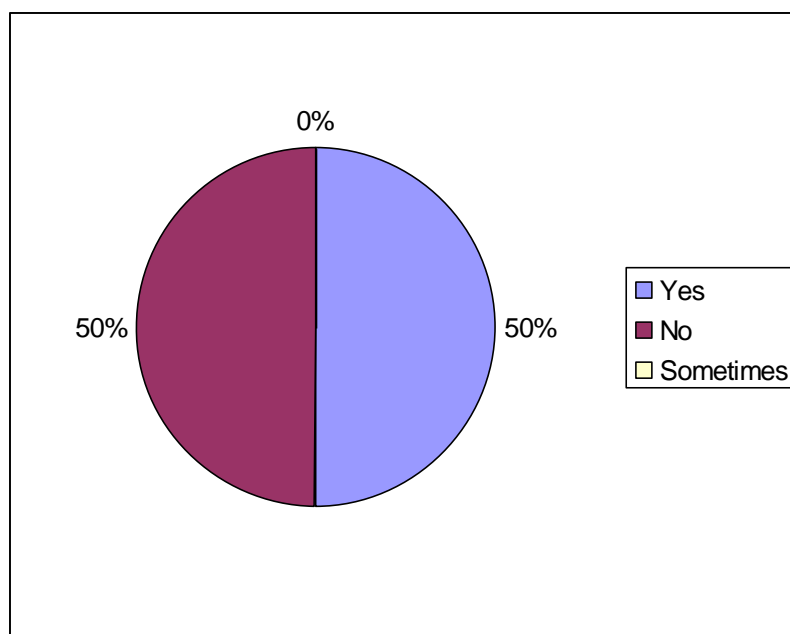


which is suggested in the textbook. However, during the classroom observation, the researcher found the real picture to be quite opposite. Surprisingly, some teachers raised questions about the appropriateness of communicative approach in the context of Bangladesh.

Question no. 6 was “Did you have any special training on English language teaching?” Out of eight teachers, four answered ‘yes’, four answered ‘no’ and none answered ‘sometimes’. The percentages are shown in the following table and pie-chart:

of the Institutions	Yes	No	Sometimes
Idhesawari Girls’ College	50%	50%	0%
tre Dame College	100%	0%	0%
oly Cross College	0%	100%	0%
quarunnisa Noon College	50%	50%	0%
Average	50%	50%	0%

Table: 1.6



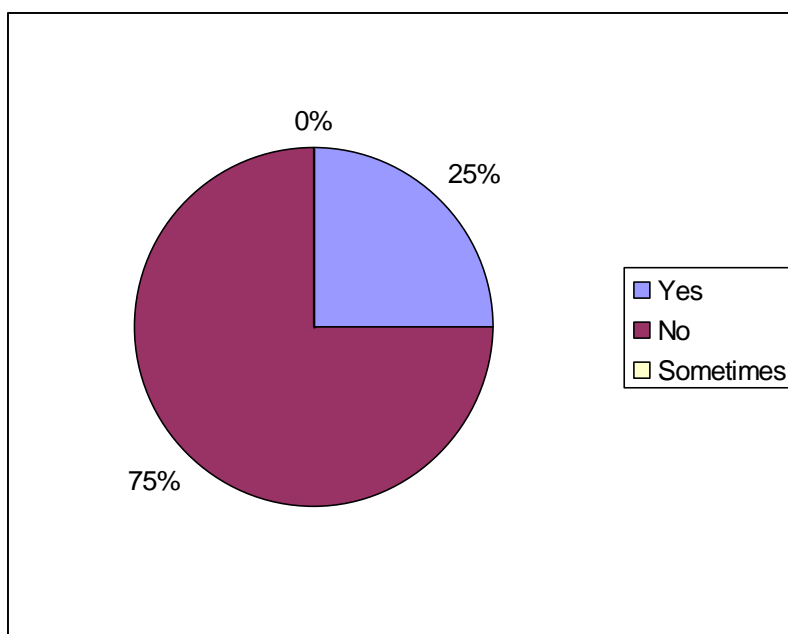
Pie chart: 2.6

The pie chart shows teachers' involvement with training program on English language teaching. According to the chart, 50% teachers had training while the rest did not have any training. However, during the classroom observation, the researcher did not find any major difference between the trained and untrained teachers' conduction of class.

Question no. 7 was “.Did you have any special training on English language teaching?” Out of eight teachers, two answered ‘yes’, six answered ‘no’ and none answered ‘sometimes’. The percentages are shown in the following table and pie-chart:

of the Institutions	Yes	No	Sometimes
Idhesawari Girls' College	0%	100%	0%
tre Dame College	0%	100%	0%
oly Cross College	50%	50%	0%
quarunnisa Noon College	50%	50%	0%
Average	25%	75%	0%

Table: 1.7



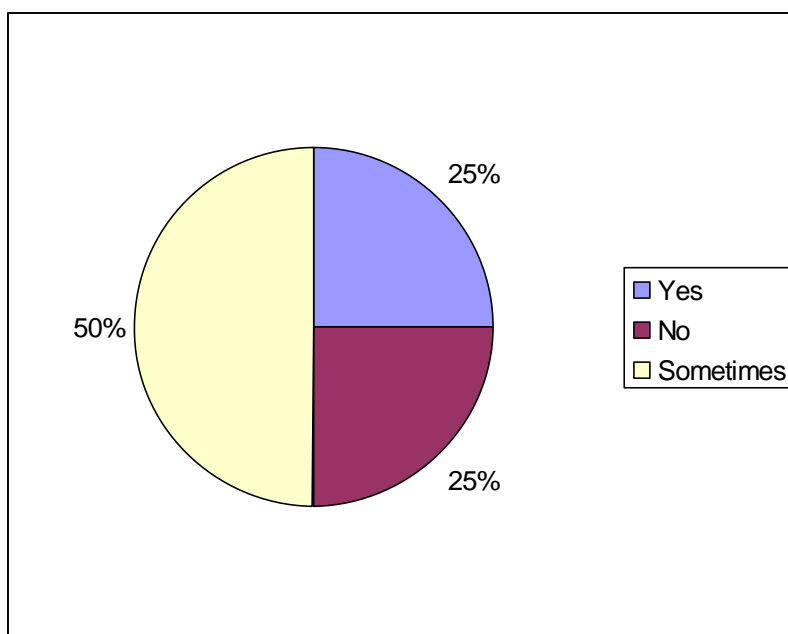
Pie chart: 2.7

The pie chart gives us statistics related to teachers' opinion about the suitability of the classroom environment for teaching English. According to the chart most teachers think that classroom environment is not suitable for teaching English. This is true to a large extent; however, the researcher did not find any initiative taken by teachers to improve the classroom environment.

Question no. 8 was “.Do you do pair/group work with your students?” Out of eight teachers, two answered ‘yes’, two answered ‘no’ and four answered ‘sometimes’. The percentages are shown in the following table and pie-chart:

of the Institutions	Yes	No	Sometimes
Idhesawari Girls' College	100%	0%	0%
tre Dame College	0%	0%	100%
oly Cross College	0%	100%	0%
quarunnisa Noon College	0%	0%	100%
Average	25%	25%	50%

Table: 1.8



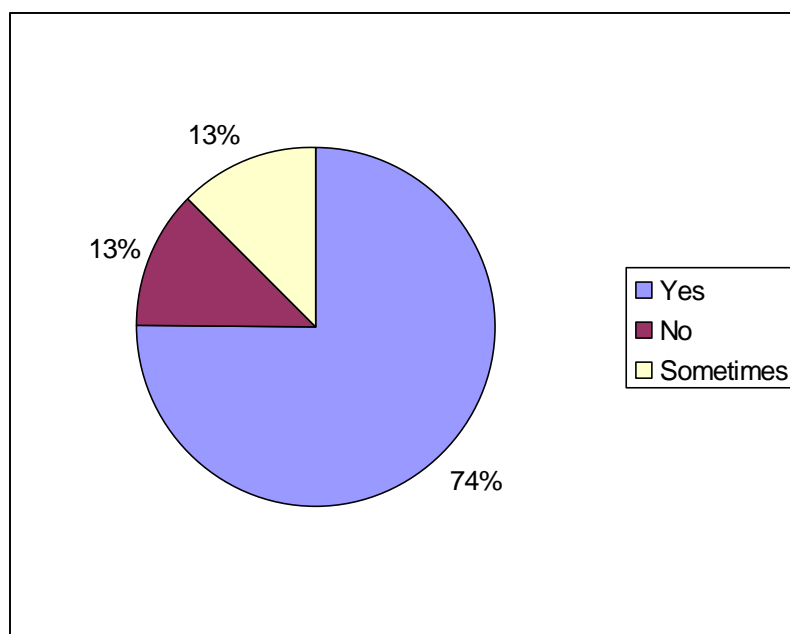
Pie chart: 2.8

The pie chart presents statistics related to teachers' arrangement of group or pair work with their students. According to the chart, 50% teachers do pair or group work with their students. However, in none of the institutions the researcher found group or pair work. Interestingly, during the interview with teachers they said that due to the unusually large classroom, it was not possible for them to arrange group or pair work.

