

Scaffolding Writing Skills for Indian College Students through Collaborative Learning Tasks Using Online Forums

THESIS

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Under the Supervision of
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CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the thesis entitled “**Scaffolding Writing Skills of College Students through Collaborative Learning Tasks on Online Forums**” and submitted by Ms. Suman Luhach (ID No 2011PHXF032P) for the award of PhD Degree of the Institute embodies original work done by her under my supervision.

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SUMMARY

The present digital era has influenced the teaching methods and materials for optimising the efforts made by teachers and increasing the learning quantum among learners. The present research, as a similar attempt, devises a pedagogical framework which has been integrated with writing tutorials in web-supported language classrooms. Considering the fact that the web-support is underutilized and there is a dire need for enhancing the writing skills among college students, the teaching framework has been formulated by keeping scaffolding as the theoretical basis of learning and by incorporating different types and levels of scaffolding with online support (technical scaffolding). The study also explores how different types of scaffolds can be employed to enable the maximum change to occur in students' writing skills in the set Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD). The framework is designed to facilitate incorporation of online writing tutorials on the Learning Management Systems (LMSs) structured for web-supported instruction process at BITS, Pilani.

The study employs online discussion forum platform, one of the Learning Management System (LMS) resources, available for on-campus students of the institute. The target group for the study involves a heterogeneous group of 64 engineering students from different levels enrolled in the course *Effective Public Speaking in II semester 2013-14*. Speech writing is an indispensable component of the course and requires some tutorial sessions. The study aims at providing these via online discussion forums with the objectives of- understanding the nature of writing process while students accomplish

their writing tasks on online forums, analysing how far collaborative learning tasks on online forum helps in scaffolding the writing skills among college students, exploring students' perception of online forum based collaborative learning of writing experience and investigating the viability of using online forum for collaborative learning of speech writing. The methodological triangulation adopted to realize the objectives include- *content analysis* to understand the writing process, *pre-test* and *post-test* to find the improvement in the writing skills, *survey* through a questionnaire to know students' perception and a collective interpretation of results of the three methodologies respectively.

Content analysis has been done of the online transcripts to analyse the nature of writing process while students take part in online writing tutorials. Results of conceptual as well as relational content analysis, under the parameters corresponding to the different stages of writing process, suggest that students' emphasis had been more on content development and critical thinking. Both of these are integral components of higher order concerns in writing and higher order thinking skills respectively. It also implies that online forums provide a space for doing relevant research regarding a topic and coming up with variety of perspectives on the same. This process enables students to move towards refinement in ideas as well as writing. Pre-test/post-test results also indicate significant improvement in higher order concerns as well as lower order concerns. It also implies that students if engaged in online writing tutorials may improve significantly by shifting towards the intermediate and advanced levels of proficiency in speech writing. Students agreed that online forum discussions helped them to be more attentive to focus

on higher order concerns in writing being reflective, interactive, argumentative and explorative. They were very careful towards mechanics of writing on an open platform. Students have experienced a holistic considerable improvement in their speech writing abilities through the intervention. The study, thus motivates to adopt the web-supported LMS as supplementary in writing classrooms.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

S. No.	Abbreviation	Expanded form
1.	LMS(s)	Learning Management System(s)
2.	HOCs	Higher order concerns (in writing)
3.	LOCs	Lower order concerns (in writing)
4.	HOTS	Higher order thinking skills
5.	ZPD	Zone of Proximal Development
6.	OLFs	Online Learning Forums
7.	PdBA	Product based approach
8.	PsBA	Process based approach
9.	GBA	Genre based approach

Chapter 1

Introduction

Learning Management Systems (LMSs) are being increasingly adopted by educational institutions to empower teaching and learning process. The instructional method which is apposite for such an environment is collaborative learning. Students through collaboration can not only help each other in the learning process but also can enhance their own understanding and proficiency. Bruffee (1984) has emphasised incorporation of collaborative learning into college education stating, “Collaborative learning provides a particular kind of social context for conversation, a particular kind of community- a community of status equals: peers.” (p. 642). Collaborative learning helps making students autonomous, active and independent learners. Students who behave as passive knowledge consumers turn into dynamic knowledge constructors through collaboration.

Since its inception, maximum implications of the concept of collaborative learning have been underscored in teaching and learning of writing skills (Smith & MacGregor, 1992). The study tries to find out the usefulness of this method by integrating it with writing courses. This has been done by measuring development in writing skills, analysing nature of writing process and getting students’ perception. This chapter discusses the importance of writing and critical thinking for college students, the need of incorporating online collaborative writing tutorials, the scope and objectives, limitations, delimitations and significance of the proposed study.

1.1 Background

Effective writing is important in every discipline for a student as he is assessed on his understanding and knowledge through writing. Not only in education but, writing,

according to Ott (2002), is also becoming more important in today's technology based job environments as "it requires more forms of written communication in every area of business world than ever before" (p.15). Chowdhary (2011) corroborates it with a shocking fact that in India only about one third employers are satisfied with their employee's writing ability. Despite its importance in academics and professional arena, it is also undeniable that writing is a great cognitive challenge for students and thus they often ignore to write. It has been found (Jacobs & Karliner, 1977; Carroll, 2002; Shaadgah, 2014) that students in colleges often lack proficiency in substantive writing and critical thinking but not in mechanics of writing. Critical thinking in college writing gives shape to logical and methodical writing aptitude which is rated as a very significant achievement at the tertiary level (Tang, 2009; Sunder, 2013; Stassen, Herrington & Henderson, 2011; Bahr, 2010; Vynche, 2012; Benjamin & Clum, 2003). The aim of higher education of making students efficient writers and critical thinkers can be fulfilled by integrating writing courses. Shaadgah (2014) mentions critical thinking as "a highly desirable goal of higher education courses" (p. 169) and asserts, "It can be developed if they are taught using internet-based writing programs" (p. 176).

It is a well known fact that writing has always been an integral element of higher education, be it a component or a complete course. So, the logical inference which develops out of the aforementioned references is - though writing is taught at colleges but the ways in which it is taught is not up to the mark (Jacobs & Karliner, 1977; Carroll, 2002). The approach of regular feedback at every stage of writing seems lacking and thus is an exclusionary practice (Boas, 2011; Chang, 2014). It implies that the means of learning writing (process writing approaches) are more important than the end product as inappropriate means can never lead to the desired well crafted and

refined composition. Reflection and logical thinking process can be possible for those who have cognitive control over the process of writing which comes with a lot of practice. So, both understanding and enabling the process of writing are very important.

1.2 Collaborative Learning and Writing

Learning writing as a process can be appropriated through collaborative learning of writing. The practice of writing in groups has also been termed as *Collaborative writing* which is done through process based collaborative written interaction for generating and organising ideas (Widodo, 2013; Steele, 2004). Students are expected to learn the intricacies of writing through written interaction and peer feedback. Marimon (1986) states, “Collaborative learning is constitutive of writing across the curriculum, if we define writing as a process of making choices, in other words, as a process of critical thinking” (p.9). Proficiency in writing can be attained by doing writing and that requires maximising the feedback mechanism through the tutorials along with a required amount of the theoretical classes (Bok, 2009; Kellog & Raulson, 2007; Young, 2002).

1.3 Need of Online Collaborative Writing

Collaborative writing in classrooms and physical settings are often perceived as a very tiring work by the students as it accompanies obligation of presence and exchange of documents (Pankratov, 2013). With available online facilities like LMSs, students can utilize asynchronous tools and can also engage in online collaborative writing. It alleviates time and place constraints, facilitates necessary research and reflection, and provides a space for expression (Warschauer, 1995). But integration of online writing tutorials with classroom teaching is rarely being practised in institutes despite the

awareness of aforementioned benefits and common availability of e-learning infrastructure, generally known as Learning Management Systems.

The present study highlights how the learning management system (LMS) *Nalanda* (based on Moodle, leading open source LMS solution) is being employed for offering writing tutorials to on-campus students in BITS, Pilani. The study integrates online discussion forums as a platform to facilitate collaborative writing in the course entitled Effective Public Speaking where speech writing is an integral component. Speech writing has been chosen as this genre encompasses components of assertion, argumentation, exposition, development, logicity, unity, cohesion and persuasion- all necessary for analytical writing. The study provides observation results of collaborative writing by the students i.e. the process of writing and discussion on the speech tasks given by the instructor and about the development in speech writing abilities of the students.

1.4 Scope and Objectives

The literature review chapter establishes that research done on the integration of online forums in education is mostly in online courses but not in classroom teaching. The genres of writing which have been included did not study the integration of online forums for speech writing (Chuikova, 2012) as a supplement to the classroom learning for on- campus students. The present study thus, attempts to introduce online forum based speech writing tutorials for college students over LMS with following main objectives:

1. To understand the nature of writing process while students accomplish their writing tasks on online forums.
2. To analyse if collaborative learning tasks on online forum help in enhancing the writing skills of college students.

3. To explore students' perception about the use of online forum based collaborative learning of writing skills experience.
4. To investigate the viability of using online forum for collaborative learning of writing skills.

1.5 Research questions

The present study is an attempt to integrate online environment in Effective Public Speaking classroom as a supplement which give students an opportunity to discuss and practice speech writing with the convenience of space and time so that they can think critically and learn by doing and also through peer feedback. The research questions which have been formulated for the situation are:

RQ1. Does collaborative writing and discussion over online forums, when integrated with classroom teaching, help students enhance their proficiency in speech writing skills?

RQ2. What are students' perceptions of collaborative writing and discussion over online forums, when integrated with classroom teaching?

RQ3. What is the overall result of the speech writing tutorial over online forums after analyzing the change in written proficiency, students' perception and online transcripts?

A paragogical framework is designed to understand how different types and levels of scaffolds can be operated to achieve appropriation in a particular writing task through web- supported tutorials over LMS. So, further research questions which arise are:

RQ4- How and to what strength are Van Lier's features of Scaffolding operationalised in the collaborative speech writing process?

RQ5- What is the main focus of discussion while students are engaged in the process of speech writing over the forums?

The framework has been implemented in online forum mediated writing tutorials by the researcher and a detailed analysis of the writing process corresponding to its stages is done through content analysis.

1.6 Limitations

Limitations of a research have been defined as, “matters and occurrences that arise in a study which are out of the researcher’s control and limit the extensity to which a study can go, and sometimes affect the end result and conclusions that can be drawn” (Simon and Goes, 2013, p.1). Keeping this in view, one of the major methodological limitations of the present research is the restricted sample size which limits it to a single course entitled Effective Public Speaking and the writing component of speech writing. The course was chosen because speech writing component involves argumentation, assertion, exposition, persuasion and analysis which facilitate critical thinking and focused writing. The study doesn’t claim to generalize the results of this case to larger population and variety of writing courses for college students. But, the implications of the paragogical scaffolding framework and its outcomes may be extrapolated in other writing courses with larger number of students.

Another practical limitation of the study is that it could not manage doing a longitudinal research due to paucity of time. Moreover, necessity of a pilot study added to the time constraint and made it difficult to conduct a longitudinal research over alternate two or three semesters.

The research undertaken was different from actual lab researches as it was based on practical educational settings. So, it was natural to encounter some validity issues such as sample selection bias that might have occurred due to consecutive sampling.

Effort has been made to minimise its effect by adopting triangulated research design. Inability to check the authenticity of the posts was another limitation of the study. Though students had their unique login id and password but it was not possible to verify the same at the user end.

Another methodological limitation of the study is that the researcher could not interview the group of students while getting their perceptions through questionnaire. Interview leads to subjective open ended perceptions of the students which pose a challenge of developing an analysis framework of the responses and that was practically not possible with constrained time limits. Though that would have provided broader perspective of the students but was also practically impossible as the study was already a methodologically triangulated research.

1.7 Delimitations

Delimitations explain the boundaries of a study and limit the scope (Simon, 2011).

The major delimitations of the study are:

1. The method of sample selection for the present research was consecutive sampling.
2. The study involves only one campus, one course and only one element of teaching writing skills. It was carried out among heterogenous group of the undergraduate engineering students in BITS Pilani registered in Effective Public Speaking Course (ENGL C353) during second semester 2013-14.
3. The sample was limited to 64 students considering the effort and time needed to complete the project and number of students registered in the course.
4. Speech writing, which is being taught to the registered students was selected as course content for pre-test/post-test and online collaborative writing treatment.

5. In pre-test/post-test proficiency of students was measured at nine parameters: Attention grabber, speaker's credibility statement, thesis statement, internal preview, organization and development, support for ideas, use of connectives, style and conclusion
6. For content analysis, the construct of scaffolding was gauged in relation to the stages of writing process, elements of writing (HOCs and LOCs) and higher order thinking skills.
7. Interdependence of students outside the classroom and online forum collaborative discussions cannot be denied and controlled.

1.8 Challenges and issues

The major challenge was experienced at the level of implementation of the constructs and integration of online medium with classroom teaching and learning process. The pedagogical scaffolding framework was designed to implement it at tertiary level web-supported classrooms to facilitate online writing tutorials. For this, it was obligatory to do a careful planning as it was an attempt to extend the walls of classroom teaching to web without any significant change in the regular course requirements and structure. So, a pilot study was conducted to find the pitfalls and rectify them during final study. Instruction sheets (well informed by the constructs), pre-test/post-test assignments and assessment rubric, online speech writing tasks and questionnaire were designed and tested during the pilot study to check their validity, reliability and practicality.

1.9 Significance

It has been implied in the outcomes of the study that it has conceptual, methodological, educational and analytical contribution to the existing research. A pedagogical scaffolding framework has been devised to facilitate writing tutorials on

online forums. This framework is not course specific and can be extrapolated to other elements of writing skills such as report writing and argumentative essay writing.

Methodology adopted in the study tried to implement as well as assess the operation of the construct of scaffolding by setting features of scaffolding given by Van Lier in conformity with the stages of writing process and also with the elements of writing and higher order thinking skills.

One of the educational aims emphasised in the study is the importance of writing skills and critical thinking in higher education. The genre of speech writing demands argumentative and persuasive skills to be mastered by the students. For this, engaging them in tutorials worked upon their higher order thinking skills and helped them hone their critical thinking skills along with writing skills. The study helps in carrying out the aims of higher education.

Another important significance of the study is the integration of Educational Technology in English Language Teaching. The technology of web 2.0 had been recognised with its usage in language learning and one of the web 2.0 tools i.e. online forums has been integrated as a supplement to classroom environment to facilitate writing tutorials. This platform had been selected out of the many resources available on LMS *Nalanda* designed for on-campus students. So, the study makes an attempt to integrate web-supported learning environments into language classrooms.

1.10 Thesis Structure

The thesis is divided into six main chapters. The *first* chapter is the introduction which provides an overview of importance of writing skills and critical thinking in higher education, learning management systems and collaborative learning and writing strategies. It also discusses objectives, research questions, significance, limitations and delimitations of the study.

The *second* chapter consists of literature review. It provides an extensive review of the theories, concepts and researches done in the field. It starts with the discussion of status and importance of writing skills in higher education. It is essential to acquire reflection and logical thinking process to attain cognitive control over the process of writing. Emphasis on practice has been maintained through studies in the field. Collaborative writing as a strategy to engage students in writing practice and thinking has been discussed in detail along with an explanation to writing as a process, genres of college writing, speech writing as a different genre, higher order and lower order concerns (HOCs and LOCs) in writing and higher order thinking skills (HOTS), internet and types of instructions, learning management systems (LMSs) and web 2.0 in language classrooms.

The *third* chapter attempts to devise a pedagogical scaffolding framework for integration of online writing tutorials with web- supported language classrooms. This has been done after an insight into the types, levels and key features of scaffolding. This framework has been implemented in online forum mediated writing tutorials by the researcher and a detailed analysis of the writing process corresponding to its stages is done.

The *fourth* chapter discusses the different research methods used in the study and rationale behind using them to accomplish the objectives of the study. This has been done through discussing research design, participants, data collection instruments data analysis approach, procedure and timeline, variables, research question and hypotheses. A triangulated research approach with quasi-experimental research design involving pre-test/post-test, content analysis and questionnaire has been explained and validated.

The *fifth* chapter includes analytical procedures and findings of the study. Analysis has been done under three sections. Section one deals with the data analysis of pre-test and post-test. Section two focuses on content analysis of the online transcripts and section three shows analysis of questionnaire of students' perceptions on the treatment. Concluding section of the chapter provides a holistic view of the whole study and results.

The *sixth* chapter provides conclusions of the study. It discusses the findings, draws implications and provides directions for future research.

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Chapter 2

Literature Review

This chapter presents a review of the literature for the research undertaken. The chapter includes sub-sections on writing and higher education, collaborative writing, writing process, genres of college writing, speech writing as a genre, higher order and lower order concerns (HOCs and LOCs) in writing and higher order thinking skills (HOTS), internet and types of instructions, learning management systems (LMSs), web 2.0 in language classrooms and promotion of online collaborative learning. It also discusses differences between wikis, Google documents, blogs and forums, collaborative writing with web 2.0 tools and an overview of integration of online forums in language classrooms, research gap and research questions.

2.1 Writing and Higher Education: Need Scenario

Effective writing skills are integral to mastering the communication skills in any language learning. Besides listening, speaking and reading skills, writing is an essential tool for learning a discipline. Therefore, the English language teachers need to share the responsibility of improving writing skills of students. This includes learning to write effectively and also knowing the process of writing which involves writing, editing, rewriting and proofreading. It is a skill that helps getting jobs and promotions. Analytical writing ability is considered a good indicator of value added by higher education (Benjamin & Clum, 2003). Despite the importance of writing skills, it has been increasingly observed that students hate writing (Lavelle & Zuercher, 2001). A high degree of verbal ability is necessary to generate cohesive text that clearly expresses the ideational content (Mc Cutchen, 1984). Writing ability further depends on the ability to think clearly about substantive matters (Nickerson,

Perkins, & Smith, 1985). Writing well is a major cognitive challenge. Sunder (2013) emphasises that the aim of college education is to inculcate analytical and critical thinking among students. Students at college are often not able to organise and develop their thoughts keeping the audience in mind. Even records do not vindicate the same. Jacobs and Karliner (1977) state the finding of evaluation of college students' essays, "A substantial proportion of freshmen who come to our schools are 'literate' in that they can write reasonably correct English but are handicapped by their inability to demonstrate thought on paper" (p.489). The findings were very surprising as most of the papers though had negligible mistakes related to grammar and mechanics but seriously lacked in thought and were vague (Jacobs & Karliner, 1977). It also indicates that lack of practice in writing also results in lesser developed cognitive skills. Emig (1977) asserted that writing can have a distinct role in learning as both product and process of writing together lead towards meaningful and effective learning. It has been further substantiated by Emig (1977) when he says that some renowned cognitive theorists like Lev Vygotsky, A.R. Lunia and Jerome Bruner have also advocated that advanced level of thinking abilities of analysis and synthesis can be enhanced to the utmost with verbal support particularly written.

Many reports have shown that very less percentage of college students as well as employees in India have advanced levels of written and overall language proficiency in English. Chowdhary (2011) has cited results based on survey done on 303 employers across the nation by FICCI in 2010. These results show that only about one third employers were satisfied with their employee's writing ability. It was also found that only 26% employers were satisfied with their employees' ability to communicate in English. Bose (2013) has also reported the findings of 'Aspiring Minds' National Employability Report', for which the survey was

conducted on 60,000 students from colleges across India enrolled in their final year. While looking for the suitability of these students for an analyst's role, it was found that "close to 84 per cent graduates were found lacking the right levels in cognitive ability. Ninety per cent graduates did not have required proficiency in English communication." Gohain (2012) also cites, "about 25% to 35% of engineers are unable to comprehend in English, which includes their day-to-day conversation and academic lectures, affecting the overall delivery of knowledge." Puranik (2015) reveals a startling fact that 97% of the engineering students in India cannot speak fluently in English. Based on the study of these reports it can be deduced that both graduates and employees seriously lack in effective communication skills. And when it comes to employers' expectations (Chowdhary, 2011) they think that their employees should be more efficient in both spoken and written communication.

Higher education aims at developing analytical and CT abilities. Both require reflection and logical thinking process and that can be possible for those who have cognitive control over the process of writing which comes with a lot of practice. It can be compared with the practice sessions in the Maths classrooms. The requirement of pen and paper for some calculations is lost because practice results into cognitive control and automated processing of all the stages. Likewise, proficiency in writing takes years to develop through endless and deliberate practice (Kellog & Raulson, 2007). One who is at the advanced level of proficiency in writing skills also signifies that he is also at the advanced level of thinking skills. At college, training is more important than instruction (Kellog & Raulson, 2007). In fact, it's crucial. Students in college do not require interpretation of what is written in text books about different genres of writing. They, in actual, require training and practice and most important, timely feedback. According to Bok (2009), "Real proficiency, however, requires

sustained practice. Similarly, undergraduates are unable to learn to write with clarity, precision, and grace unless they have repeated opportunities to keep on writing and get prompt feedback from the faculty” (p. 87). This clearly suggests that proficiency in writing can be attained by writing only and that requires the need to maximise feedback mechanism through the tutorials along with a required amount of the theoretical classes.

Beaufort (as cited in Young, 2002) also calls for changing the way most composition courses being are taught in colleges because inspite of passing out with satisfactory marks students fail to transmit their learning into effective writing. The five context-specific knowledge domains emphasised by him while teaching college students are:

- (1) discourse community knowledge
- (2) subject matter knowledge
- (3) genre knowledge
- (4) rhetorical knowledge
- (5) writing process knowledge

Discourse community refers to the audience to deal with, subject matter knowledge signifies proper understanding of the situation and purpose, genre knowledge is the exact knowledge about mode of written communication to be adopted and rhetoric suggests the style of language to be followed. The last- writing process knowledge – is actually not the least but the most important domain to be properly understood and practised by the students. The steps of writing process, if given adequate practice in colleges, helps enhancing fluency in writing at college level and further at work place resulting in saving a lot of time during the real world writing needs. Practice through tutorials help conditioning the learners (Carroll, 2002) as:

Students in college do not necessarily learn to write better, but that they learn to write differently-to produce new, more complicated forms addressing challenging topics with greater depth, complexity, and rhetorical sophistication. Both composition teachers in first-year courses and faculty in other academic disciplines may underestimate the difficulty of such tasks, students' needs for repeated practice, and the ways in which expectations for literacy differ across disciplines, courses, and professors (p.15).

Carroll (2002) has named the writing assignments in colleges as 'literacy tasks' as they require a good deal of extra knack than just to frame grammatically perfect sentences. Carroll (2002) has also emphasised that students need to:

Orchestrate a complicated sequence of 'literacy acts' which require knowledge of research skills, ability to read complex texts, understanding of key disciplinary concepts, and strategies for synthesizing, analysing, and responding critically to new information, usually within a limited time frame (p.25).

Continuous practice of these 'literacy tasks' are intended to make college students develop "thinking tools- the intellectual skills and creativity not just for their college work, but for their life, relationships, and future professions" (Jewell, n.d.).

The discussion suggests that the aim of higher education of making students critical thinkers can be fulfilled to some extent by integrating writing courses. Faculty can also play a crucial role by showing promptness in giving timely and quality feedback. Or, such arrangements can be made by the faculty where students can help each other by becoming constructive critics. As it is a well known fact that writing is a recursive process, so setting up an environment for writing practise becomes important. Such an environment can be created through providing writing tutorials tasks in groups.

Teacher's role would be to monitor and moderate the group writing tasks. Writing in groups can help students better understand the stages of writing process and slowly automate it. The practice of writing in group has been termed as 'Collaborative writing' and its detailed discussion has been done in the next section.

2.2 Collaborative Writing

The term 'collaborative writing' indicates anything written with the efforts of two or more people together. There is no single definition of the concept of collaborative writing. It is a slippery concept as there are many ways of writing in groups (Hill, 2003). Thus, there is a need to properly set the frame and instructions before starting or assigning a collaborative writing task so that it saves and eases both the efforts and the time. Farkas (1991) has given four possible definitions helpful in approaching collaboration through an analysis of processes. These definitions highlight varied shades of collaborative writing and clearly differentiate between various possibilities while working in collaboration. According to Farkas (1991) collaborative writing can be defined as:

1. Two or more people jointly composing the complete text of a document.
2. Two or more people contributing components to a document.
3. One or more person modifying, by editing and/or reviewing, the document of one or more persons.
4. One person working interactively with one or more persons and drafting a document based on the ideas of the person or persons (p.14).

The definition given by Farkas has four different degrees of collaboration for writing tasks. On close analysis of the above definitions it can be deduced that there are two broad categories of these different shades of collaborative authoring. The first category of collaborative authoring includes a single or many individual authors who

through discussions, suggestions and reviews by the colleagues or the participants get benefited and finally produce individual documents. The approach of writing followed in such collaborative written interaction is process based (Widodo, 2013). The second category involves authors in groups who produce a single document either by contributing different components or one person starting with the initial draft and others contributing through modifications and reviews. The second category in which the final product is a single unit can be put under cooperative learning of writing and not the collaborative learning. McInerney and Roberts (2004) have differentiated between cooperative learning and collaborative learning so that the confusion while using the two terms can be evaded and appropriateness and unambiguousness of their usage can be sustained. The Figures 1 and 2 provide the gist of the connotations of both the terms and also help in differentiating between the two terms easily.

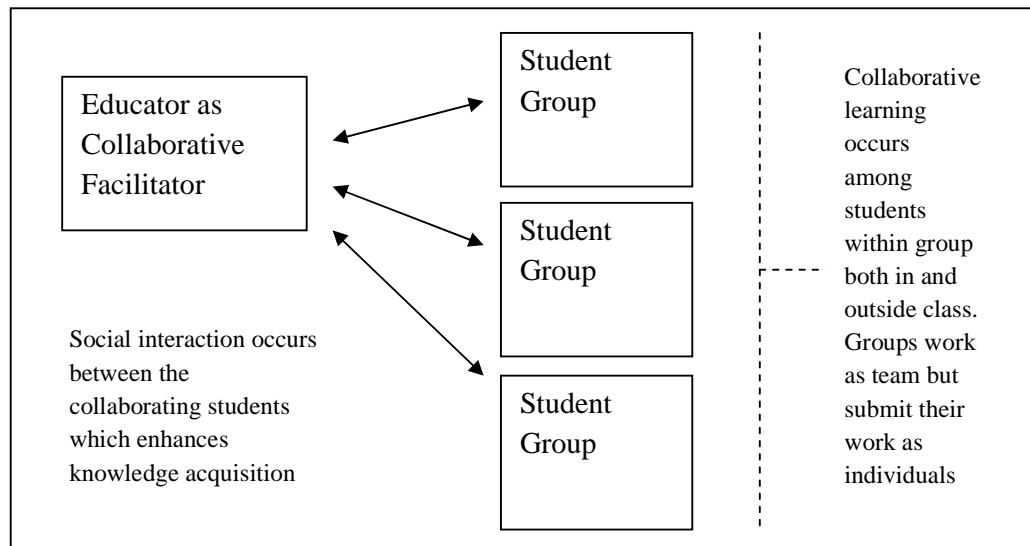


Figure 1. Concept model of Collaborative Learning adapted from “Collaborative or Cooperative Learning?” by J.M. McInerney and T.S. Roberts, 2004, in Tim S. Roberts (Ed.), *Online Collaborative Learning: Theory and Practice*, p. 203-214, ISP, USA.

Both cooperative and collaborative learning demands students to work in groups. In cooperative learning, the students in a single group are well aware of their role, or the part of the task which each student has to accomplish in order to submit the work as a single unit. There may or may not be interaction among students. They focus on completing the task or project properly i.e. the end product's perfection through the approach 'divide- and- conquer' (Ingram & Hathorn, 2004). Whereas, in collaborative learning the emphasis is laid on group learning where 'student- student interaction' (McInerney & Roberts, 2004, p. 207) proves crucial in the learning process.

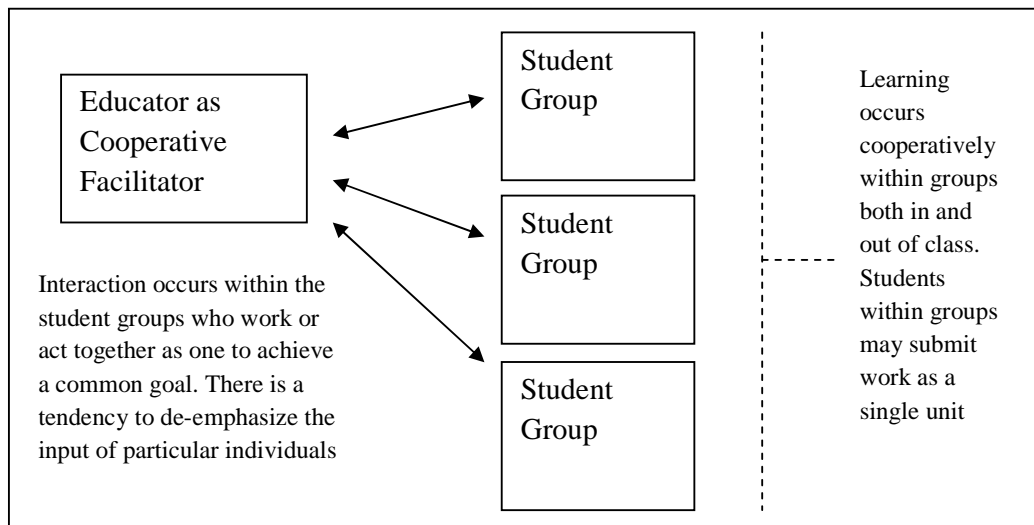


Figure 2. Concept model of Cooperative Learning adapted from “Collaborative or Cooperative Learning?” by J.M. McInerney and T.S. Roberts, 2004, in Tim S. Roberts (Ed.), *Online Collaborative Learning: Theory and Practice*, p. 203-214, ISP, USA.