Question no. 9 was “.Do you have friendly relationship with your students?” Out of eight teachers, six answered ‘yes’, one answered ‘no’ and one answered ‘sometimes’. The percentages are shown in the following table and pie-chart:

Name of the Institutions	Yes	No	Sometimes
Madheswari Girls' College	100%	0%	0%
Notre Dame College	50%	0%	50%
Saintly Cross College	50%	50%	0%
Shaharunnisa Noon College	100%	0%	0%
Average	75%	12.5%	12.5%

Table: 1.9



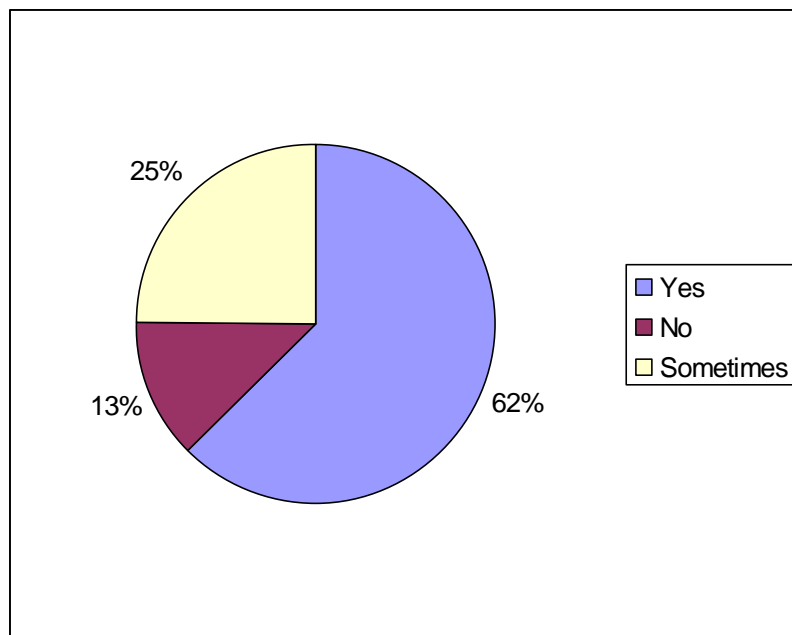
Pie chart: 2.9

The pie chart shows teachers' relationship with their students. According to the chart, majority of teachers said that they have friendly relationship with their students. However, during an open discussion with students, they said that few teachers were friendly while many teachers were extremely authoritative.

Question no. 10 was “.Do you try to apply any technique of your own to make writing skill interesting to your students?” Out of eight teachers, five answered ‘yes’, one answered ‘no’ and two answered ‘sometimes’. The percentages are shown in the following table and pie-chart:

of the Institutions	Yes	No	Sometimes
Idhesawari Girls' College	50%	0%	50%
tre Dame College	50%	0%	50%
oly Cross College	50%	50%	0%
quarunnisa Noon College	100%	0%	0%
Average	62.5%	12.5%	25%

Table: 1.10



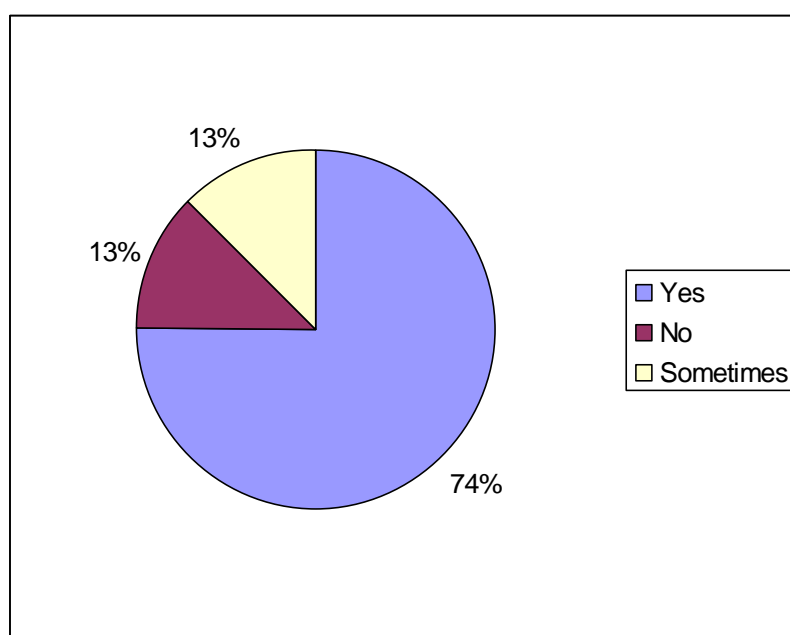
Pie chart: 2.10

The pie chart gives us statistics related to teachers' innovation of own techniques in making writing class interesting to students. According to the chart, most teachers try to apply their own techniques to make writing class interesting. However, the researcher got the opposite idea from students during the interview as they said writing class was not interesting to them. Moreover, the researcher did not find any innovative technique applied by teachers in the class during classroom observation.

Question no. 11 was “.Do you try to apply any technique of your own to make writing skill interesting to your students?” Out of eight teachers, six answered ‘yes’, one answered ‘no’ and one answered ‘sometimes’. The percentages are shown in the following table and pie-chart:

Number of the Institutions	Yes	No	Sometimes
St. John's College	100%	0%	0%
St. Mary's College	50%	0%	50%
St. Paul's College	50%	50%	0%
St. Raphael's College	100%	0%	0%
Average	75%	12.5%	12.5%

Table: 1.11



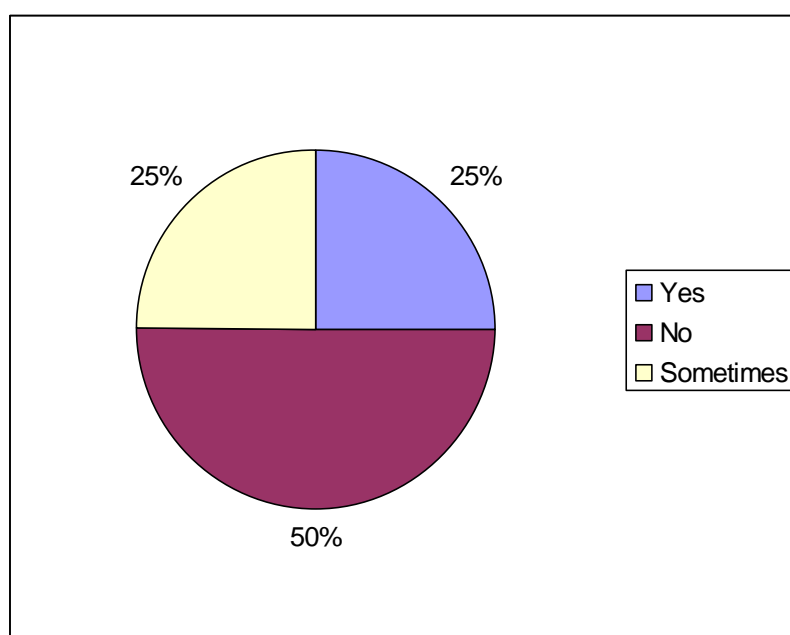
Pie chart: 2.11

The pie chart presents teachers' opinion related to improvement of students writing skill by means of their teaching procedure. According to the chart most teachers think that their teaching procedure is improving students' writing skill. However, the sample writing collected from students provides the opposite evidence.

Question no. 12 was “.Do you think the prevailing exam system is very helpful for improving writing skill of the students?” Out of eight teachers, two answered ‘yes’, four answered ‘no’ and two answered ‘sometimes’. The percentages are shown in the following table and pie-chart:

Name of the Institutions	Yes	No	Sometimes
Madhesawari Girls' College	100%	0%	0%
Sainte Dame College	0%	50%	50%
Sydney Cross College	0%	100%	0%
Shaharunnisa Noon College	0%	50%	50%
Average	25%	50%	25%

Table: 1.12



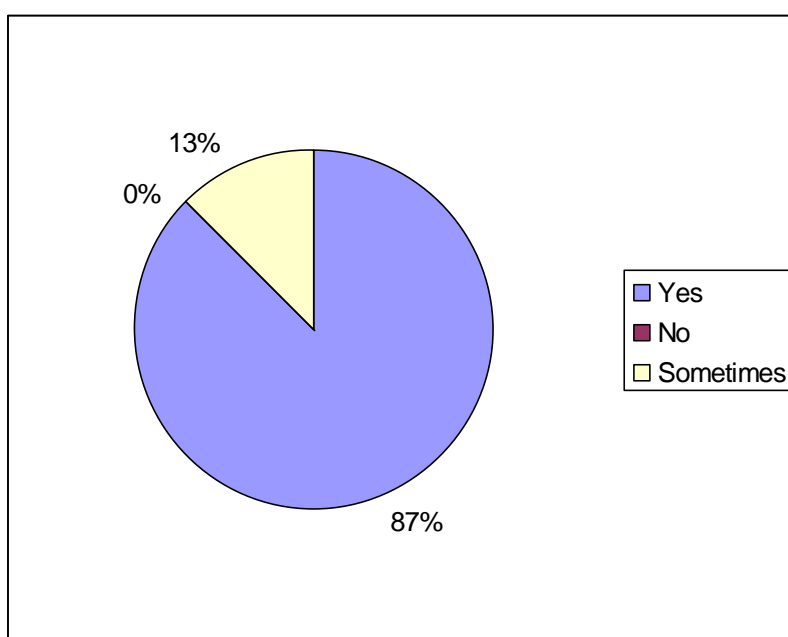
Pie chart: 2.12

The pie chart gives us statistics related to teachers' opinion about the prevailing exam system. According to the chart, 50% teachers believe that the prevailing exam system is not at all helpful for improving the writing skill of students. During the interview with teachers, all of them said that the testing system was not helpful.