Generally, after the collaborative learning environment set by the instructor is over, individual progress of the students is seen. It is seen whether the collaboration has resulted in mutual learning or not. Each individual is aware of the task in a holistic manner, i.e. learning in holistic way is not just a part of whole task but students actually tend to help each other in their own overall learning. Whereas, accountability in cooperative learning is individual, everyone is responsible for their work (Millis, 1996).

The present research deploys collaborative learning strategy for it is based on interactive learning and learners are dependent on each other during the learning process. It is the whole learning process which makes this learning strategy more vulnerable. In the present study, the domain of learning is writing skills of college students. They are encouraged to collaborate for the learning process of the process of writing (Widodo, 2013). They are expected to learn the intricacies of writing through written interaction and peer feedback and come up with individual final performances.

2.3 Writing as a Process

Looking at how writing instruction has evolved over time and what different approaches have been followed Hung (2008) has come up with integrating three major approaches for teaching writing:

- Product based approach (PdBA)
- Process based approach (PsBA)
- Genre based approach (GBA)

PdBA is based on providing certain set of composition instructions in the classroom followed by an attempt by the students to emulate the sample. In the end, teacher evaluates the composition and assigns grades. The major drawback of the approach was that it lacked the focus on process of writing and feedback required from the

instructor and peers at each stage of the composition. According to Hung (2008), “in product oriented classrooms, the writing processes and strategies used as students wrote never became a matter of great concern” (p.12). It is expected from students to master any genre of writing just on the basis of theoretical instruction and specimen copy of the written product provided in the classroom.

Table 1 gives a clear picture of the differences between the two approaches.

Table 1

Difference between Process Based and Product Based Approach

S. No.	Process Based Approach	Product Based Approach
1.	text as a resource for comparison	imitate model text
2.	ideas as starting point	organisation of ideas more important than ideas themselves
3.	more than one draft	one draft
4.	more global, focus on purpose, theme, text type, i.e., reader is emphasised	features highlighted including controlled practice of those features
5.	Collaborative	Individual
6.	emphasis on creative process	emphasis on end product

Note. Adapted from “Product and process writing: A comparison” by V. Steele, 2004, retrieved from <http://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/article/product-process-writing-a-comparison>

Attention on PsBA began in late 1960s opposing the style of writing instruction in PdBA. Boas (2011) holds:

In contrast to the product approach to writing, which is based on studying and replicating textual models, the process approach involves multiple and repeated steps that compel the writer to closely consider the topic, language, purpose for writing, and social reality of an audience (p.26).

Steele (2004) concludes that what makes process based approach so important is the collaborative work and the discussion involved for generating and organising ideas. The ‘unfinishedness’ (Murray, 2003, p.4) of the writing process is vital for students to develop as writers. PsBA considers writing as a recursive process involving shuffling between different stages of writing until it takes a final shape. PsBA is composed of some common major steps which have been presented in Figure 3.

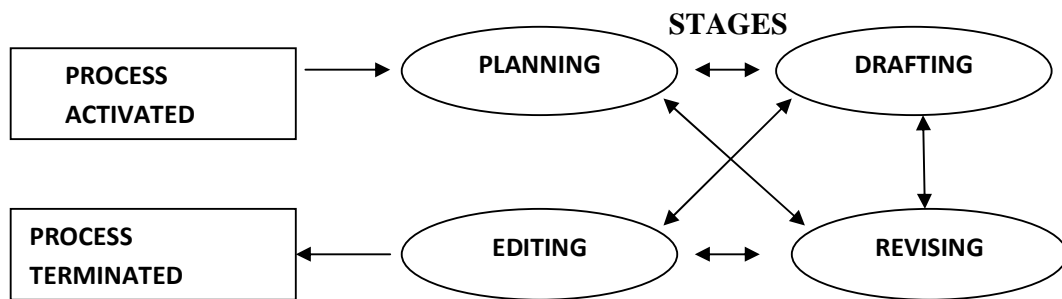


Figure 3. Representing various stages of Writing Process. Adapted from “The writing process and the process writing” by Anthony Seow, 2002, In Jack C. Richards & Willy A. Renandaya (Eds.) *Methodology in Language Teaching: An Anthology of Current Practice*, p. 315.

GBA builds upon the PsBA and argues that writing is (Hung, 2008) a “transactional activity, writing represents a process that the writer must take the reader’s background, knowledge, needs, interests and ideologies into consideration” (p.16). This approach demands teachers to prepare students for the academic, professional and social life by making out the major writing tasks these areas will consist of. GBA gives importance to audience analysis and purpose of writing in addition to the process.

The three approaches to teaching writing cannot be adopted in instruction in mutually restricted sense. To arrive at a written *product* one has to go through the *process* of writing of that particular *genre* of writing. Teachers often focus more on product and genre of writing. As a result, students don't realise the importance of all the steps involved in writing and keep on repeating the similar kinds of mistakes.

The present study is an attempt to understand the writing process of collaborative learning of speech writing. Speech writing genre is very vast in its approach as the nature of speech depends upon its purpose- informative, entertaining, description, felicitation, commemoration, persuasion etc. All the types certainly vary in their content, organisation and style depending upon its nature and thus, the genre variations due to different objectives are inherent i.e. very obvious in teaching speech writing. The focus of the present study is on understanding the nature of writing process as an effective means of performing the speech writing task that results in a quality product doing justice with the genre. Mere replication of the existing product (sample speech) and superficial understanding of the genre alone cannot help. According to Seow (2008):

the idea behind process writing is not really to dissociate writing entirely from the written product ...but to have an effective performance oriented teaching programme that would mean that we need to systematically teach students problem-solving skills connected with writing process that will enable them to realise specific goals at each stage of the composing process (p.136).

Process writing does not discard the product but it focuses on understanding the nuances of writing at every stage to get a well framed product.

Emig (1977) has also pointed out for teaching writing as a process that process writing involves immediate mechanism of feedback and reinforcement for the part of writing being completed.

A comprehensive model (see Figure 4) of writing process approach has been given by Coffin, Curry, Goodman, Hewings, Lillis & J. Swann (2012). This model has been kept as the basis for content analysis done in the study for understanding the nature of writing process. This model explains elaborated stages of process writing as reflection, peer/tutor review, additional research or idea generation elements have also been included in the model along with classic planning-drafting-revision-editing approach.

In the study undertaken the platform for practising writing through process approach is online discussion forum where the importance of looking at tutor/peer feedback, reflection, brainstorming and additional research or idea generation is categorical. These are also important steps in understanding the nature of writing. Thus, the model shown in Figure 4 comes out to be an appropriate one for attaining the objective of understanding writing process.

The basic model of process writing which involves planning-drafting-revision-editing approach does not figure out the kind of inputs or factors which lead to revision and editing.

In collaborative writing reflection, peer review, additional research and idea generation play a key role in revising and refining the text. So, a comprehensive approach of writing process needs to be understood to get an insight into the importance and functioning of interdependent learning of writing.

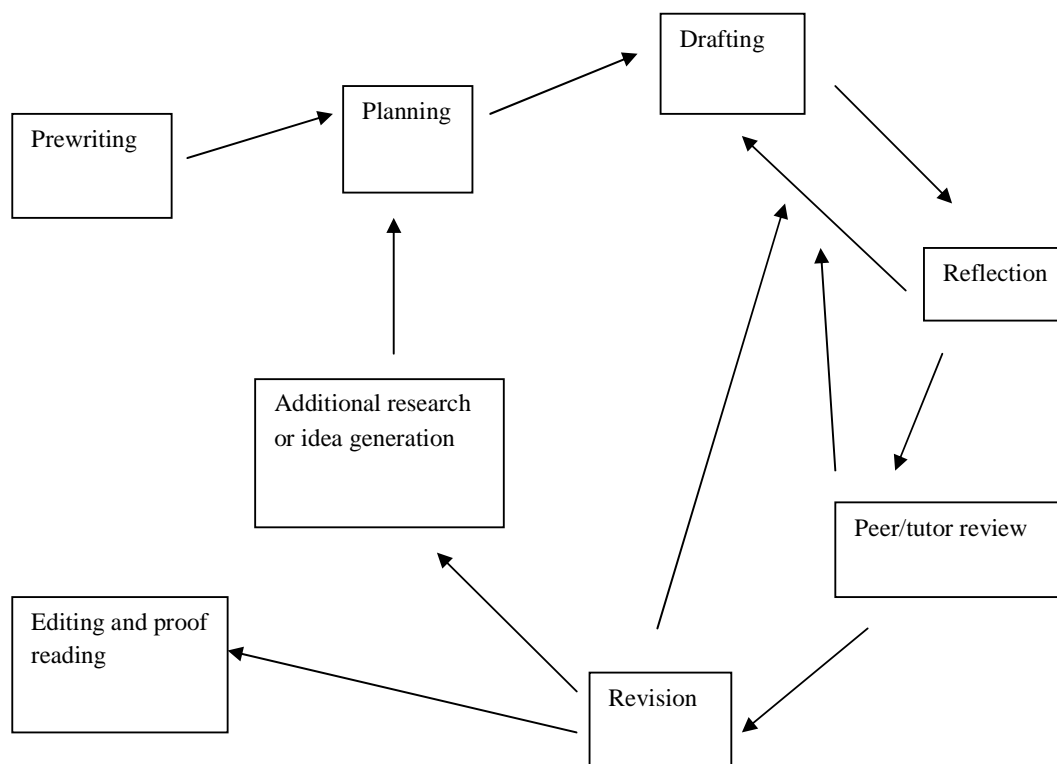


Figure 4. The writing process approach and its conceptual representation. Adapted from “Teaching Academic Writing: A Toolkit for Higher Education” by C. Coffin, M.J. Curry, S. Goodman, A. Hewings, T. M. Lillis and J. Swann, 2012, p.34.

The elaboration of the various steps of the writing process approach (as illustrated in Figure 4) has been done in the Table 2. This elaboration shows the types of writing activities done under each step of the writing process. These indicators would also help in categorisation done for content analysis and choosing the appropriate elements of writing corresponding to each stage of writing process.

Table 2

The Writing Process Approach

S.No.	Stage of Writing Process	Elaboration
1.	Prewriting	Generating ideas, understanding the ideas of others, collecting information, note-taking, free writing, brainstorming, looping
2.	Planning	Organising and focusing ideas, mind mapping, clustering, listing, outline
3.	Drafting	Writing initial drafts of a text focusing mainly on the development, organisation and elaboration of ideas
4.	Reflection	Letting work sit, coming back to it at a later point
5.	Peer/tutor review	Feedback from others
6.	Revision	Further developing and clarifying ideas, the structure of the text
7.	Additional research or idea generation	
8.	Editing and Proofreading	Focusing attention on the surface –level features of the text.

2.4 Genres of Writing for College Students

At college it is expected that students are already proficient in language usage- sentence construction, word choice and grammatical accuracy. When students enter college, the main aim of introducing writing courses is to inculcate and develop HOCs among them (Sunder, 2013; Jacobs & Karliner, 1977; Emig, 1977) and also to introduce some new genres of writing which they have not studied at school

(Beiderwell, Tse, Lochhaas & N. B. Decanter, 2014). The genres which are generally followed at college are:

1. Technical and Academic writing
2. Creative writing
3. Remedial writing
4. Business writing, etc.

Creative writing is often kept optional as it can be taken up by those students who have a flair for writing and are very good at imagination. It is often an inborn talent which can be groomed by acquainting them with the nuances of creative writing. Technical and Academic writing are expository in nature and are often compulsory courses as these courses prepare students to accomplish certain academic writing tasks at college- report writing, research paper writing, journal writing etc. and also at workplace in future – reports, letters, memos etc. Remedial writing courses are designed for those students who do not have basic proficiency in writing required to write meaningful sentences with proper expression. Business writing course aims at making students ready to write components which are often required in business dealings as proposals, business letters etc.

2.5 Speech Writing: As a Different Genre

Speech writing differentiates itself from other writing genres as it is written to be spoken. According to Neale & Ely (2007), “Writing for the spoken word is a special discipline; it requires that ... products be written primarily, although not exclusively, to be heard, not read” (p.1). The aim is to deliver a well-crafted speech that means prewriting to perform better during speaking. So, it is generally assumed that writing a speech beforehand is one of the factors to deliver perfect speech. Some researchers (Mader, 1985; Elbow, 1985; Stay, 1985) also hold that mutual coordinating

involvement of both in teaching also helps in enhancing written proficiency. Mader (1985) concludes from his five years of teaching experience, “ a coordinating sequence of speaking/writing courses, together with videotaping and playbacking of speeches is a practical and successful method of developing those cognitive skills that enable students to improve as writers” (p.254). McKinnon (as cited in Mader, 1985) says, “50 percent of the students entering college are unable to cope with abstract propositions which reflects that students initially may not have achieved the cognitive maturity needed to confront the successfully academic exercises needed in college writing” (p.155). He holds that cognitive skills can be honed through public speaking and argumentative courses. Generally, in such courses the speaker or the writer must always remember that they get a single chance to deliver the information they intend to deliver. For that, the argument has to be clear and logical for the targeted audience. Mader (1985) concludes in his essay that public speaking courses have relevance in teaching of writing as in such courses the focus is on generating ideas after proper analysis.

Elbow (1985) has very comprehensively explained the relationship between speech and writing. He favours teaching both speaking and writing together and cites many ways in which writing is similar to speech in the third section of his essay, *The Shifting Relationship between Speech and Writing*. Elbow (1985, p. 290) holds that writing, like speech, can be made communal by making students write together. By doing this the contextual particularity found in speech can be induced in writing by allowing students to write in small groups particularly about some issue or situation by sharing their experiences in written and being the audience for their peers. So, like speech immediate response and clarification can be invited in writing also. This

practice 'keeps the discourse active' as working in groups means that the students are available for 'writing-in-response-to-each-other's-writing'. Elbow (1985) holds,

The best writing has voice: the life and rhythms of speech. Unless we actively train our students to 'speak onto paper', they will write the kind of dead, limp, nominalised prose we hate..... so in order to make writing good we should try to make it like speech (p.291).

College writing demands hold on assertive, argumentative and persuasive writing skills as these qualities help them grow a lot in all the spheres of their lives- social, professional and educational. Speech writing incorporates all these elements but inspite of this fact this component is generally not included in the genres of college writing.

Chuikova (2012) strongly recommends changes in pedagogy to enhance writing skills and the most important change he emphasises is grouping writing and speech practice. The positive results of the integration are many. Mentioning some in the research paper Chuikova (2012) says, "style of speaking may change, oral texts become more structured, the techniques of involving the reader/ listener are used more intensely, summarizing and paraphrasing skills are improved" (p.226). Thus, though Speech Writing is not much focused upon and usually not taught in many universities but its inclusion can certainly become decisive for students in scaling new heights in the social, academic and professional arenas.

A glimpse of the national and international institutions which offer courses in speech writing or communication can be seen in the data compiled in Table 3.

Table 3

Universities offering courses in Speech Writing

S.No	Name of the University	Course	Course details	Source of Information
1.	Open University of Nigeria	Speech Writing		http://www.nou.edu.ng/NOUN_OCL/pdf/pdf2/ENG%20414%20SPEECH%20WRITING.pdf
2.	Dartmouth	Speech Courses	Public speaking, speech writing, Rhetoric of Social Justice, Legal Rhetoric, Argumentation in Speech and Writing, Persuasive Public Speaking, Political Humor Rhetoric: Contemporary Television, Intercultural Rhetoric, Resistance to Influence: Inoculation Theory-Based	https://writing-speech.dartmouth.edu/curriculum/speech-courses
3.	Georgetown university, school of continuing studies	fundamentals of speech writing	Identifying ways to use speechwriting to successfully convey a message or a policy Understanding how to use speechwriting to deliver sound bites and make news	http://scs.georgetown.edu/courses_nc/XCPD-226/fundamentals-of-speech-writing?ref=offerings&dId=5
4.	Oregon State university, College of liberal arts – school of Arts and communication	Speech communication	Within the area of rhetoric and social influence, our faculty engages in scholarship and teaches courses in argumentation, persuasion, propaganda, visual rhetoric, social movements, pop culture, media	http://liberalarts.oregonstate.edu/school-arts-and-communication/speech-communication

			criticism, political campaigns, and environmental rhetoric	
5.	Massey university, new Zealand	Speech Writing (15 credits)		http://www.massey.ac.nz/massey/learning/programme-course-paper/paper.cfm?paper_code=219.310)
6.	Harvard Kennedy School, John F. Kennedy School of Govt.	Speech Writing		https://www.hks.harvard.edu/news-events/media-experts/us-government-politics/politics/communications/speechwriting
7.	Simon Fraser University	Speech Writing		http://www.sfu.ca/continuing-studies/courses/bcpw/speech-writing.html
8.	College of Public Speaking, London	Advanced Speech Writing		http://www.collegeofpublicspeaking.co.uk/courses/advanced-speech-writing
9.	Iowa State University	Speech Communication	assess the quality of arguments; evaluate information found in research and public discourse; and cultivate rhetorical sensitivity in order to better connect with individuals and audiences.	http://www.speechcomm.iastate.edu
10.	UNC College of Arts and Sciences, The Writing Center	Speeches		https://writingcenter.unc.edu/files/2012/09/Speeches-The-Writing-Center.pdf
11.	BITS Pilani, India	Effective Public Speaking		

2.6 Higher Order Thinking, Higher Order Concerns and Lower Order Concerns in Writing

The essential aspects of any piece of writing are higher order concerns (HOCs) and lower order concerns (LOCs). Both HOCs and LOCs have their own importance. HOCs are beyond knowing common language usage and sentence construction. Somebody who is able to write a correct sentence may or may not be able to write something meaningful (Jacobs and Karliner, 1977). The vice-versa is also equally possible. Somebody with well developed higher order thinking skills (HOTS) might not be able to put his thoughts on the paper due to lack of command over the language usage i.e. LOCs. But to achieve excellence in HOCs it is very important to be reflective and think critically, which means higher order thinking skills will lead to a well developed composition where all the aspects of HOCs of writing meet the standard requirement. The present study where online writing tutorial (with inherent discussion) environment has been created, both thinking and composing take place through writing. Thus, for doing the content analysis, some aspects of HOTS have also been included along with HOCs as the nature of online writing task not only has formal writing attributes but also has the benefit of a platform where students can think in writing.

Elements of HOCs (Purdue, OWL, 2013) are- Focus/Thesis/Purpose, audience, organisation and content development and of LOCs are- Grammar (sentence structure, punctuation, prepositions, articles, verb tense), word choice and spellings. HOTS mean critical, logical, reflective, metacognitive and creative thinking (King, Goodson & Rohani, 1998, p.1).

Often the aspects of HOCs and LOCs are seen while doing revision which is the last step in the writing process and that is essential of course. But a careful process of

composition can also be followed by applying HOTS and keeping in mind the elements of HOCs and LOCs at each stage of writing process. The strategy can help in understanding the value of each element effectively in a systematic manner. This practice can reduce the end time revision load by imparting quality into the composition at each stage of writing process. Since the objective of the study is to understand the nature of writing process while students accomplish their writing tasks on online forums, so the dimensions for content analysis (done to understand the nature of writing process), need to be in conformity with the stages of writing process. The table 4 shows the levels of dimensions of writing and thinking – HOCs, HOTS and LOCs corresponding to the stages of writing process.

Table 4

Stages of Writing Process and Dimensions of Writing and HOTS

Main Category	Generic Category (stages of writing process)	Sub-categorisation for coding (HOCs, HOTS and LOCs)
Writing Process	Pre-writing and planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Audience analysis (AA) • Thesis Statement/ Focus/ Purpose (TS) • Outline (OL)
	Drafting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organisation (ORG) • Initial Content development (CD-I)
	Reflection and peer review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Critical thinking (CT)
	Revision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Critical thinking: self-regulation(CT-SR)
	Additional research or idea generation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional Content development (CD-A)
	Proofreading and editing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lower Order Concerns (LOCs)

2.7 Internet and Types of Instructions

With the dawn of internet era there are conspicuous changes in every walk of life and education is no exception to it. Educationists maintain that instructional technology is

the key to quality education in 21st century (Mergendollar, 1996) and a new educational culture (Connick, 1997) has been created where students have the ownership of their own leaning. Educators support online learning because of its unique abilities to provide students with enriched learning experiences, to extend learning beyond the classroom, and to support more successful differentiated learning strategies that personalize students' educational experiences (Eduviews, 2009).

Internet in the instructional purposes has given rise to three types of web- instructions on the basis of organisation and amount of instruction online (Davidson-Shivers & Rasmussen, 2006):

- Web- Based Instruction (WBI)
- Web- Enhanced Instruction (WEI)
- Web- Supported Instruction (WSI)

In WBI, instruction is completely online with the advantage of anywhere and anytime instruction i.e. instructional materials and assignments are delivered through internet. WEI is different from WBI as some face-to-face sessions are present along with online sessions. This is also known as blended learning (Pulist, 2013, p.18). WSI makes use of online resources for the on-campus/regular students as supplementary. Types of activities in WSI include- discussions, projects in collaboration, communication through e-mails, finding information online. All the three types of online environments can be created through learning management systems provide by online service providers such as Moodle, Sakai, Canvas by Structure, Blackboard/Angel/WEBCT, Desire2Learn etc. (DRAFT 2011).

2.8 Learning Management System (LMS)

LMS is an integrated online educational resource having several attributes which facilitate teaching and learning process in institutes. According to Paulsen (2002),

Learning Management System is a broad term that is used for a wide range of systems that organize and provide access to online learning services for students, teachers, and administrators. These services usually include access control, provision of learning content, communication tools, and organizations of user groups. Another term that often is used as a synonym to LMS is learning platform. (p.5)

Faculty can view and manage their course schedules, enroll students, organise and present course contents, create and monitor course groups, post assignments, assign grades and track attendance. Students also can complete online assignments and participate in chat groups and forums. Highlighting the importance of LMS in enhancing employability prospects, Mahalakshmi & Suresh, (2010) have suggested that implementation of at least one of the pre-final or final semester course interactions done via LMS would benefit the students.

In the present study, the LMS has been preferred over other independent web 2.0 tools like blogs and wikis as it provides an environment where all assignments and activities can be accessed under a single log-in (Pandey & Pandey, 2009). BITS Pilani e-learning centre provides two LMSs for on-campus and off-campus students. These are *Nalanda* and *Taxila* respectively. Both *Taxila* and BITS LMS (*Nalanda*) are based on Moodle (leading open source LMS solution). Some of the attributes of *Nalanda* have been discussed in the next section after providing an image overview of its user interface in Figure 5.

You are logged in as SUMAN LUHACH . (Logout)



BITS Pilani
Pilani Campus

Nalanda
THE ON-CAMPUS LEARNING MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

My home Customise this page

Main menu

- Web Site News and Announcements
- BITS Website
- BITS Mail
- e-Services
- Contact Us
- Important Information
- Grading tutorial
- Mobile Apps Development
- Contest

Calendar

August 2014

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

Settings

- My profile settings

Upcoming events

There are no upcoming events

[Go to calendar...](#)
[New event...](#)

Online users

An institution deemed to be a University under Sec 3 of the UGC Act, 1956 under notification # F.12-23/63.U-2 of Jun 18, 1964
 © 2011-2014 Centre for Software Development, SDET Unit, BITS-Pilani, India.
 Contact us : nalanda@pilani.bits-pilani.ac.in

New messages (2)
[Go to messages](#) [ignore](#)

Figure 5. BITS LMS Nalanda for On-Campus Students

2.8.1 Modules of LMS Nalanda

Different teaching and learning modules (activities and resources) have been customised on LMS Nalanda at BITS Pilani. Table 5 provides an overview of these modules.

Table 5

LMS Nalanda, BITS Pilani learning modules

LMS Nalanda, BITS Pilani	
Activities	Resources
Assignment	Book
Chat	File
Choice	Folder
Database	LMS content Package
External Tool	Label
Forum	Page
Glossary	URL
Lesson	
Quiz	
Schedular	
SCORM package	
Survey	
Wiki	
Workshop	

2.9 Web 2.0 in Language Classrooms and Promotion of Online Collaborative Learning

As our students today have grown up with technology, are referred as digital natives. Both learning paradigms and learning styles of these digital natives are significantly different (Prensky, 2001). They are very comfortable with the use of new technologies because they use technologies as integral part of their life. New Web teaching and learning tools are created at a fast pace to help better address the multitude of teaching and learning styles (Schmidt & Brown, 2004). Incorporation of social networking sites, blogs, wikis, podcasts, discussion forums, Skype, CD-ROM books, electronic books, and other technologies offer unprecedented opportunities to involve students in multiliteracy experiences in the classroom and beyond (Borsheim, Merritt & Reed

2008). Both synchronous and asynchronous modes of technology add new dimensions to teaching and learning. These tools also provide variety of materials for teaching and learning. Collaborative learning is one of the learning methods which are very much in vogue with these new technologies. Web 2.0 offers educators a set of tools to support forms of learning that can be more strongly collaborative and more oriented to the building of classroom communities (Crook, 2008). Kimball (2001) holds the view that in the past, collaborative learning activities have been restricted to distance education and full-time students in on-campus settings were not benefiting because of the logistical difficulties in finding time and space for students to work together. However, little research has been done to determine how such learning environments can be created that can effectively incorporate online teaching and learning with traditional classrooms to enhance the quality student learning. As online medium provides liberty to learners to work at their own pace and time and location, collaborative learning can be fostered for both on-campus and off-campus students. The present study has taken up online collaborative learning through on-campus Learning Management System (LMS) *Nalanda* for inculcating speech writing.

The early twentieth century educationist John Devey has been credited with promoting the idea of building cooperation in learning on a regular and systematic basis (Richards and Rogers, 1986). Creating a contextual environment is the basic requirement for communicative language teaching and the web 2.0 helps in building an online learning community which utilizes the platform to provide learning within a context which is a unique feature of classroom teaching. Nunan (1992) has also pointed out that Collaborative language learning offers a truly conducive environment for autonomous learning of language. Lata and Singh (2012) have also pinpointed that due to moves towards communicative language teaching, recent innovations in

classroom practice have emphasized the value of collaborative learning, learner centeredness and autonomy and shared decision making in the classroom leading to a new education system with new pedagogy and learning strategies (Lata & Singh, 2012, p.175). Collaborative learning, in fact, emerges when students are engaged in problem solving activities which demand interaction and co-construction of language and expression. Collaborative learning occurs when learners work together, brainstorm, discover the key concepts, and related information for themselves. The teacher plays the vital role in building and supporting peer-to-peer interaction and removing stagnation and blocks during the process of learning. He does not teach but encourages them, questions their process and monitor each others' reasoning as and when required. Collaborative practices are being increasingly advocated in second language classrooms largely in response to the collaborative potential of web 2.0 tools (Kessler, Bikowski & Boggs, 2012, p.91). However, internet as a medium for communication, it does lend itself particularly to communicative and task- based learning (Teeler, 2006, p.59). Web 2.0 provides knowledge sharing, communicating, collaborative creation tools which have greatly improved learning activities (O'reilly, 2005). The popular applications of web 2.0 such as social media, forums, blogging, wikis, and podcasting help in learner centred and active learning. Forums, blogs and wikis have been identified as the important web 2.0 tools for collaborative authoring/ writing. With online learning forums (OLFs), blogs and wikis learning does not stop after the class meeting is over but can be extended beyond class hours (Krish, Hussin & Sivapuniam, 2010). Thoughtful use of these tools can enhance effective instructional approaches that emphasise writing for meaningful social purposes, mastery of relevant genres, and development of students' academic language proficiency (Warschauer, 2010, p.6).The present study highlights how the online

learning management system (LMS)- *Nalanda* (based on Moodle) is being used for on –campus students in BITS, Pilani. It provides observations about collaborative learning by the students i.e. the process of writing and discussion on the speech tasks given by the instructor and about the enhancement, if any, in speech writing abilities of the students. The theoretical construct of the study is Scaffolding – a vital component of Socio- Cultural theory. Collaboration during completion of online forum speech writing task is the core issue of the illustrative research design. This study, therefore, takes a closer look at the online forum as a mediating tool in the process of collaborative learning task.