Question no. 13 was “Do you encourage your students to practise writing creatively for their examination?” Out of eight teachers, seven answered ‘yes’, none answered ‘no’ and one answered ‘sometimes’. The percentages are shown in the following table and pie-chart:

Name of the Institutions	Yes	No	Sometimes
Madheswari Girls' College	100%	0%	0%
Sainte Dame College	100%	0%	0%
St. John's Cross College	50%	0%	50%
Shaharunnisa Noon College	100%	0%	0%
Average	87.5%	0%	12.5%

Table: 1.13



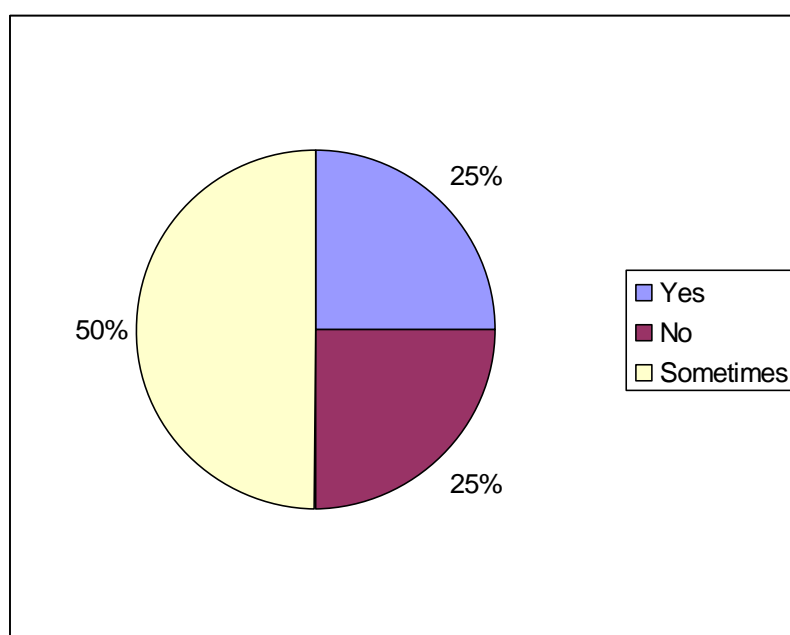
Pie chart: 2.13



The pie chart shows teachers' encouragement regarding students' creative writing. According to the chart most teachers encourage students to practice writing for their examination. However, during and open discussion with students, they said that some teachers give them a short suggestion of selected topics to memorize for the examination. Question no. 14 was "Do your students fear writing activities when it is assigned in the class?" Out of eight teachers, two answered 'yes', two answered 'no' and four answered 'sometimes'. The percentages are shown in the following table and pie-chart:

Name of the Institutions	Yes	No	Sometimes
Madheswari Girls' College	0%	50%	50%
Sacred Heart College	0%	50%	50%
St. Joseph's College	50%	0%	50%
St. Joseph's College	50%	0%	50%
Average	25%	25%	50%

Table: 1.14



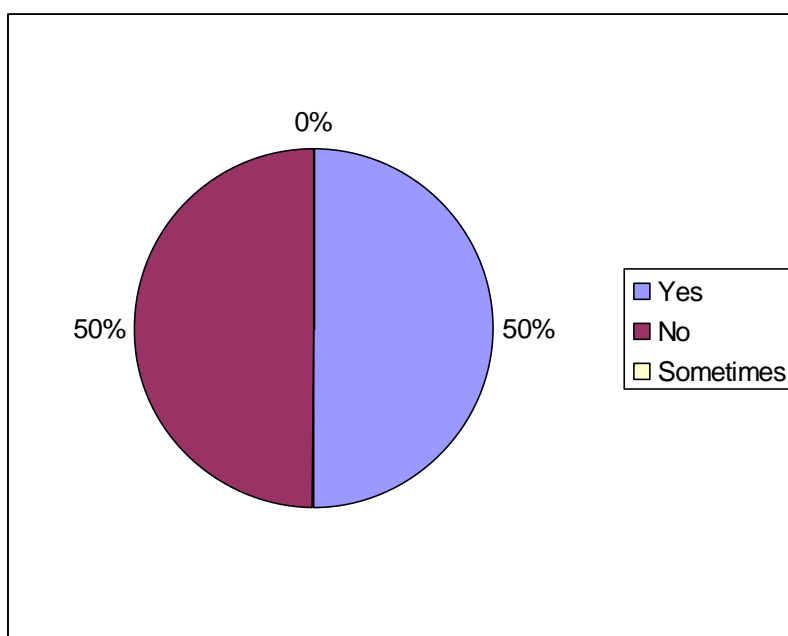
Pie chart: 2.14

The pie chart gives us statistics related to teachers' opinions about students' feelings of writing activities in the class. According to the chart 50% students' fear writing activities when it is assigned in the class.

Question no. 15 was “.Do you have enough time to explain grammatical rules and their applications in writing?” Out of eight teachers, four answered ‘yes’, four answered ‘no’ and none answered ‘sometimes’. The percentages are shown in the following table and pie-chart:

of the Institutions	Yes	No	Sometimes
Idhesawari Girls' College	100%	0%	0%
tre Dame College	50%	50%	0%
oly Cross College	0%	100%	0%
quarunnisa Noon College	50%	50%	0%
Average	50%	50%	0%

Table: 1.15



Pie chart: 2.15

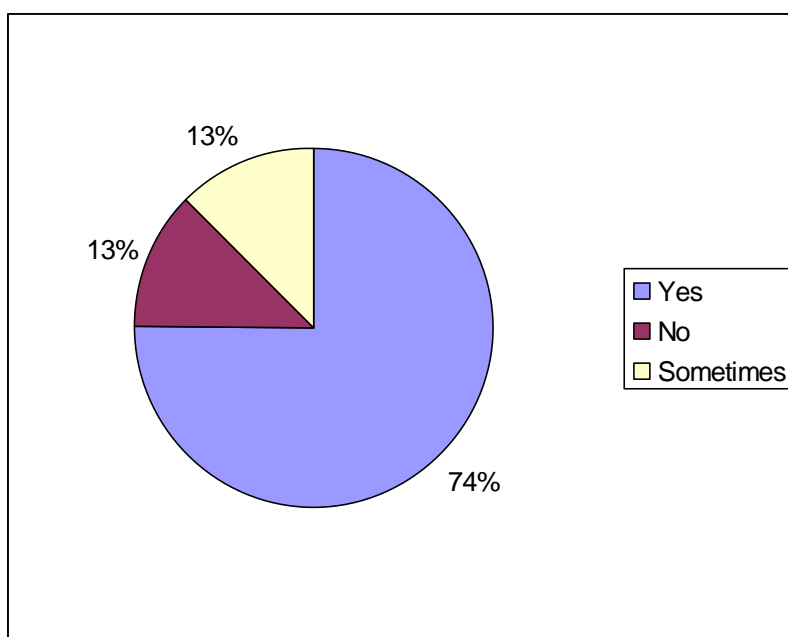
The pie chart shows teachers' notion about time in explaining grammatical rules and their applications in writing. According to the chart 50% teachers find enough time while the rest of teachers do not find. However, according to students' opinions in the interview with the researcher most teachers did not explain grammatical rules and their applications to writing.

## Result of the Survey of Teachers' Interview

Question no. 1. Was “Do you teach the controlled, guided and free writing chronologically as suggested in the present syllabus?” Out of eight teachers, six teachers answered ‘Yes’, One teacher answered ‘No’, and one teacher answered ‘Sometimes’. The percentages are shown in the following table and pie chart.

of the Institutions	Yes	No	Sometimes
dhesawari Girls' College	100%	0%	0%
re Dame College	100%	0%	0%
ly Cross College	50%	50%	0
quarunnisa Noon College	50%	0%	50%
Average	75%	12.5%	12.5%

Table: 1.1



Pie chart: 2.1

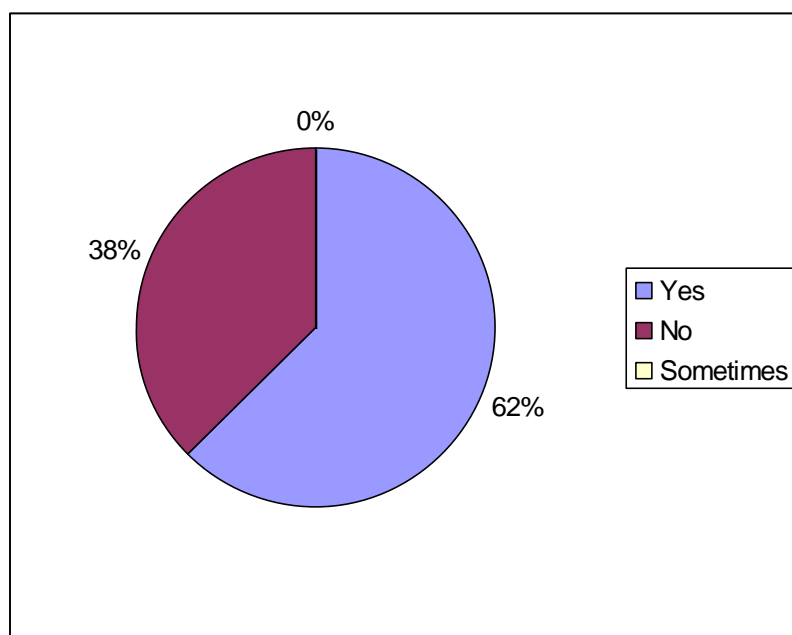
The pie chart gives us statistics related to teachers' way of teaching writing skill. According to the chart most teachers teach controlled, guided and free writing as suggested in the present syllabus. However, during the classroom observation, the

researcher did not find any teacher following the stages of writing as prescribed in the present syllabus.

**Question no. 2. Was “Do you use a grammar workbook with the main textbook?” Out of eight teachers, five teachers answered ‘Yes’, three teacher answered ‘No’, and no teacher answered ‘Sometimes’. The percentages are shown in the following table and pie chart:**

of the Institutions	Yes	No	Sometimes
dhesawari Girls’ College	100%	0%	0%
re Dame College	0%	100%	0%
ly Cross College	50%	50%	0%
quarunnisa Noon College	100%	0%	0%
Average	62.5%	37.5%	0%

Table: 1.2



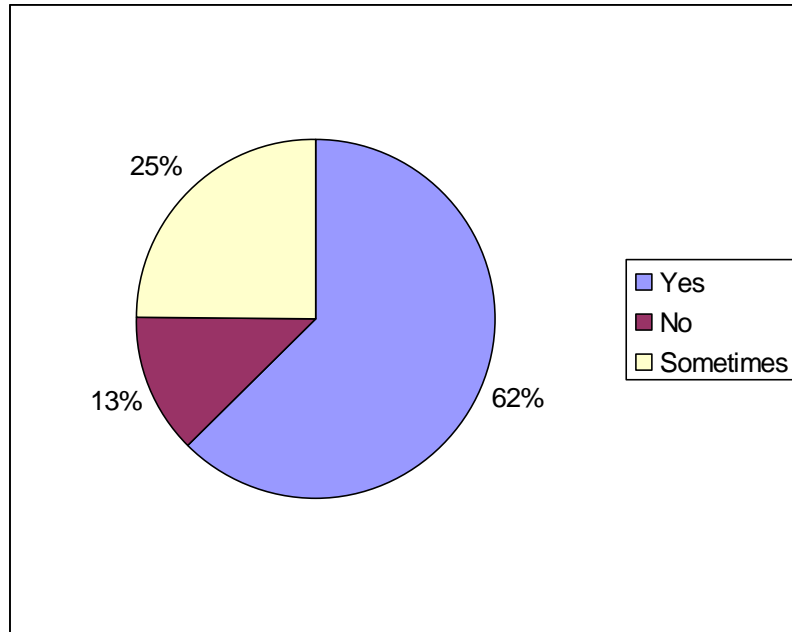
Pie chart: 2.2

The pie chart presents teachers' use of extra grammar book with the main text. According to the chart 62% teachers use a grammar work book with the main text. However, in an informal discussion with teachers they said to the researcher that they cannot use any other work books with the main text as they need to finish the syllabus within stipulated time fixed by the concerned institution.

**Question no. 3. Was “Do you use English as a medium of instruction in the classroom?” Out of eight teachers, five teachers answered ‘Yes’, one teacher answered ‘No’, and two teachers answered ‘Sometimes’. The percentages are shown in the following table and pie chart:**

of the Institutions	Yes	No	Sometimes
dhesawari Girls' College	50%	0%	50%
re Dame College	50%	0%	50%
ly Cross College	50%	50%	0%
quarunnisa Noon College	100%	0%	0%
Average	62.5%	12.5%	25%

Table: 1.3



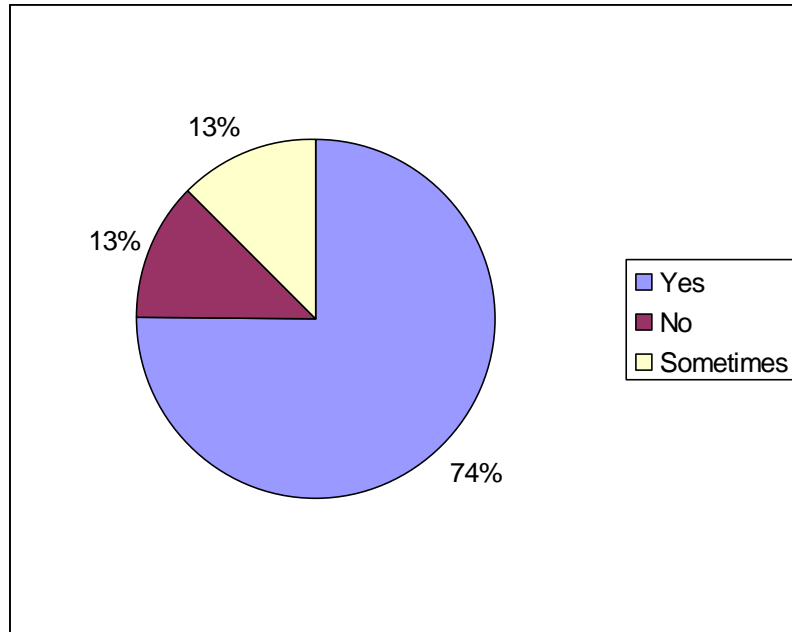
Pie chart: 2.3

The pie chart shows teachers' medium of instruction in the classroom. According to the chart, most teachers use English as a medium of instruction in the classroom. However, during the classroom observation, the researcher found that most teachers use Bengali as a medium of instruction.

**Question no. 4** was “Do you think that learning the rules of English is necessary to learn writing skill properly?” Out of eight teachers, six teachers answered ‘Yes’, one teacher answered ‘No’, and one teacher answered ‘Sometimes’. The percentages are shown in the following table and pie chart:

of the Institutions	Yes	No	Sometimes
dhesawari Girls’ College	100%	0%	0%
re Dame College	50%	0%	50%
ly Cross College	50%	50%	0%
quarunnisa Noon College	100%	0%	0%
Average	75%	12.5%	12.5%

Table: 1.4



Pie chart: 2.4

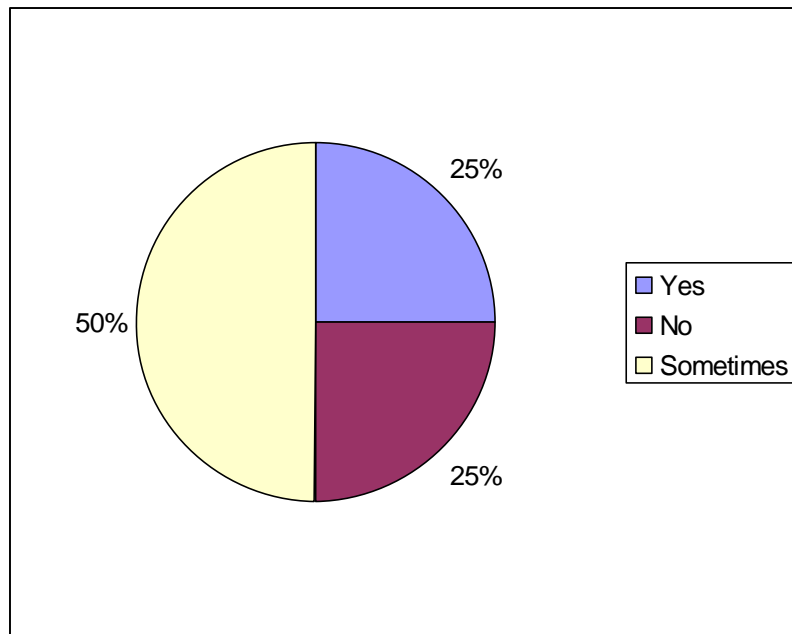
The pie chart gives us statistics related to teachers' opinion about the importance of learning the rules in learning writing skill properly. According to the chart, most teachers think that learning the rules of English is necessary.

**Question no. 5** was “Do you do pair/group work with your students?” Out of eight teachers, two teachers answered ‘Yes’, two teacher answered ‘No’, and four teachers answered ‘Sometimes’. The percentages are shown in the following table and pie chart:

Name of the Institutions	Yes	No	Sometimes
dheshawari Girls' College	0%	0%	100%
re Dame College	50%	0%	50%
y Cross College	0%	100%	0%
uarunnisa Noon College	50%	0%	50%
Average	25%	25%	50%



Table: 1.5



Pie chart: 2.5

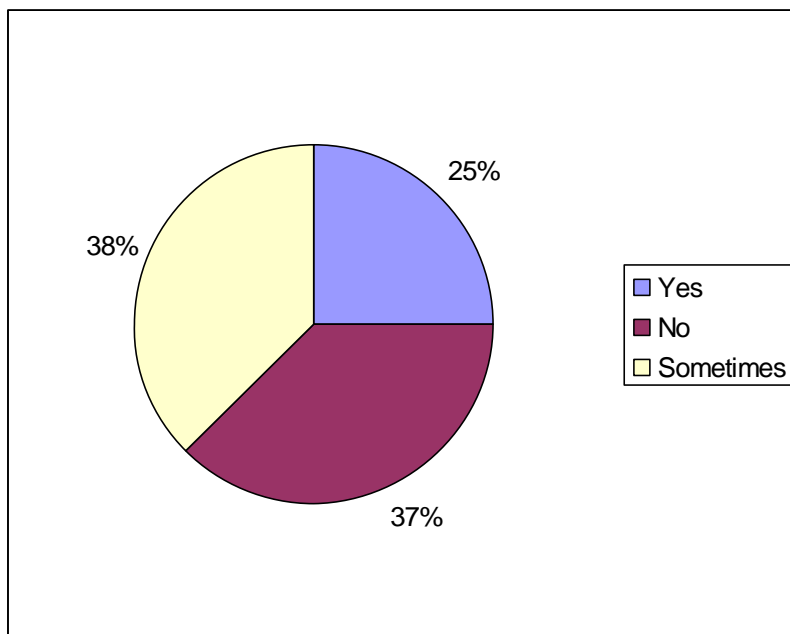
The pie chart presents the statistics related to teachers' arrangement of pair or group work. According to the chart 50% teachers arrange pair or group work with their students. The same statistics is found in the survey of questionnaire for teachers and it has already been said that the researcher did not find any pair or group work in the classroom.