2.9.1 Differentiating between Wikis, Google Documents, Blogs and Forums

To understand these web 2.0 tools better, it would be appropriate to start with a look on the features of these tools with the help of the table drawn below. Mishene has adapted a comparative table (created by Mishne, n.d) giving the differences between blogs, Wikis and google documents. In an exploratory study done by Miyazoe & Anderson (2010, p.186) the main differences between blogs, wikis and forums have been chalked out by simultaneously implementing the three tools. The above mentioned two studies have been analysed to collectively show the main characteristics and differences among blogs, Wikis, forums and google documents. These are presented in the tabular format through deductions from the above mentioned two studies. This comparative analysis of the tools was essential to select the most suitable module for conducting the study and for also providing a rationale behind the selection.

Table 6

A comparison of Wikis, Google Documents, Blogs and Forums

S.No.	Points of comparison	Wikis	Google documents	Blogs	Forums
1.	Nature	A web page quickly edited by visitors.	an online office suite that allows to access documents from any computer via a web browser	A frequently updated website	Online platform for discussion which provides equal opportunities to all the participants.
2.	Approach	Product	Product	Process	Process
3.	Type of task	Producing single document	Producing and sharing single document through mails	Publishing by single person but comments by others	Topics for discussion
4.	Editing / authors	allow either anonymous editing or editing by an unlimited number of approved users.	An owner who can invite collaborators or viewers creates all documents. Collaborators can edit.	one person or a team of people can post. Each post is one author's voice. Others can only leave comments. Editing can be done by the author.	Anybody can initiate the discussion. Every member in the group has equal right to express their views. Editing is not allowed.
5.	Organisation	Hyperlinked collection	Like a word document in which further links can be easily provided.	Reverse chronological order	Threaded discussion
6.	Structure and administration	Open for approved.	Open for the invited	Controlled by author	Controlled by the moderator.
7.	Collaboration	Visitors can be collaborators and can edit and add	Can be shared by a team at one time	Visitors can only leave comments.	Group discussion

		information to the existing.	(synchronously) and collaborated asynchronously.		
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Note. Adapted from “Blogs, Wikis, Docs: Which is right for your lesson? A Comparison Table” by M. Wagner, M., n.d, and from “Learning outcomes and students’ perceptions of online writing: Simultaneous implementation of a forum, blog, and wiki in an EFL blended learning setting” by T. Miyazoe and T. Anderson, 2010, Science Direct System 38, p. 185-199.

The differences mentioned above provide a comprehensive view of the basic features and differences between the four online collaborative tools. The differentiation done , if analysed in relative terms rather than absolute, gives a vivid picture of these tools. For example all these tools have the commonality of being asynchronous modes of online communication. But if observed, the purpose decides different uses. Sometimes these tools can be integrated with one another to enhance the efficacy of the online medium. For example Wikis can be integrated with forums to provide the features of editing and threaded discussion side by side. Similarly, google documents provide opportunity for multiple users to work on the same document simultaneously, have a separate space for written metacommunication through chat box. (Brodahl, Hadjerrouit & Said, 2011, p.73)

The descriptive analysis also gives an insight into the basic differences of functionalities of the four web 2.0 tools with a focus on the type of collaboration in writing task. For joint production of a document Wikis and Google documents are appropriate where the focus of collaborative writing is on the final product through drafting, editing and re- drafting. Blogs and forums are the promising tools when the

focus of working is on extensive discussion process where comments, suggestions related to language and content are given so that the author who initiates the discussion process can bring in the desired changes in his/ her draft of the document through enhanced critical thinking and argumentative skills in addition to perfection in form and content in the respective language. Blogs generally have a word limit and is managed by the initiator. This mild drawback of blogs is overruled by online forums where equality of participation and unlimited interaction are facilitated. Thus, it also fulfils the requirements of the research undertaken and makes online forums as the most appropriate online medium to be utilised.

2.9.2 Collaborative Writing with Web 2.0 Tools

The definitions discussed and the table showing the differences among the four tools given above show various types of situations which invite writing whether it is a collaborative writing of a single document, or dividing the writing components among the group, and editing, reviewing each others' work or it is discussion which helps in better understanding and organising the individual assignments by the guidance provided through the ideas and feedback of the peers.

Lund (2008) arrived at conclusion that wikis hold the potential for collective knowledge advancement and language development. Lee (2010) in the results of her study shows that creating Wikis had a positive impact on the development of students' writing skills through collaborative engagement. One of the significant benefits of Wikis illustrated by this study is that peer collaboration and scaffolding fostered attention to form for the improvement of language accuracy.

Kessler, Bikowski & Boggs (2012) investigated web-based, project oriented, many-to-many collaborative writing for academic purposes using Google documents. It

explores and understands the changing nature of collaborative writing, as it is influenced by Web-based writing contexts. Findings of the study suggested that students focused more on meaning than form, that their grammatical changes were overall more accurate than inaccurate in the final document.

Balaji & Chakrabarti (2010) have contributed to the understanding of the effectiveness of online discussion forum in student learning. The study shows how the measures taken by the teacher in facilitating discourse by giving clear instructions, commenting and encouraging students helped. Krish, Hussin & Sivapuniam (2011) show how students from different language and linguistics courses participated and benefited from online forums. Forums proved to be a zone for students to practice their language proficiency and acquire language input as well as content knowledge.

Montero-Fleta & Perez-Sabater (2010) in their study on the use of blogs for Writing for a purpose, i.e. self-expression and self-reflection in blogs for professional development has encouraged them to produce language more fluently. Fageeh (2011) in an exploratory study on the use of blogs in language classrooms find that students perceived Weblog as a tool for the development of their English, in terms of their writing proficiency and attitudes towards writing. The students also viewed Weblog as giving an opportunity and freedom for self-expression in English, writing for both a local and global audience, creating active, interactive social exchanges in blogs, and maintaining an interactive relationship with a real time readership. Noytim's (2010, p.1127) study suggests that Weblog gives an opportunity and freedom for self-expression in English, writing for both a local and global audience, fostering creative, analytical and critical thinking skills, creating social interaction and good relationships between writer and reader, and supporting the learning community.

Trajtemberg & Yiakoumetti (2011) demonstrated that blogs promote EFL interaction, self-expression, self-evaluation, and a sense of language progress.

2.10 Integration of Online Forums in Language Classrooms: An overview

The process of discussions is a critical dimension of the learning process (Andresen, 2009). Discussion done on online forums is in the written form, there is a potential in the environment which needs to be explored more regarding acquisition of writing skills. Pauley (2001) suggested that online discussion forums provide an authenticity in writing and therefore serve as a meaningful supplement to the writing curriculum. Discussion forums have been an integral part of many distance education programs and many online courses. But their employment as a supplement in the regular classrooms is rarely seen. Dengler (2008) favours active learning activities in the geography classes which were complemented by the consistent inclusion of an optional online discussion forum and concluded that it provided a more comfortable space for non- native English speakers to contribute to debates. Sutherland, Watts, Garcia-Carbonell, Montero & Eidsmo (2003) concluded that participation in discussion forums in a topic-oriented discussion helps students to identify and solve problems related with their work, which can become a stimulus for the acquisition of the linguistic and communicative skills which the learner needs for his/her specific purposes. According to Godwin-Jones (2003), in addition to writing done on blogs and wikis, language teachers have found that students benefit from the extra writing done in discussion forums and from its use to communicate meaningfully in real contexts. According to Montero, Watts & Garcia-Carbonell (2007) three objectives which are fulfilled in collaborative learning on online forums are: foreign language acquisition, communication skills enhancement and content learning. Hashim (2006) concluded that through Online Learning Forums (OLFs) her participants have

increased their level of confidence in using English to communicate with one another, something they could not achieve through face-to-face communication. Kuteeva (2007) integrated online forums in the course English for Business and Accounting and came with the results that it helped in developing students' linguistic competence, augmenting cognitive development, collaborative construction of knowledge etc. Yang & Lin (2010) examined the interplay between learners' Internet perceptions and their online participation in an online writing exchange program for nursing students. It was noted that students with more participation were more likely to make progress in writing fluency. Ng, Aileen (2008) in her study discovered that the implementation of the online forums appears to provide reinforcement tasks to enable students practice their writing. Students could share their ideas and opinions in order to produce better quality writing as compared to if the tasks were to be completed independently. Krish, Hussin & Sivapuniam, (2010) have emphasised that Platforms like web forums, webinars, and bulletin boards in most Learner Management Systems (LMS) provide the additional platform for learning but are seldom utilized effectively to promote student interaction in language learning and acquisition.

The literature review clearly indicates that whatever amount of research is done on the integration of forums in education is mostly in online courses but not on integration of online forums with classroom teaching. In the studies cited, almost all the studies show the integration of forums in other streams like Geography, Nursing etc which is also in distance education or online programs. The genres of writing which have been included did not study the integration of online forums for speech writing as a supplement to the classroom learning for on- campus students.

2.11 Research Questions

The present study is an attempt to integrate online environment in effective public speaking classroom as a supplement which gives students an opportunity to discuss and practice speech writing with the convenience of space and time so that they can think critically and learn by doing and through peer feedback. The research questions which have been formulated for the situation are-

RQ1. Does collaborative writing and discussion over online forums, when integrated with classroom teaching, help students enhance their written proficiency?

RQ2. What is Students' perception of collaborative writing and discussion over online forums, when integrated with classroom teaching?

RQ3. What is the overall result of the speech writing tutorial over online forums after analyzing the change in written proficiency, students' perception and online transcripts?

The next chapter discusses the conceptual base i.e. 'Scaffolding' in detail and a conceptual framework has been formulated to integrate theory into the study. Two more research questions have been formulated at the end of the next chapter.

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Chapter-3

The Paragogical Scaffolding Framework

The present chapter attempts to devise a paragogical framework for integration of online writing tutorials with web-supported language classrooms. Sensing the need of enhancing writing skills of college students and underutilization of the web-support, the given framework has been formulated by keeping scaffolding as the theoretical basis of learning and by incorporating different types and levels of scaffolding with online support (technical scaffolding). This has been done after an insight into the key features of scaffolding and the relationship between scaffolding and zone of proximal development (ZPD). Different types of scaffolds can be employed to enable the maximum change to occur and enhancement of students' writing skills can be measured in relation to the change occurring from actual to potential level of ZPD. The framework is designed in a manner that it can be implemented to integrate online writing tutorials on the Learning Management Systems (LMSs) structured for web-supported instruction process. The researcher's aim is to introduce the students with writing tutorials over online discussion forums and do a triangulated study to analyse the writing process and to see whether any improvement occurs in the writing performance of the students after adopting the process based approach of writing and also to know students' perceptions of their online tutorial experience.

3.1 Paragogy

With the development of modern educational technology, the integration of technology is a common practice that is done not only to facilitate online courses and distance education but also to enhance the teaching and learning experience in the traditional classroom. This web-supported instruction along with regular face-to-face

classroom teaching is utilised for many kinds of assignments and activities to add value and to attain optimum learning outcome to the classroom activities. Teaching college students (andragogy) in web-supported environments has been assigned the terminology known as ‘paragogy’ (Corneli & Danoff, 2011) which is based on peer-to-peer learning. Alfuhaha has (2013) defined it aptly when he says, “Paragogy has the underlying principle of self-directed and antididactic learning process with ubiquitous web 2.0 and pervasive web 3.0 edutainment” (p. 44). Emphasising on devising such new teaching methodologies for the integration of technology in higher education, Guffey & Almonte (2004) stresses, “effective online communication and collaboration should be a part of an integrated curriculum merging traditional skills and knowledge with new digital working practices” (p. 2). The online open resources which can put this learning culture in practice, are provided by Web 2.0 as they can support communication through collaboration and can help building classroom communities. Herrington and Herrington (as cited in Simões & Borges Gouveia , 2008) suggest the same that in the era of globalisation when world has become a ‘wider community’(p.8), workplaces require self-motivated and compliant employees and such workforce could be moulded by providing them required university education, and fresh graduates from the universities are expected to be competent enough in taking initiatives, inviting people to join which certainly demands excellent communication skills of their domain.

In the present times merely possessing technical skills and knowledge is not sufficient, the ability to communicate effectively and work with others in online collaborative environments have become equally important. Talking about the prospects of teaching communication and language skills with the emerging technologies, Warschauer (2010) holds the view that, “the diffusion of new

technologies is instrumental in the development of the knowledge economy across the globe, which has made the teaching and learning of writing more important than ever before and fortunately, these same new technologies can also aid the teaching of second language writing” (p.6). Online collaborations demand a great deal of writing and web 2.0 writing tools like wikis, blogs, forums, Google documents etc. may provide apposite kind of environment to enhance the same.

Teaching of writing at college level demands a change in the teaching methods which can help students participate and learn writing skills online. For this not only the knowledge about the availability of different tools is enough, but also a rationale choice and effective implementation is essential. Warschauer (2010) has also emphasised, “The thoughtful use of the online tools can enhance effective instructional approaches that emphasize writing for meaningful social purposes, mastery of relevant genres, and development of students’ academic language proficiency” (p.3). Complying with the thought expressed above a paragogical framework has been developed which leads students towards practicing writing in a digital environment through engagement in online writing tutorials.

In the present chapter an attempt to formulate a paragogical framework by deploying two important concepts of socio-cultural theory i.e. Zone of proximal development (ZPD) and scaffolding has been made. Enhancement of students’ writing skills can be measured in relation to the change occurring from actual to potential level of ZPD and different types of scaffolds can be employed to make the maximum change possible. To engage students in writing tutorials, the conceptual framework will serve as the basis for deciding the paralogy and actual integration (deciding the procedures, activities and tasks) of the online writing tutorial with classroom teaching. The basic assumptions which underlie are – this will be helpful in making the students more

participative and active in the dynamic process of learning, it will instil collaborative ability and autonomy into students as these qualities have important theoretical basis and practical value. It will be based more on process approach than product approach of writing. The focus will be on learning rather than achievement and on process rather than presentation or on final outcome. It will encourage the learners to acquire good writing habits. However, writing being the mode of communication, online tools are an appropriate platform for practising writing skills and through a structured tutorial, students can share all the minor details related to content, structure, organisation and presentation through online medium. Thus, the process oriented attribute of online tools helps in analysing the process of development of writing skills. The present study therefore maintains that as web 2.0 tools involve collaborative learning, these need to be integrated in English language pedagogy at college level and the present chapter attempts to figure out an important framework which will facilitate the whole integration process.

3.2 Scaffolding and ZPD

Scaffolding is not a new concept but its connotations and levels have evolved over the time. Jerome Bruner (1985), who coined this term, defines it as, “A process of setting up the situation to make the child’s entry easy and successful and then gradually pulling back and handing the role to the child as he becomes skilled enough to manage it” (p.60). The concept of scaffolding has its genesis in the concept of ZPD of Sociocultural theory propounded by Lev Vygotsky. It originated from Vygotsky's concept of an expert assisting a novice, or an apprentice. The term ‘Scaffolding’ was, in fact, never used by Vygotsky, whereas, “the metaphor of scaffolding has been developed in neo-Vygotskian discussions to capture the qualities of the type of other-regulation within the Zone of Proximal Development which is supposedly most

helpful for the learning or appropriation of new concepts” (Mitchell & Myles, 2004, p.197). It reflects that ZPD is the difference of levels between actual and potential learning and scaffolding is the design and assistance provided to unfold the potentials (see Figure 6). ZPD is thus described by Vygotsky (1980) as, “the distance between the actual developmental level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers” (p.88).