**Question no. 6 was "Do you use authentic materials as pictures, charts in your class?" Out of eight teachers, two teachers answered 'Yes', three teacher answered 'No', and three teachers answered 'Sometimes'. The percentages are shown in the following table and pie chart:**

Name of the Institutions	Yes	No	Sometimes
Dhesawari Girls' College	100%	0%	0%
St. Mary's College	0%	0%	100%
St. Mary's Cross College	0%	100%	0%
Shaharunnisa Noon College	0%	50%	50%
	25%	37.5%	37.5%

Average			
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Table: 1.6



Pie chart: 2.6\

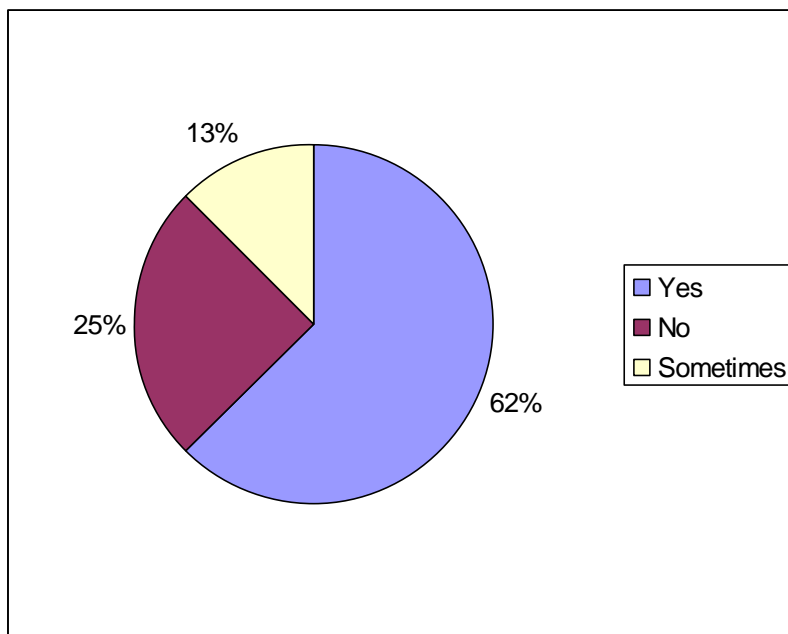
The pie chart shows the percentage of teachers' who use authentic materials in the class. 37% teachers said that they use authentic materials. However, the researcher did not find that during the classroom observation.

**Question no. 7** was “Do you teach control and guided writing to improve your students’ writing skill?” Out of eight teachers, five teachers answered ‘Yes’, two teacher answered ‘No’, and one teachers answered ‘Sometimes’. The percentages are shown in the following table and pie chart:

of the Institutions	Yes	No	Sometimes
ldhesawari Girls’ College	100%	0%	0%
tre Dame College	50%	0%	50%
oly Cross College	50%	0%	50%
quarunnisa Noon College	50%	0%	50%
	62.5%	25%	12.5%

Average			
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Table: 1.7



Pie chart: 2.7

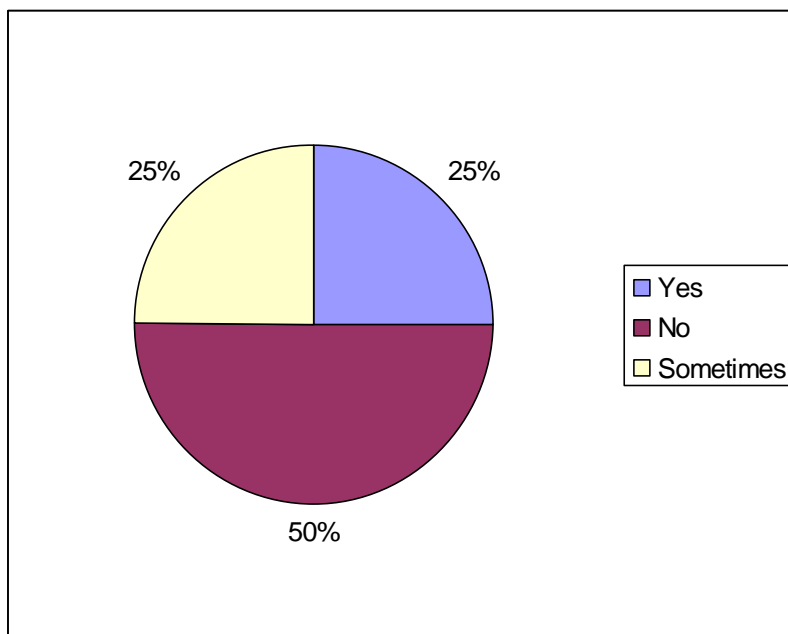
The pie chart gives us statistics related to teachers' teaching of controlled and guided writing to improve students' writing skill. According to the chart, most teachers teach controlled and guided writing. However, no such evidence was found during the classroom observation.

**Question no. 8** was "Are you satisfied with what is taught in the writing class?" Out of eight teachers, two teachers answered 'Yes', four teacher answered 'No', and two teachers answered 'Sometimes'. The percentages are shown in the following table and pie chart:

Name of the Institutions	Yes	No	Sometimes
Idhesawari Girls' College	50%	50%	0%
St. Anne's College	0%	50%	50%
St. Mary's Cross College	0%	50%	50%
Shaharunnisa Noon College	50%	50%	0%

Average	25%	50%	25%
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Table: 1.8



Pie chart: 2.8

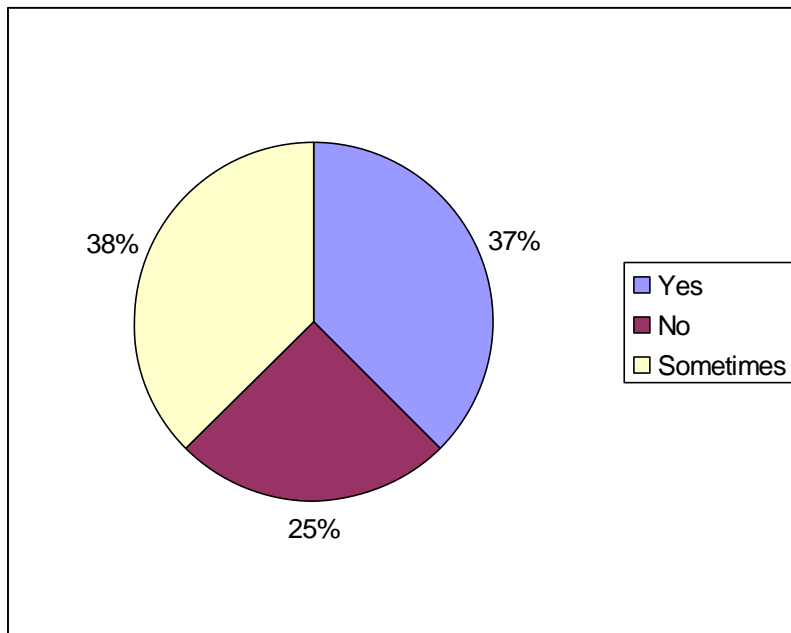
The pie chart presents the percentages regarding teachers' satisfaction with what is taught in the writing class. According to the chart, most teachers are not satisfied.

**Question no. 9 was "Do you use Teachers' Guide to teach writing?" Out of eight teachers, three teachers answered 'Yes', two teacher answered 'No', and three teachers answered 'Sometimes'. The percentages are shown in the following table and pie chart:**

of the Institutions	Yes	No	Sometimes
ldhesawari Girls' College	100%	0%	0%
tre Dame College	0%	0%	100%
oly Cross College	0%	100%	0%

quarunnisa Noon College	50%	0%	50%
Average	37.5%	25%	37.5%

Table: 1.9



Pie chart: 2.9

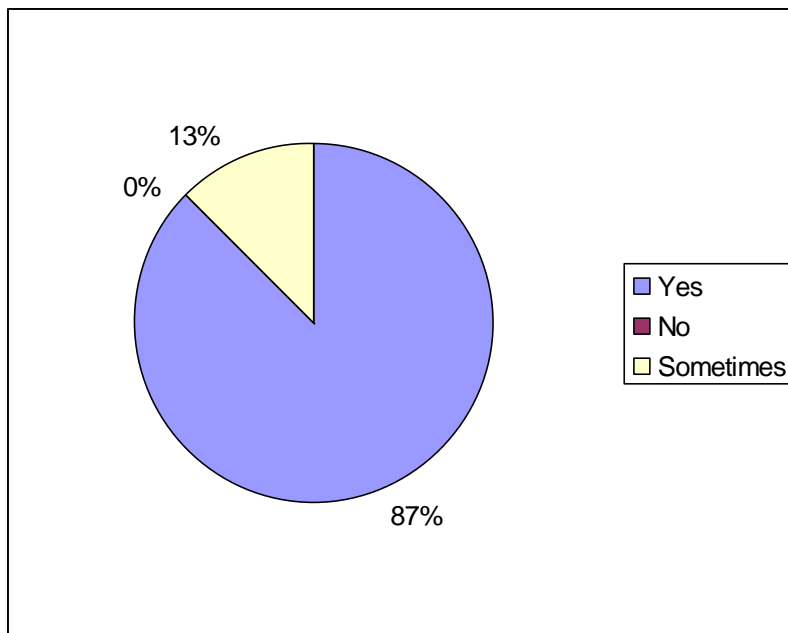
The pie chart shows teachers' use of T G (Teachers' Guide). According to the chart 37% teachers use Teachers' Guide to teach writing. However, in an informal discussion, some teachers said to the researcher that most teachers do not have Teachers' Guide as it is not available in the market, moreover few teachers have training on how to use it.