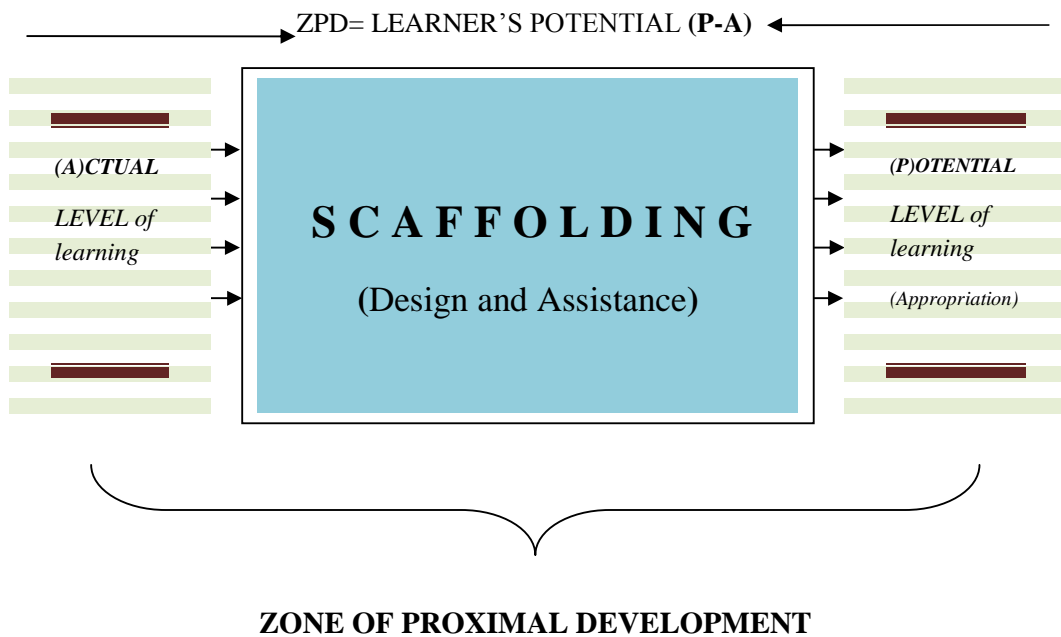


Figure 6. Conceptual Interrelatedness of Scaffolding and ZPD

Figure 6 shows the interrelation between scaffolding and ZPD. As ZPD has been defined as the difference between a learner’s potential level of learning (P) and the actual (present) level of learning (A), so the learner’s potential is P-A. In nutshell, the design and assistance provided to turn up that potential and to reach from A to P is scaffolding.

3.2.1 Spectrum of Scaffolding

Since its inception, scaffolding has been interpreted in numerous ways befitting to the educational needs. As quoted earlier, Bruner (1985) defines it ‘setting up the situation...’ (p. 60). Donato (1994) has said, “Scaffolded performance is a dialogically constituted inter-psychological mechanism that promotes the novice’s internalisation of knowledge co- constructed in shared activity” (p.41). It means that ‘shared activity’ as a prerequisite for scaffolding and dialogue is an important tool of the process of internalization of knowledge for the new learners. Santrock (2006) says,” In a dialogue, a child’s unsystematic, disorganised, and spontaneous concepts are met with more systematic, logical and rational concepts of the skilled helper” (p. 229). Knowledge is appropriated by changing the level of support over the course of a teaching session; a more –skilled person adjusts the amount of guidance to fit the learner’s current performance. It reflects that the scattered and unlearned concepts of the learner are channelised with an able guidance.

The above cited definitions of scaffolding have a notion of an expert who provides assistance to the learner. David Wood (as cited in Walqui, 2006, p.163) has challenged this limited definition of ‘expert-novice relationship’ of scaffolding and redefines it as a ‘tutorial behaviour that is ‘contingent, collaborative and interactive’. Contingent behaviour refers to the effect of one’s own actions on others or vice-versa, collaborative behaviour is behaviour when the result is achieved with united efforts and collaboration can be realised only when the group members are connected to one another on regular basis setting up interaction. Walqui (2006) has also referred to the works of several other researchers where the idea of scaffolding has been expanded to include not only an expert-learner relationship, but also a relationship of equal knowledge. It infers that a group of learners working on a shared task and working in

groups can produce results that none of them would have been capable of producing on their own. In such circumstances learners create zones of proximal development for each other and engage in mutual scaffolding. Mitchell and Myles (2004) have elaborated the same point saying, “A learner is inducted into a shared understanding of how to do things through collaborative talk, until eventually they take over (or appropriate) new knowledge or skills into their own individual consciousness. The process of supportive dialogue which directs the attention of the learner to key features of the environment, and which prompts them through successive steps of a problem, has come to be known as scaffolding” (p.195). It depicts that scaffolding also encompasses collaborative dialogue among learners of equal competence appropriating new knowledge. Scaffolding has also been operationally defined by Baleghizad, Hossein and Memar (2011) as using supportive templates by which guidance is offered to the students through a semiotically mediated situation in order to achieve higher level competence and regulation. Figure 7 briefs all the above mentioned interpretations of Scaffolding.

The chronological order of definitions and interpretations of Scaffolding helps in understanding the construct with the variety of applicability in educational settings.

It can be structural as well as procedural or can be tutor-student relationship or peer-peer relationship or tutor-peer-peer or it can also be in the form supplementary material provided to enhance the understanding.

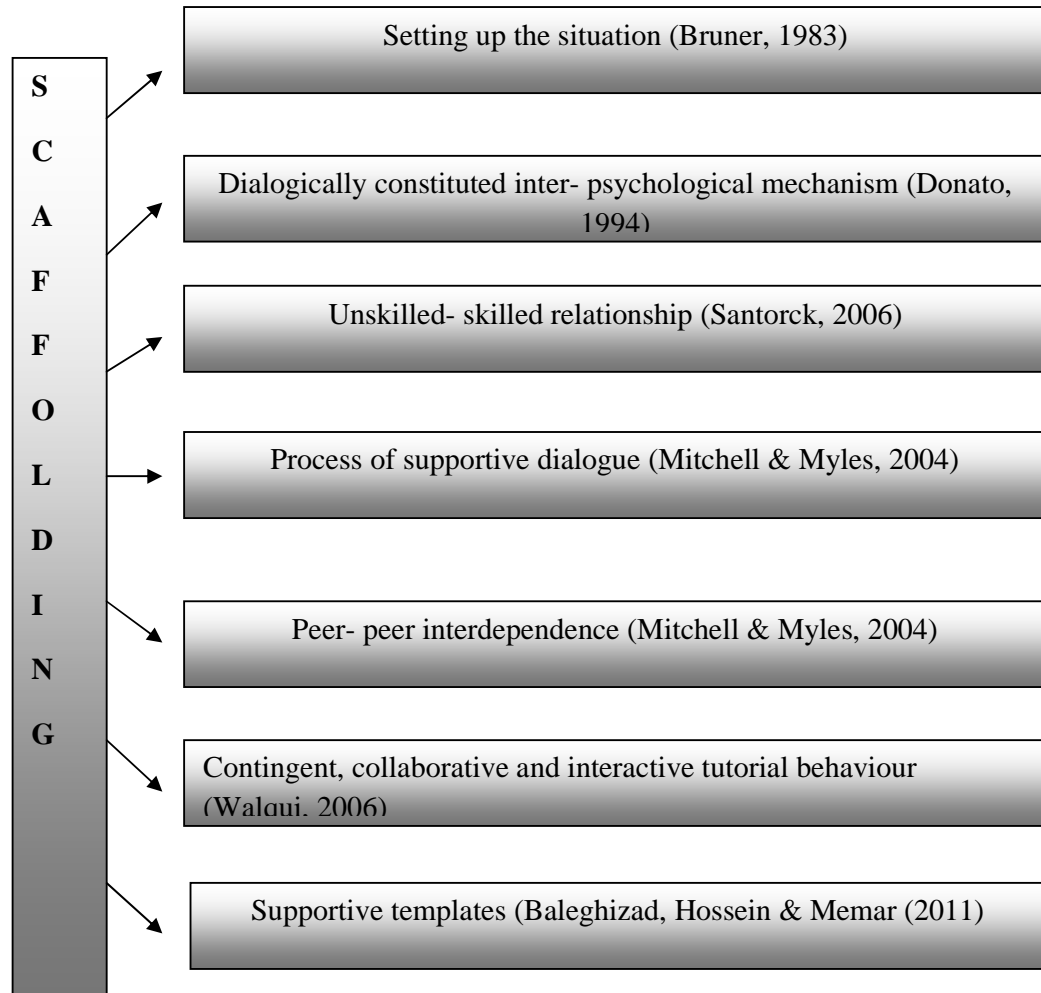


Figure 7. Spectrum of Scaffolding

Scaffolding has been divided into two levels: hard and soft scaffolding by Saye and Brush (2002). *Hard* scaffold is decided in advance. *Soft* scaffolding level comes after the enactment of the hard scaffold. Soft scaffolds are provided during the process of task either by the instructor or the peer depending on the necessity. Reciprocal scaffold (Holton and Thomas, 2001) is also a type of soft scaffold. At both levels, scaffolding is shared by each member and it changes constantly as the group works on a task (Holton & Clarke, 2006). Van Lier (as cited in Walqui, 2006, p.165) has proposed six central features of pedagogical scaffolding which in its purview starts with hard scaffolding by the teacher (expert- learner relationship) and then transfers it

to the students (collective soft and reciprocal scaffolding). Lier seems to refine Wood's three features of scaffolding - contingent, collaborative and interactive- into six for educational settings as: Continuity, contextual support, intersubjectivity, contingency, handover/takeover and flow. The above six features can be better understood by classifying these according to the levels and types scaffolds. Broadly, these can be put into following categories-

- Features of hard scaffolds
 - Continuity
 - Contextual Support
- Features of soft and reciprocal scaffolds
 - Intersubjectivity
 - Contingency
 - Flow
 - Handover/Takeover

Features of continuity and contextual support fit into the level of hard scaffolding. *Continuity* means activities and tasks which are planned beforehand with a set time limit. *Contextual support* is provided through decisions regarding the task environment and purposes by providing learners the whole action plan of a particular task. Intersubjectivity, contingency, flow and handover/takeover as stated by Van Lier, fall under soft scaffolding. *Intersubjectivity* comes when the students start working in groups and they start getting familiar with the task and the group members are mutually promoted to work together. *Contingency* is the necessary support provided on timely basis. This can be provided by both teachers and the students. *Flow* comes when learners are fully devoted on the task and their interaction runs

smoothly with optimum coordination. *Handover/takeover* is the students' procession towards attaining the grasp over the task and move towards appropriation.

Technical scaffolding is a recent terminology but was visualised quite earlier by Kao, Lehman and Cennamo (1996) when they proposed that "the processing and integrating capabilities of computers have created an interactive, support-rich, and individualized learning environment. These characteristics might break the limitations of scaffolding and ease the implementation of this instructional technique" (p.302). In Technical Scaffolding, "computers replace the teachers as the experts or guides, and students can be guided with web links, online tutorials, or help pages" (Yelland & Masters, 2007, p.367). In web- supported environments or learning management systems (LMSs) the online environment works both as a pseudo-teacher and as a medium. While integrating online tutorials with classroom teaching, hard scaffolds are set for students by the instructor and students have access to these on either their institutional LMS or the online portal created by the instructor. In the present study, the paragogical scaffolding framework is conceptualised which is not to be understood in absolute terms as it also includes hard, soft and reciprocal scaffolds like face to face learning. The difference lies in the medium of providing the scaffold which is internet. With the advent of technology many softwares and programmes have been developed which have been used to scaffold knowledge among adult learners. In higher education, the focus of learning is generally on developing higher order thinking skills among students and making them autonomous learners. Web 2.0 has provided an important medium in the form of LMSs within institutions to create different online communication environments (technical scaffolding), where the process of scaffolding can be maximised through hard scaffolding provided by the teacher and soft and reciprocal scaffolding by the teacher and peers.

3.3 Integration of Scaffolding in Language Learning: An Overview

For educational settings, in general, Walqui (2006) has envisaged scaffolding as both structure and process. He opines that scaffolding cannot be looked as a rigid structure but it also encompasses flexibility of changing the type and level of pedagogical support. He underscores range of levels of scaffolding from “macro-level planning of curricula over time to micro-level moment-to-moment scaffolding and the contingent variation of support responsive to interactions as they unfold” (p.159). Walqui (2006) has also discussed some types of instructional scaffolding techniques which have been employed by him in his language classrooms in school– modelling, bridging, contextualisation, building schema, re-presenting text and developing metacognition. All these have been discussed in detail along with their classroom implementation using various instructional scaffolds. The results show positive changes reflected in the learners’ performance and it is suggested to break the traditional mould and make steps towards making language classrooms interactive, dynamic and motivating.

Baleghizad, Hossein and Memar (2011) find out that most of the study related to application of scaffolding into teaching is restricted to case studies or individuals only. Therefore, they experimented and conducted a study on level IV students of a language institute. Three types of scaffolds are provided to these students- non-structured, low structured and high structured. Hypothesis testing is done to compare these three types of scaffolds and results show that low structured group outperformed the other two. This shows that the cognitive load of the task should be moderate i.e. it should not be so low that students lose the sense of challenge and nor it should be so high that students become frustrated. The study suggests that low structured scaffolding facilitate students to explore freely and also learn through enjoying the challenge. The study’s relevance lies in considering whole class instead of individual

students and trying to make an estimate regarding the appropriate degree of scaffolding required for the students.

Michel and Sharpe (2005) in their study on school students of level seven conceptualised scaffolding at two levels: scaffolding as a task enabling support and scaffolding as language mediated co-regulatory activity. Many types of activities are given in which scaffolding can be kept as basis. Few examples are: individual work, small group work and whole-class interaction. They believe that innovative ways of 'doing, speaking and thinking' can be created for students when teacher initiates the discussion. These discussions have an implicit impression of scaffolding as 'language-mediated, collaborative activity'. In conclusion it is suggested, "scaffolded activity is an identifiable pedagogical activity sub-system well suited to improving the social, linguistic and academic participation and performance of second language learners as well as their English-only speaking peers" (Michel and Sharpe, 2005, p.52).