**Question no. 10 was "Do you try to teach the students how to develop writing composition?" Out of eight teachers, seven teachers answered 'Yes', no teacher answered 'No', and one teacher answered 'Sometimes'. The percentages are shown in the following table and pie chart:**

of the Institutions	Yes	No	Sometimes
dhdesawari Girls' College	100%	0%	0%
tre Dame College	100%	0%	0%
oly Cross College	50%	0%	50%

quarunnisa Noon College	100%	0%	0%
Average	87.5%	0%	12.5%

Table: 1.10



Pie chart: 2.10

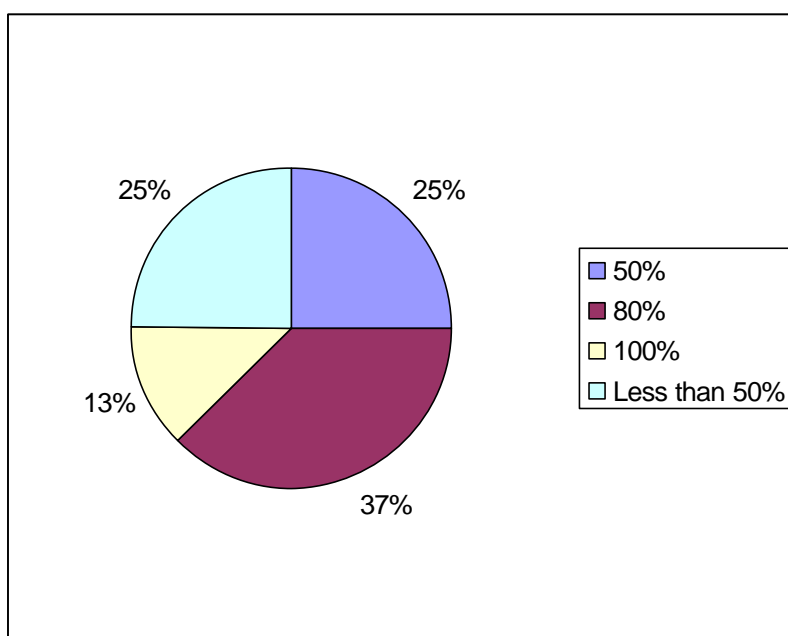
The pie chart gives us statistics related to teachers' effort to teach students how to develop writing composition. According to the chart, most teachers try for that. However, in this case the researcher finds teachers' remarks questionable as he did not find any functional effective strategies undertaken by teachers for that purpose.

**Question no. 11** was "Do the students submit their writing work to you after doing the given task?" Out of eight teachers, seven teachers answered 'Yes', no teacher answered 'No', and one teachers answered 'Sometimes'. The percentages are shown in the following table and pie chart:

Name of the Institutions	50%	80%	100%	ss than 50%
Shesawari Girls' College		100%		

Notre Dame College		50%	50%	
Siddheswari College	100%			
Viqarunnisa Noon College				100%
Average	25%	<b>37.5%</b>	12.5%	25%

Table: 1.11



Pie chart: 2.11

The pie chart presents the percentage related to students' submission of the writing task to their teachers. According to the chart, 80% students submit their writing task to teachers after doing the given task. However, the researcher found that most of the time students do not get feedback on their writing task.

Question no **12** was "What do you do in developing students' writing task?" In response to this question from the eight teachers, different opinions came out. For example, One teacher who had been working for about four years at Notre Dame College said, "I encourage the students to write individually of their own through brain storming and give them group assignment for writing task." A teacher who had been working for two years at Siddheswari College said, "I teach writing showing the steps of writing such as (i) Brain storming (ii) Planning (iii) Organizing (iv) Drafting (v) Editing." Another teacher who had been working for six years at Viqarunnisa Noon College said, "For developing writing task, I tell them to write on a topic from their experience. They also write creatively about a particular event." Again, a teacher who had

been teaching for eighteen years at Holy Cross College said, “I emphasize on their writing on various topics which they come across in their daily practical life.”

Question no **13** was “What are the problems according to you that hinders students’ development in writing?” In response to this question, most of the teachers pointed to the lack of practice, reluctance in writing, poor vocabulary, lack of grammatical competence and proper schema, lack of confidence hinder students’ development in writing.

Question no **14** was “Do you think the present testing system is not conducive to the development of writing skill? Why?” In response to this question all the teachers opined that the present testing system was not conducive to the development of writing skill. As for the reasons of their opinions, they pointed that testing system is defective because a students’ creativity and innovativeness can hardly be judged in this system. Moreover, the present testing system provides opportunity for learners to memorize.



## Result of Observation Checklist

Four classes were observed with the prior approval of the Principal along with the permission of the Head of the English Department. During the observation the researcher wrote his comments in the observation checklist (see Appendix E). The observation schedule is given below:

Name of Institution	Date of Observation	Time of Observation	Number of Students	Students Present	Percentage
Meheswari Girls' College	2-08-08	10.00 am	60	55	92%
Saint Mary's Dame College	9-08-08	8.00 am	150	142	95%
St. Xavier's Cross College	9-08-08	1.00 pm	140	130	93%
St. Ann's Parunnisa Noon College	6-08-08	10.00 am	133	125	94%

The result of the Observation Checklist is given in the next page.

## Observation Checklist

Teachers activity	Aswari	Girls'	Dame College	Cross College	Arunnisa Noon College
	Yes/No	Yes/No	Yes/No	Yes/No	Yes/No
Is the lesson well-planned and the teacher well-prepared?	Yes		Yes	Yes	Yes
Does the teacher appear relaxed and friendly during the class?	No		Yes	Yes	No
Is the teacher's instruction clear?	Yes		Yes	Yes	No
Does the teacher introduce the lesson clearly and attractively?	No		No	No	No
Does the teacher make the lesson interesting and interactive?	Yes		Yes	No	No

the teacher do pairwork the nts? Mention the activity.	No	No	No	No
the teacher give any writing task students?	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
the teacher help the students to do riting task?	Yes	No	Yes	No
the teacher correct errors?	No	No	No	No
the teacher give feedback?	No	No	No	No

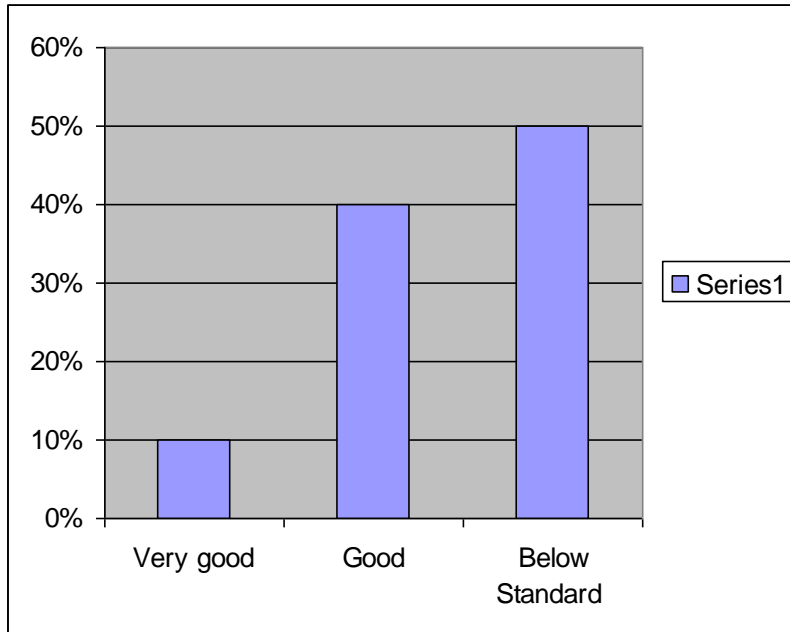
The researcher found that almost all the classrooms were unusually large. In some of the classrooms there was not sufficient light even. In most cases, teacher did not move round the class rather was standing at one place. Interaction among students and interaction between teacher and students was absent. Classes were lecture based and not task based. In two institutions teachers did not use the board at all. So, the researcher did not find any communicative approach in the classrooms. Most teachers conducted the class in a very traditional way. Even some trained teachers also conducted the classes without implementing any communicative approach. The researcher did not find any prewriting activities in the classrooms. Effective feedback was absent totally. In all the institutions, students sitting on the back benches did not pay much attention to teachers' speech and teachers were also not careful about that.

# Analysis of Sample Writings

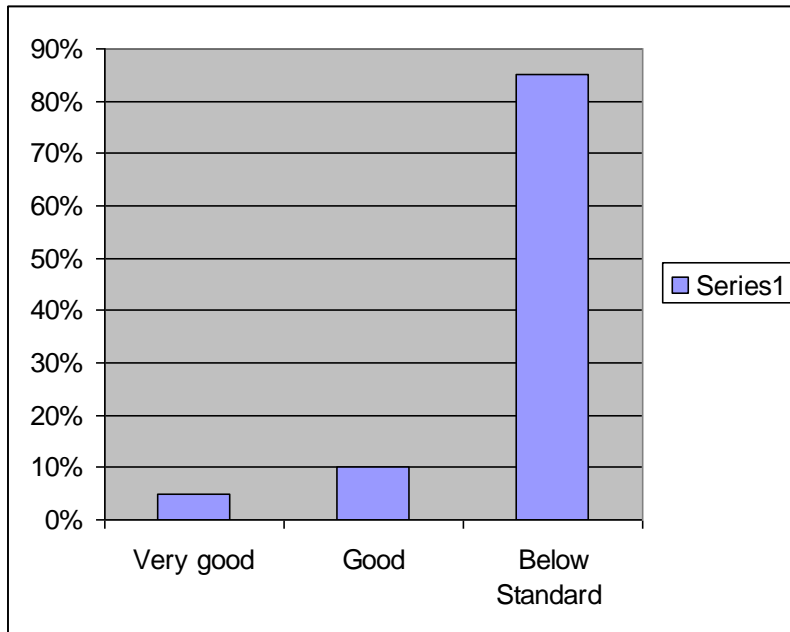
From four institutions total 174 sample writing was collected. Students were given to write on such a topic which they usually do not memorize. The topic was “Write about how you celebrated the last summer vacation.” The word limit was 150. The following chart shows the number of sample writings collected from respective colleges.