Veerappan, Suan and Sulaiman (2011) introduce intensive scaffolding to three university students over a time period of 5 weeks. They talk about the improvement in their performance in journal writing and have also enlisted different stages of process writing but the discussion on exploring the nature of writing process has not been done. The scaffold provided by the teacher focuses mainly on the lower order concerns in writing. Similarly, Schwieter (2010) has employed editorial and revising scaffolding techniques in writing in a magazine writing project. The project is divided into four stages where emphasis been given on editing and revising the essays through peer-review and instructor review. The results show the improvement in writing skill through quantitative measurement and leave the scope for further research by exploring how the development in writing is facilitated. Thus, various editorial stages

for scaffolding writing skill have been given and the feedback mechanism in the writing process is left for future research.

Barnard and Campbell (2005) have also moved ahead of the implementation of scaffolding in enhancing writing skills of the school students and have tried it with college students in University of Waikato. The students were enrolled under the course named EAP (English for Academic Purposes) which was designed for students of international background. Emphasis has been given on teaching writing through process approach as this approach familiarises students with the recursive strategies and techniques that writers use while composing. This case study analyses the procedure of application of the theoretical construct of scaffolding in writing classrooms by utilising electronic media. Six major principles of scaffolding given by Van Leir have been analysed through the online transcript. They believe that there is a considerable amount of online tutoring required for writing courses and working in groups enables students to work interdependently paving the way for gradual independence. The various stages of process writing are explored with the help of principles given by Van Lier. The study makes an effort in the direction of taking it up for college students through online interaction and exploring process writing. But this does not give the detailed analysis of writing process corresponding to the stages of writing. And, it is also not substantiated with visible change (quantity and quality) in performance of the student. In addition to these, the principles given by Van Lier have been analysed without outlining any schema in which these principles are operationalised.

The present chapter provides a framework which incorporates the six principles along with specifying the types and levels of scaffolds operating at each stage of

implementation of scaffolding in online tutorials integrated with classroom teaching of speech writing.

3.4 The Paragogical Framework

Based on the above discussion, a paragogical framework has been prepared for the present study which is shown in Figure 9. It is the extension of the conceptual base design, shown in Figure 8, which had been developed for integrating technical scaffolding for online writing tutorials. The given framework conceives how some, out of the several types, of scaffolds proposed by various educational visionaries are operational at different levels in online environment to achieve the objective of enhancing writing skills by online tutorials. In the given framework, technical scaffolding term has been used in general for an online environment (LMS) which also works as zone of proximal development for learners. After showing how different theoretical scaffolds can work at different levels in the conceptual base design, an equivalent paragogical framework has been proposed. This equivalent framework is designed to help better comprehend the conceptual base and to help better envision the integration of different online tools in different types of writing tutorials.

Figure 8 shows the model framed keeping in mind the different conceptual shades of scaffolding. However, this framework can broadly be understood by dividing it into two types of support: structural and procedural. Structural support has been provided through the online environment or through technical scaffolding. It can be compared to the structural support of the classroom environment.

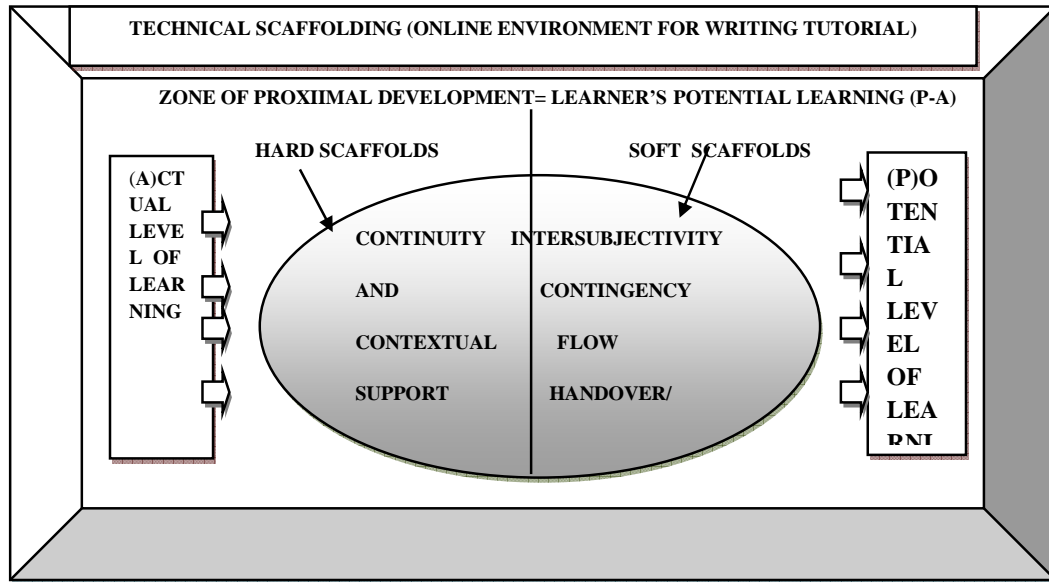


Figure 8. Conceptual Base Design for Integrating Online Writing Tutorials

Hard scaffolds are set to provide contextual support. Continuity provides a transition from structure to procedure by setting the schedule of activity. Hard scaffolds are initiated to enable students enter the phase where the new learning takes place with the existing knowledge. This stage prepares learners to get them acquainted with the type of activity or task they have to perform, in how many parts and in how much duration. To simplify, all the instructions related to the writing task are provided under the tag of ‘hard scaffold’ as these are decided in advance. This has also been depicted in the equivalent paragogical framework in Figure 9. When learners enter the procedural zone, soft scaffolds start working. Some common features (given by Van Lier) related to soft scaffolding have been shown in the framework. These include- intersubjectivity, contingency, handover or takeover and flow. Intersubjectivity is established when learners are encouraged to work in groups and they start getting familiar with each other through some initial formal interaction in the initial stages of the task. Contingency refers to the support/feedback learners start seeking from each

other. If the task is moderated by the instructor, then it can also be found occasionally between the student and the instructor. This support is provided on timely basis. Slowly, after initial and occasional guidance of the instructor, learners will take charge of the task; they are oriented in the direction of writing activity (speech writing for the present study) and subsequently fully taking over the task. This stage marks their first step towards attaining autonomy. It is assumed that learners start participating to the maximum level and are ‘in tune’ with each other resulting working in full swing leading to the development of flow among learners. As shown in Figure 8 soft scaffolds of intersubjectivity, contingency, takeover and flow, all come into picture through various activities like collaboration, interaction, peer feedback, instructor feedback etc. (see Figure 9) leading them towards appropriation of the writing task.

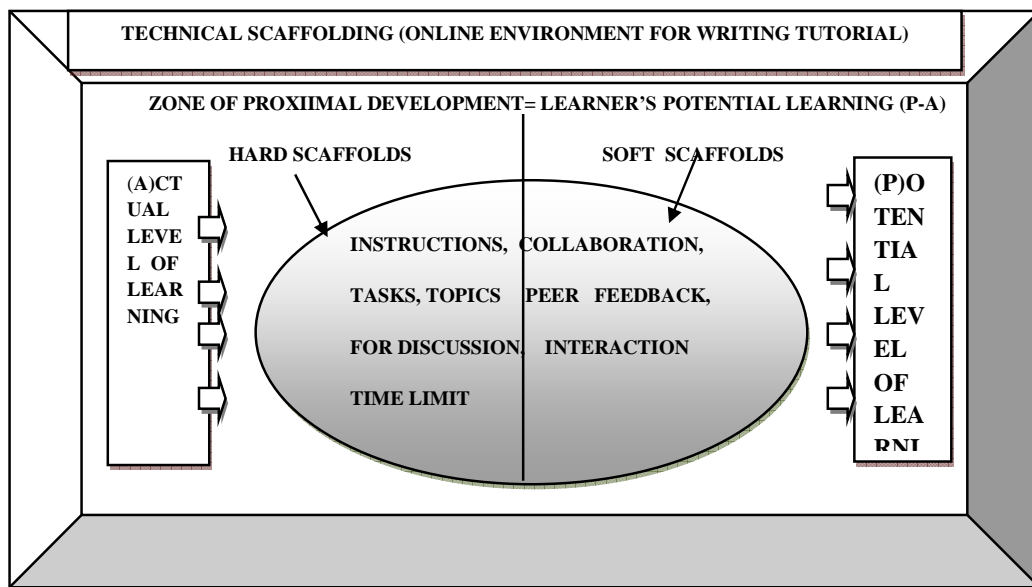


Figure 9. A Paragological Framework for integrating online writing tutorials

The framework proposed tries to prepare a scheme by which students can proceed while working within the framework of their group. The instructor would provide hard scaffolds through online environment (technical scaffold), provide feedback to

groups and individuals, be available for assistance (soft scaffold) and scaffold specific students at their point of need (contingency). The instructor provides an online environment to students where they are provided with the expectations (contextual support) and a timeline (continuity) at the onset. After this structural support, accountability of task completion as active learners is shifted to the students in which they are supposed to perform the two fold job of students as well as peer instructors as they scaffold their classmates (reciprocal scaffolding) and move ahead towards autonomous learning directed to appropriate a particular writing task.

To conclude, the paragogical framework is designed to understand how different types and levels of scaffolds can be operated to achieve appropriation in a particular writing task through web- supported tutorials over LMS. So, the research questions which arise are-

RQ4- How and to what strength are Van Lier's features of Scaffolding operationalised in the collaborative speech writing process?

RQ5- What is the main focus of discussion while students are engaged in the process of speech writing over the forums?

This framework has been implemented in online forum mediated writing tutorials by the researcher and a detailed analysis of the writing process corresponding to its stages will be done. This will be a step forward in the direction of understanding the nature of writing process.

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Chapter 4

Methodology

The present chapter discusses the different research methods and rationale behind using them to accomplish the objectives of the study. For this, the chapter has been divided into separate heads namely: research design, participants, data collection instruments data analysis approach, procedure and timeline, variables, research question and hypotheses.

4.1 Research Design

Speech writing is an integral part of the Effective Public Speaking (EPS) course being offered at BITS Pilani to the first year degree students as an elective and the students enrolled in the course are systematically trained for writing effective speeches. The classroom activities in the course mainly consist of lectures by the instructor and of the oral assignments to be done by the students. The study is based on an educational intervention and it becomes essential before conducting the study that it must not affect the regular classroom activities and also the learning outcome of a particular course. So, being aware of all the activities and assignments involved in the course the researcher was able to draft and conduct the study very carefully.

A quasi-experimental design has been employed in BITS Pilani language classroom settings to address the aims of the present research. It is commonly used design in educational researches as there are practical difficulties behind random allocations of participants in a given classroom setting (Fife-Schaw, 2006, p. 93). This design is not true experimental in nature and it lacks random allocation of students. Consecutive sampling technique, which is a type of non-probability sampling, has been used for the research. Consecutive means that all the available subjects are taken into the study

which ensures a better representation of population. Out of the many quasi-experimental designs ‘Non-equivalent Control group design (NECG) with pre-test and post-test’ has been employed. The term non-equivalent suggests that groups are not randomised and also suggests that participant characteristics may not be balanced equally among the control and experimental group (Quasi-Experimental Design in Education, n.d.). Control group helps accounting for threats to validity and keeping a pre-test allows us to have some idea of how similar the control and treatment group are before the intervention (Fife-Schaw, 2006, p. 94) and helps mitigating the sample selection bias and regression to the mean. In quasi experimental research design threats to internal validity cannot be ruled out but can be minimised and that has been done by keeping a control group and pre-test. Methodological triangulation has been adopted to validate the research findings of the study.

4.2 Triangulated Research

The present research deploys both quantitative and qualitative methods of research. The triangulated research which has been used in the study is a methodological triangulation as the classroom integration of online forums for writing tutorials have been studied from multiple perspectives. Since, triangulation is the combination of methodologies in the study of the same phenomenon (Denzin, 1978, p.291), so here the phenomenon of online tutorials with classroom teaching has been analysed after integration of different methods of data collection and analysis. Before discussing the instruments used in the study the concept of triangulation has been entailed in the ensuing section.

4.2.1 Triangulation

Triangulation is a terminology used in research for using multiple research methods to analyse a phenomenon from different angles. It has been defined ‘as a method used by

qualitative researchers to check and establish validity in their studies by analysing a research question from Multiple perspectives’ (Guion, Diehl & McDonald, 2011) and also as a method which provides a most comprehensive view of the research problem (Morse, 1991). Michael (2002) suggests that triangulation should be viewed as an opportunity to uncover deeper meaning in the data. Figure 10 shows the basic model of triangulation which combines both qualitative and quantitative approaches.

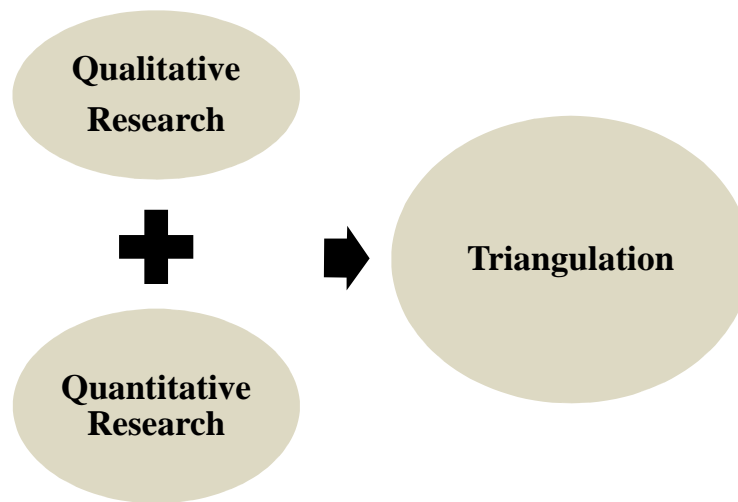


Figure 10. Basic model of triangulation

4.2.2 Types of triangulation

Different types of triangulations (Guion, Diehl & McDonald 2011) on the basis of nature and purpose of research are: Data triangulation, investigator triangulation, theory triangulation, methodological triangulation, environmental triangulation.

The present research adopts methodological triangulation. Methodological triangulation involves the use of multiple qualitative and/or quantitative methods and it has been defined as ‘the use of two or more than two methods in studying the same phenomenon under investigation’ (Mitchell, 1986). Methodological triangulation has been divided into two types- within method and between/across method triangulation. Within method employs only one method but expands itself by applying various

strategies like checking internal consistency and validity. Denzin (1978, p. 303) favours 'between' or 'across methods' approach which, by combining at least two different methods in one study in order reap the benefits of each approach while compensating for their weaknesses as well. The methodological triangulation adopted for the study is:

Between- methods

- **Content Analysis:** to analyze the nature of writing process
- **Pre- test, post-test:** to gauge the change in written proficiency
- **Questionnaire:** to know students' perception of integration of online forum for developing speech writing skills through process based approach of writing.

Within- methods

Within-methods involve checking internal consistencies of the questionnaire, rubric and content analysis framework through reliability tests. This has also been done for the exactness in the research.

4.2.3 Rationale

The study targets at introducing online discussion forums through LMS for writing tutorials with multiple objectives. These objectives target at understanding the effectiveness of the change in paralogy from different perspectives. The objectives of understanding the nature of writing process, getting students' perceptions of the process and gauging their development in writing skill have been fulfilled through different methods- content analysis, questionnaire and pre-test/post-test respectively. The combination of all these three methods to attain the objectives of this single study of introducing new paralogy makes the study methodologically triangulated. The

different methods used in the study have been discussed in detail in the ‘instruments’ section.

4.3 Participants

The participants of the study were students enrolled in Effective Public Speaking (ENGL C353) course in the Department of Humanities and Social Sciences, BITS Pilani during II Semester 2013-14. This course is a practice- oriented course where students try to develop skills of speech making through actual practice. The students enrolled in the course made a heterogenous group because students from different streams and different levels could be located in the classroom. Heterogeneity in the study helps in minimising ‘selection-maturation interaction’ which is one of the threats to validity in non-randomly selected samples. This course is an elective course in the pool of humanities courses offered by the department. Out of total 82 students enrolled in the course few had withdrawn from the course and few did not attend the class regularly. Finally, 64 active students were identified for participation in the study.

4.4 Instruments

Methods of data collection and data analysis have been depicted in the Table 7

Table 7

Methods of Data Collection and Data Analysis

S.No.	Data Collection Methods	Data Analysis Methods
1.	Online record of the threaded discussions over <i>Nalanda</i>	Content Analysis
2.	Pre-test/ Post-test	Rubric/ independent t- test
3.	Questionnaire	Mean, Standard Deviation

4.4.1 Methods of Data Collection

Online record of threaded discussions over *Nalanda*

Online record of group wise discussion on their respective speech topics was archived to analyse the nature of writing process to find out how the scaffolding features of intersubjectivity, contingency, flow, handover and takeover are operationalised.

Pre-test/ Post-test

Classroom as a whole is considered a single entity. Total eight groups of 8 students each were made in the classroom which makes the total number of students who participated for the study 64 (8*8). Out of the total 64 students 32 students made the experimental group and 32 students made the control group. So, it results in 4 four groups participating in experimental group. Students in each group were supposed to write a speech individually on the same topic. They were asked to write it twice on different topics as a pre-test and post-test component. Topics for speech writing were different at all the stages i.e. pre-test, forum discussion and post test. This was done in order to eliminate the possibility of threats to validity. Pre-test was conducted once the components of speech writing were taught in the classroom by the instructor as it made students well aware of the basics of speech writing. This was done for both control and experimental groups. For experimental groups post-test was taken after the students were exposed to online forum discussion tutorial on a speech topic. The control group was asked to write post-test without being exposed to the treatment.

Rubric for pre-test/post-test analysis

Specific rubric (refer appendix A) was designed to assess students' proficiency in speech writing for both pre-test and post-test. The rubric is analytic in nature. In analytic scoring, a score has been assigned to each dimension for assessment. Analytic scoring is useful in the classroom as it can help students and teachers

identify students' strengths and their learning needs (Jonsson and Svingby, 2007, p.132). Rubric defined a range of levels from 0 to 3- 0(unacceptable), 1(developing), 2(accomplished) and 3(exemplary) - for befitting completion of each component of the speech. Total number of items in the rubric is nine that sets the highest score for rubric at 27 (3*9). All the items of the rubric were decided keeping in mind the essential components of a speech.

Reliability and Validity of the Rubric

To establish its validity, the rubric was circulated to five senior faculty members in language teaching on consent of the supervisor. Rubric was designed to check the relevance of the items included in it on four point scale ranging from 'not relevant' to 'relevant' (refer appendix A) . Experts evaluated the rubric and suggested a few changes which were fixed after mutual agreement of all the experts.

An inter-rater reliability analysis using the Kappa statistic was performed to determine consistency among raters (see Table 8). Two raters independently assigned ratings on the rubrics for pre-test and post-test measurement to establish the inter-rater reliability. The raters were provided with the rubric coding manual along with explanation of the objective of keeping the rubric for assessment.

Table 8

Reliability Statistics

		Symmetric Measures			
		Value	Asymp. Std. Error ^a	Approx. T ^b	Approx. Sig.
Measure of Agreement	Kappa	.67	.058	10.676	.000
N of Valid Cases		50			

a. Not assuming the null hypothesis

b. Using the asymptotic standard error assuming the null hypothesis

Raters agreed on 78.33 % level of ratings. Cohen's Kappa Coefficient of reliability was .67 ($p < 0.001$)— which is considered to be a good level of inter-rater reliability. According to Bakemann & Gottman (as cited in Jeong, 2001) , a coefficient of .40 to .60 is considered fair, .60 to .75 as good, and over .75 as excellent reliability.

Questionnaire

The questionnaire was designed to get students' perception on their experience of participation in online forum discussion assignment of the speech writing tutorial. The questionnaire was divided into two parts (refer appendix B):

- Part A: It consisted of 5 questions related to demographics of the students in order to establish their authenticity for filling the questionnaire.
- Part B: It consisted of items relating to students' experience of the learning process in the online writing tutorial on *Nalanda*. All the items were framed on five point likert scale: *SA = strongly agree; A = agree; U = uncertain; D = disagree; SD = strongly disagree.*

This part was further divided into three sections:

- HOCs and HOTS: 11 questions (qs.1-11) were framed for getting students' responses on whether the assignment helped them improve upon higher order concerns in writing and higher order thinking skills or not.
- LOCs: Qs. No. 12-16 (5 questions) were designed to know how much the assignment helped students improve the lower order concerns in speech writing.
- Online Discussion Forum: last 10 questions (Qs. No. 17-26) aimed at getting the feedback on utility of online forums as an appropriate medium for conducting such tutorial practices.

Reliability and Validity of the questionnaire

To establish its validity, the questionnaire was circulated to five senior faculty members in language teaching on consent of the supervisor. Questionnaire was designed to check the relevance of the items included in the questionnaire on four point scale ranging from 'not relevant' to 'relevant'. Experts evaluated the questionnaire and suggested few changes which were fixed after mutual agreement of all the experts.

Chronbach's alpha was run to check the reliability of the questionnaire during the pilot study as well as during the main data collection. The measure came to be .907 during the pilot study which is a high reliability score for the questionnaire. To recheck whether the questionnaire maintains its reliability score for the main study sample, again Chronbach's alpha was calculated in which the previous score was maintained (with a negligible change). The score for the main study was .903 (see Table 9).

Table 9

Questionnaire Reliability Statistics

Reliability Statistics		
Cronbach's	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized	
Alpha	Items	N of Items
.903	.901	26

4.4.2 Methods of Data Analysis

Content Analysis

Online transcripts which were saved after online writing tutorial was conducted over online forums on LMS *Nalanda*, provided the data for analysing the nature of writing process through content analysis. Holsti (as cited in Steve, 2001) has defined content analysis as, “any technique for making inferencing by objectively and systematically identifying specified characteristics of messages” (p.1). Krippendorff (1989) defines it as, “content analysis is a research technique for making replicable and valid inferences from data to their context.” In more simplified words it has been defined as a research tool used to determine the presence of certain words or concepts within texts or set of texts. In the present study content analysis has been done of the online transcripts to analyse the nature of writing process while students take part in online writing tutorials over online forums. The categorisation (see Table 10) and analysis framework (see Table 11) have been constructed for the purpose.

Table 10

Categorisation for Content Analysis

Main Category	Generic Category (stages of writing process)	Sub-categorisation for coding (HOCs, HOTS and LOCs)
Writing Process	Pre-writing and planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Audience analysis (AA) • Thesis Statement/ Focus/ Purpose (TS) • Outline (OL)
	Drafting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organisation (ORG) • Initial Content development (CD-I)
	Reflection and peer review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Critical thinking (CT)
	Revision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Critical thinking: self-regulation(CT-SR)
	Additional research or idea generation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional Content development (CD-A)
	Proofreading and editing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lower Order Concerns (LOCs)

Table 11*Analysis Framework: HOCs, HOTS and LOCs*

S.no	Skill	Definition	Indicator
1.	Audience Analysis	Audience analysis is the study of audience composition, knowledge, interests, attitudes, situation and interaction pattern	Statements/Posts <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identifying the general demographic features of audience- Age, Sex, Religious Orientation, Education, Profession, Racial, ethnic or cultural background. Gauging the importance of those features to a particular speaking situation like audience size, physical setting, length of presentation, audience disposition toward the topic, the speaker and the occasion
2.	Thesis Statement/ Focus/ Purpose	An explanation of the topic or purpose of a speech.	Statements/Posts <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identifying the main idea and central purpose of the text. Suggesting text's focus, emphasis and scope.
3.	Outline	A preliminary plan of the composition usually providing the blueprint by dividing it into headings and subheadings.	Statements/Posts <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identifying the steps of an outline done through mind mapping or taxonomising
4.	Organisation	In composition the arrangement of ideas, incidents, evidence, or details in a perceptible order	Statements/Posts <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identifying the various patterns of organising content like chronological, cause and effect, comparison and contrast, spatial, topical, psychological, problem and solution etc.
5.	Content development	Evidence or support present in the discussion to develop and to prove a point	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identifying various rhetoric modes deployed for different patterns of organisation like, narration, process, examples, illustrations, description, analogy, definition,

		well.	<p>classification and division etc.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initial Content Development (CD- I)- one student initially adds to the content • Additional Content development (CD- A)- recurring additions to the content by the student
6. Critical Thinking	<p>Critical thinking is the ability to think clearly and rationally. It includes the ability to engage in reflective and independent thinking. the mental process of actively and skillfully conceptualizing, applying, analyzing, synthesizing, and evaluating information to reach an answer or conclusion</p>	<p>Statements/Posts indicating</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interpretation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Categorisation ○ Decoding significance ○ Clarifying meaning • Analysis <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Examining ideas ○ Detecting arguments ○ Analysing arguments • Inference <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Assessing claims ○ Assessing arguments • Explanation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Querying evidence ○ Conjecturing alternatives ○ Drawing conclusions • Evaluation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Stating results ○ Justifying procedure ○ Presenting arguments • Self-Regulation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Self examination ○ Self correction <p>(Facione, P. A., 1990)</p>	
7. LOCs	<p>Spellings, punctuation marks, grammar, clarity in diction and sentence, precision and effectiveness.</p>	<p>Sentences/posts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suggesting correction in errors in spellings, punctuation marks, grammar and sentence and paragraph structure. 	

Reliability and Validity of the coding scheme

To establish its validity, the coding scheme was circulated to five senior faculty members in language teaching on consent of the supervisor. Coding scheme was designed to check the relevance of the categorisations included in it on four point scale ranging from 'not relevant' to 'relevant'. Experts evaluated the coding scheme and suggested a few changes which were fixed after mutual agreement of all the experts.

An inter-rater reliability analysis using the Kappa statistic was performed to determine consistency among raters. Two raters independently assigned codes on the coding scheme for content analysis of online transcripts of discussion forums. The raters were provided with the coding framework and proper description of the objective of keeping the categorisation of the coding scheme for assessment. Raters agreed on 80.26 % level of ratings. The inter-rater reliability for the raters was found to be $Kappa = 0.731$ ($p < 0.001$). The obtained Kappa value is considered to be a good level of inter-rater reliability. According to Bakemann & Gottman (as cited in Jeong, 2001), a coefficient of .40 to .60 is considered fair, .60 to .75 as good, and over .75 as excellent reliability (see Table 12)

Table 12

Reliability statistics of coding scheme

		Symmetric Measures			
		Value	Asymp. Std. Error ^a	Approx. T ^b	Approx. Sig.
Measure of Agreement	Kappa	.731	.062	11.731	.000
N of Valid Cases		71			

a. Not assuming the null hypothesis.

b. Using the asymptotic standard error assuming the null hypothesis.

Content analysis in the present study has been done at two levels: relational content analysis and conceptual content analysis. The detailed description of the two along with analysis has been done in chapter on data analysis.

Independent Samples t-test

The independent-samples t-test (or independent t-test, for short) compares the means between two unrelated groups on the same continuous, dependent variable (Independent T-Test using SPSS, n.d.). In the present research control group and experimental groups are being analysed. The assumptions of this test- normality, homogeneity of variance and independence- are fulfilled and have been discussed along with the data analysis in the next chapter.

Questionnaire result analysis

Questionnaire which is designed to analyse students' perception about the experiment has been analysed through mean and standard deviation. All the analysis and results have been shown in next chapter.

4.5 Procedure and Timeline

The study is based on an educational intervention and it becomes essential before conducting the study that it must not affect the regular classroom activities and also the learning outcome of a particular course. So, being aware of all the activities and assignments involved in the course the researcher was able to draft and conduct the study very carefully.

The study required a writing component and in EPS classroom speech writing is an important component. It is also a genre of writing which has a considerable scope for assertive, argumentative and persuasive writing and thus can work upon higher order thinking skills of the students, which is also the aim of higher education.

It is felt that time constraint of the classroom is depriving students to have enough practice in writing. During the 2nd semester of the academic session 2013-14, online forum was used by the researcher for teaching speech writing after seeking formal permission from the instructor. For this purpose, the class of 64 students was divided into 2 groups (experimental and control) of 32 students in each group. Experimental group was further divided into 4 groups of 8 students each. Different speech writing tasks were posted on the forum. This was done to intensify the speech writing practice by students so that they are able to develop skills of organising a speech well with a better expression. Capitalising on the techno- friendly attitude of the students the teacher believed that forums would provide students a platform to experience speech writing in a new light and subsequently they would regard it as a meaningful task. The rationale behind having a forum assignment was to make students feel comfortable to express themselves in written English. The stepwise integration of the forum on *Nalanda* with the classroom teaching is shown with the help of the Figure 11.

As it has been mentioned the forums were integrated with the classroom teaching of speech writing, Figure 11 shows of two learning modules for the on- campus EPS students: the Classroom module and the Forum module on LMS *Nalanda*. The instructor, in the classroom, teaches students the basics of speech writing- its importance in day to day life, outline preparation, how to write an effective introduction and conclusion, different types, importance of thesis statement, internal preview, use of rhetoric etc. Emphasis is given to teach students the importance of drafting an effective speech before delivery. For this, practising speech writing within groups is facilitated on online forums.