Name of Institution	Number of Sample Writing
Siddheswari Girls’ College	37
Notre Dame College	58
Holy Cross College	24
Viquarunnisa Noon College	55
Total	174

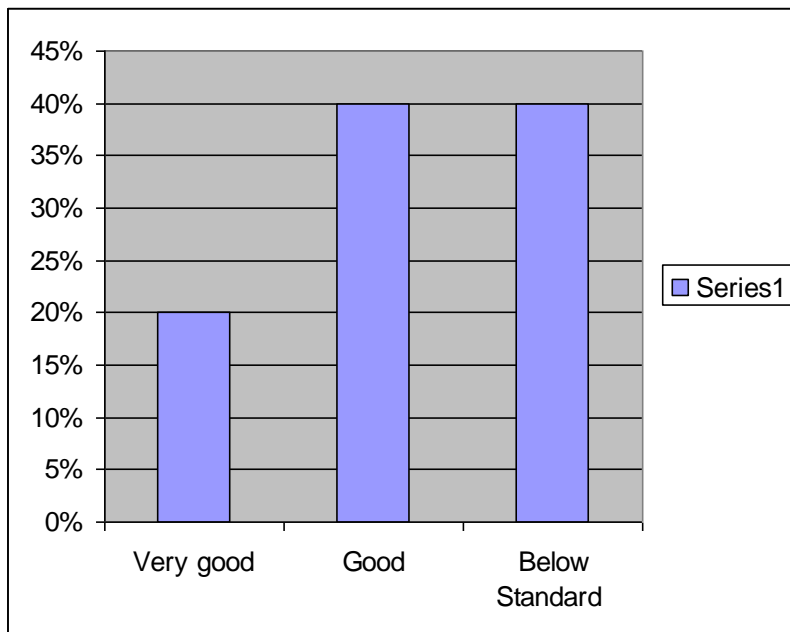
After collecting the sample writings, those scripts were checked and marked. It was found that most students could not do well as they had to write on that topic without any preparation. Only few students’ writing was satisfactory (see Appendix F). So it is clear that students’ writing ability is not developed up to the standard as it is expected at the HSC level. Students’ performance in different colleges is shown through column charts:



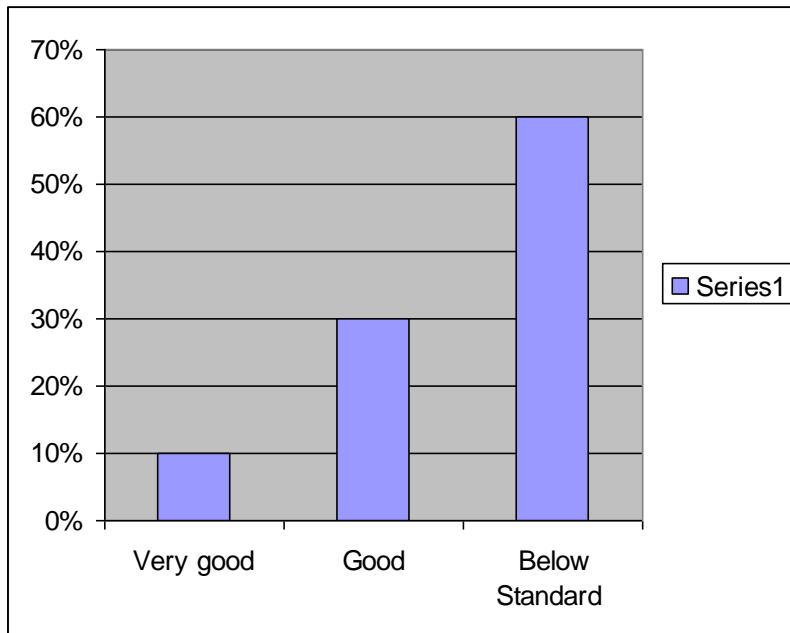
Column Chart: 1 Siddheswari Girls' College



Column Chart: 2 Notre Dame College



Column Chart: 3 Holy Cross College



Column Chart: 3 Viquarunnisa Noon College

# Chapter 5

## Findings

The data presents an appreciable picture of both teachers' teaching and students' learning the writing skill. However, the real situation is something quite opposite.

The researcher wants to show some similarities as well as incompatibilities among the data collected from different sources. For example, students' and teachers' responses were contradictory. On the other hand, classroom observation shows a different picture. About the strategies of teaching writing, teachers said that they teach students through pair or group work sometimes. On the contrary, majority of students said that they had never worked in pairs or groups. During observation, the researcher did not see any pair or group activity in any of the classes. In some cases, students said one thing in the questionnaire and answered the opposite in the interview.

Though, the present HSC syllabus strongly recommends teaching writing communicatively, and moreover, examples of communicative writing activities are given in the syllabus as students expressing themselves in writing in realistic situations and for realistic purposes, the real situation inside the classroom is totally different. There is no certain relationship among the syllabus, teaching and testing. Students are not taught writing strategies in any of the colleges. They do not have sufficient writing classes in a month. Even there is not any fixed class for teaching writing. They are hardly asked to write something in the class. This happens because of the negligence of the teacher about correcting students' copies.

The researcher found that in none of the colleges pre-writing activities are practised. Majority of students do not know what pair or group work is. There is no discussion among students before starting a writing activity. Students do not have any idea about the stages or process of writing. They also do not know what a topic sentence is. Though some teachers said that they engage their students in pair or group work sometimes, the students did not agree.

Teaching writing in realistic situations and for realistic purposes, as suggested in the syllabus, were absent in all the colleges. The researchers did not find any visual aids in the writing classes to teach writing showing a real context. As a result, they are ignorant about real life situations and purposes. Some of the students even do not know why writing is important in life.

Many of the teachers have expressed their discontentment regarding the textbook published by NCTB. According to their opinions, the textbook does not have enough exercise on writing task, even the ones which it has is not suitable for practice in the classroom. Some of the young teachers' reaction was a bit strong against the textbook. They said that since the Textbook Board has given neither enough exercises nor any separate workbook, indirectly it has helped the so-



called “guide industry” to flourish. Some teachers said that they were given the textbooks according to the new syllabus but they were not given any sort of training. They said that the government does not have any training facility for private college teachers.

While visiting the institutions, the researcher had some opportunities to talk to some of the guardians. In the conversation with those guardians the researcher wanted to know about their children’s writing ability and the teachers’ role in improving that. Many guardians said that teachers do not teach well in the class and they somehow compel students to go to their coaching centres. Some said that teaching has become commercial nowadays. On the contrary, teachers said that since they get very insufficient amount of remuneration from the institution, they have to depend on private tuitions. Some teachers said that they do not enjoy private teaching but the day to day expenses are so high that are compelled to do that.

Many teachers said that students did not want to learn how to write rather they wanted some selected topics which they could memorise for their examination. On the other hand, according to some students, teachers do not teach how to write freely in the class but want them to write. It was found that some teachers have the motivation to teach students how to write but they cannot do that because of time constraint, and institutions’ pressure to finish the syllabus within the stipulated time.

The researcher found that HSC question papers are designed in such way that they create an opportunity for learners to memorize. In this connection, he analyzed the question papers of Dhaka Board (see Appendix G) of last five years which are as follows:

Dhaka Board 2007

English first paper: *A Beggar*

English second paper: *Gender Discrimination*

Dhaka Board 2006

English first paper: *Social Value*

English second paper: *An Ideal Student*

Dhaka Board 2005

English first paper: *Load Shedding*

English second paper: *Road Accident*

Dhaka Board 2004

English first paper: *Good Health*

English second paper: *Physical Exercise*

Dhaka Board 2003

English first paper: *Eid - ul - Fitr*

English second paper: *Good Health*

So, it is seen that the question pattern grows in propensity among students to memorize as there is repetition of the same topics. If the question pattern were designed with a view to developing students’ creativity, it would have been much better.

In the observation it was found that in none of the institutions students were taught the process to write. Teachers expected the writing from students as a product. Therefore students are not or little aware of the writing procedure. The researcher found several factors responsible for the failure in developing the writing skill at the HSC level which are as follows:

- i. Lack of expertise
- ii. Lack of training facilities for teachers
- iii. Unusual large classrooms
- iv. Poor socio-economic set up
- v. Lack of sufficient logistic support
- vi. Lack of motivation on the part of students
- vii. Exam-oriented teaching environment
- viii. Defective testing system
- ix. Teacher centred teaching system
- x. Lack of practice-opportunity in classroom

# Chapter 6

## Discussion of Findings in Relation to Hypothesis

The researcher tried to find out the causes which hinder students' development in writing skill. The research question focuses on the basic causes of problems in writing. The analysis of data shows that there are some common causes. The questionnaire survey, interview, observation - all these methods give a more or less similar indication regarding the causes of the problem. Even when the researcher conducted an open discussion with the students regarding the causes of their problem they provided similar opinions. From the analyzed data, it becomes clear; though the communicative approach has been introduced in the HSC curriculum most of the teachers do not follow the techniques and procedure of it. Our Bangladeshi learners are in a great problem in learning to write in English.

Concerning error correction, the survey shows, though the teachers sometimes correct errors they are not aware of what kind of feedback the students have received. There prevails no teaching learning atmosphere in the class. There is no scope to practise writing tasks adequately though for learning every skill practice is a must. On the other hand, as the teacher is not properly trained in language teaching, they cannot explain the writing techniques to students in a way which would be helpful for students' writing. Therefore, it is obvious that our learners do not have concrete foundation in the basics of writing skill.

One thing is very clear that our learners do not have sufficient motivation to learn writing effectively. Observation of lessons in classes at colleges confirms the fact that lack of proper teaching and trained teachers are responsible for students' weakness in learning writing. Moreover, the defective testing system contributes to students' failure in developing writing skill at the HSC level.

Therefore, the research hypotheses can be considered to be compatible with the data.

# Chapter 7

## Conclusion

Teaching writing is extremely neglected at the higher secondary level. Although only writing skill is tested in the HSC examination, there is no congenial atmosphere for the development of writing in the classroom. Students lack motivation and teachers fail to create that in them. On the other hand, some students want to learn how to write but teachers lack the efficiency to teach writing with the necessary techniques. It is because of the lack of training. Since there is no proper guidance for teaching writing, students feel reluctant to write. The ultimate result of this reluctance and negligence is the poor score in English in the HSC examination. Although writing skill is judged in the examination, the system is not conducive enough to help learners in developing their creative faculty to write. The testing system indirectly compels learners to memorize.

Although, it is very essential for learners to grow their creativity to face the challenges of these highly competitive days, neither the board of education nor the institutions take any initiative for that. Our institutions are still following the traditional ways of teaching. Consequently, this results in learners' weakness in the writing skill. Students' low motivation results from teachers' inability to teach effectively. At the same time, lack of training, inadequate remuneration, adverse environment have a negative impact on teachers.

Overall, the researcher thinks that the prevailing poor condition can be changed if necessary steps i.e. providing training for teachers, increasing teachers' salary appointing skilled teachers, reforming the text book and testing system and motivating learners are taken by the concerned authorities. It is optimistic to see that consciousness is rising among both students and teachers regarding the development of writing skill. It can be hoped that a positive change will take place in developing writing skill of students at the HSC level.

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# Appendix-A

## Questionnaire for Students

Name of the Institution.....

Class status:.....Date .....Place.....

Please put tick mark on the appropriate box. You don't need to write your name anywhere in the paper. (This will only be used in the dissertation & your opinions will be kept confidential.)

1. Do you practise writing in your classroom?  
Ans:  Yes  No  Sometimes

2. Do you think writing in English is interesting?  
Ans:  Yes  No  Sometimes

3. Do you fear writing activities in English?  
Ans:  Yes  No  Sometimes

4. Do you like the way in which you are taught writing in the classroom?  
Ans:  Yes  No  Sometimes

5. Does your teacher encourage you to practise writing in classroom?  
Ans:  Yes  No  Sometimes



6. Does your teacher correct your error individually in the classroom?

Ans:

Yes

No

Sometimes

7. Do you depend much on memorization to pass your writing examination?

Ans:

Yes

No

Sometimes

8. Can you write freely on any topic?

Ans:

Yes

No

Sometimes

9. Does your teacher discourage you to memorize?

Ans:

Yes

No

Sometimes

10. Do you think you have enough scope to improve writing skill in your class?

Ans:

Yes

No

Sometimes

11. While writing, do you ever feel that you do not have enough vocabulary for writing?

Ans:

Yes

No

Sometimes

12. Does your teacher help you in doing your writing task?

Ans:

Yes

No

Sometimes

Thank you for your participation

# Appendix-B

## Questions for Teachers

Name of the Institution:.....  
Designation of the Teacher:.....Teaching Experience.....  
Place:..... Date:.....

Please put tick mark on the appropriate box:  
**(Your opinions are extremely confidential and these will only be used in the dissertation)**

1. Do you emphasize writing activities in your class?  
Ans:  Yes  No  Sometimes
2. Do you have your own lesson plan for classroom activities?  
Ans:  Yes  No  Sometimes
3. Do your students get feedback on their classroom writing activities?  
Ans:  Yes  No  Sometimes
4. Do you think the duration of class time is enough for practising writing skill?  
Ans:  Yes  No  Sometimes
5. In your teaching do you follow the communicative approach which is suggested in the textbook?

Ans:  Yes  No  Sometimes

6. Did you have any special training on English language teaching?

Ans:  Yes  No  Sometimes

7. Do you think your classroom environment is suitable for teaching English properly?

Ans:  Yes  No  Sometimes

8. Do you do pair/group work with your students?

Ans:  Yes  No  Sometimes

9. Do you have friendly relationship with your students?

Ans:  Yes  No  Sometimes

10. Do you try to apply any technique of your own to make writing skill interesting to your students?

Ans:  Yes  No  Sometimes

11. Do you think your class teaching procedure is improving your students writing?

Ans:  Yes  No  Sometimes

12. Do you think the prevailing exam system is very helpful for improving writing skill of the students?

Ans:  Yes  No  Sometimes

13. Do you encourage your students to practise writing creatively for their examination?

Ans:

Yes

No

Sometimes

14. Do your students fear writing activities when it is assigned in the class?

Ans:

Yes

No

Sometimes

15. Do you have enough time to explain grammatical rules and their applications in writing?

Ans:

Yes

No

Sometimes

**Thank you for your participation.**

# Appendix-C

## Questions for Students' Interview

Name of the Institution.....

Class status:.....Date .....Place.....

1. Do you do any writing activity in your class? What types of writing tasks do you do? How often?

Ans:

2. How do you do your writing task? Individually or in pairs/groups?

Ans:

3. Does the teacher discuss the topic of writing with your in class before asking you to write? What does the teacher do?

Ans:

4. Do you know how to write paragraph or an essay? What do you know?

Ans:

5. Do you have any problems with grammar and vocabulary?

Ans:

6. Does the teacher give you feedback on your writing? How does he do that?

Ans:

7. Do you memorize paragraphs or essays for your exam? Why do you do that?

Ans:

8. What other problems do you have with the development of your writing skill?

Ans:

9. What would you like to do in a writing class? What would you like your tasks to do?

Ans:

10. Do you feel that you cannot write because of your inability to write sentences correctly?

Ans:

# Appendix-D

## Questions for Teachers' Interview

Name of the Institution:.....

Designation of the Teacher:.....Teaching Experience.....

Place:..... Date:.....

1. Do you teach the controlled, guided and free writing chronologically as suggested in the present syllabus?

Ans:

Yes	No	Sometimes
-----	----	-----------

2. Do you use a grammar workbook with the main textbook?

Ans:

Yes	No	Sometimes
-----	----	-----------

3. Do you use English as a medium of instruction in the classroom?

Ans:

Yes	No	Sometimes
-----	----	-----------

4. Do you think that the learning the rules of English is necessary to learn writing skill properly?

Ans:

Yes	No	Sometimes
-----	----	-----------

5. Do you do pair/group work with your students?

Ans:

Yes	No	Sometimes
-----	----	-----------

6. Do you use authentic materials as pictures, charts in your class?

Ans:

Yes	No	Sometimes
-----	----	-----------

7. Do you teach the control and guided writing to improve your students' writing skill?

Ans:

Yes	No	Sometimes
-----	----	-----------

8. Are you satisfied with what is taught in the writing class?

Ans:

Yes	No	Sometimes
-----	----	-----------

9. Do you use Teachers' Guide to teach writing?

Ans:

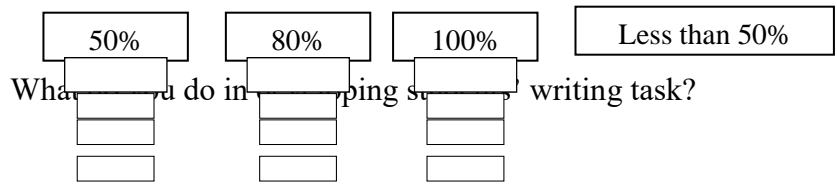
Yes	No	Sometimes
-----	----	-----------

10. Do you try to teach the students how to develop writing composition?

Ans:

Yes	No	Sometimes
-----	----	-----------

11. Do the students submit their writing work to you after doing the given task?



12. What do you do in helping students in writing task?  
Ans:

13. What are the problems, according to you, that hinder students' development in writing?  
Ans:

14. Do you think that the present testing system is not conducive to the development of writing skill? Why?  
Ans:

**Thank you very much for your participation.**



# Appendix-E

## Observation Checklist

Record details of lesson observed below.

Aims of the lesson:

- 1.
- 2.

Skill focus:

Language focus:

Materials used:

Observer:..... Teacher Observed.....

Date:\_\_\_\_\_ Time:\_\_\_\_\_ Institution:.....

Unit:\_\_\_ Lessons:\_\_\_\_\_ Class:\_\_\_\_\_ Total No. Of students:

.....  
 Title of lesson:\_\_\_\_\_ Ss present:\_\_\_ Boys:\_\_\_ Girls:  
 .....

Activity	Yes	No	Examples
Lesson well-planned and the teacher well-			
appear relaxed and friendly during the			
teacher's instruction clear?			
Teacher introduce the lesson clearly and			

Teacher make the lesson interesting and		
Teacher do pairwork the students? Mention		
Teacher do group-work with the students? activity		
Teacher give any writing task to the		
Teacher help the students to do the writing		
Teacher correct errors?		
Teacher give feedback?		

Draw a diagram of the main stages of the lesson (tasks and activities, time spent on each):

Your general comments on the strengths and weaknesses on the teaching of writing Skill:

Write about the techniques that the teacher followed in teaching writing skill. Make an assessment about the teaching style: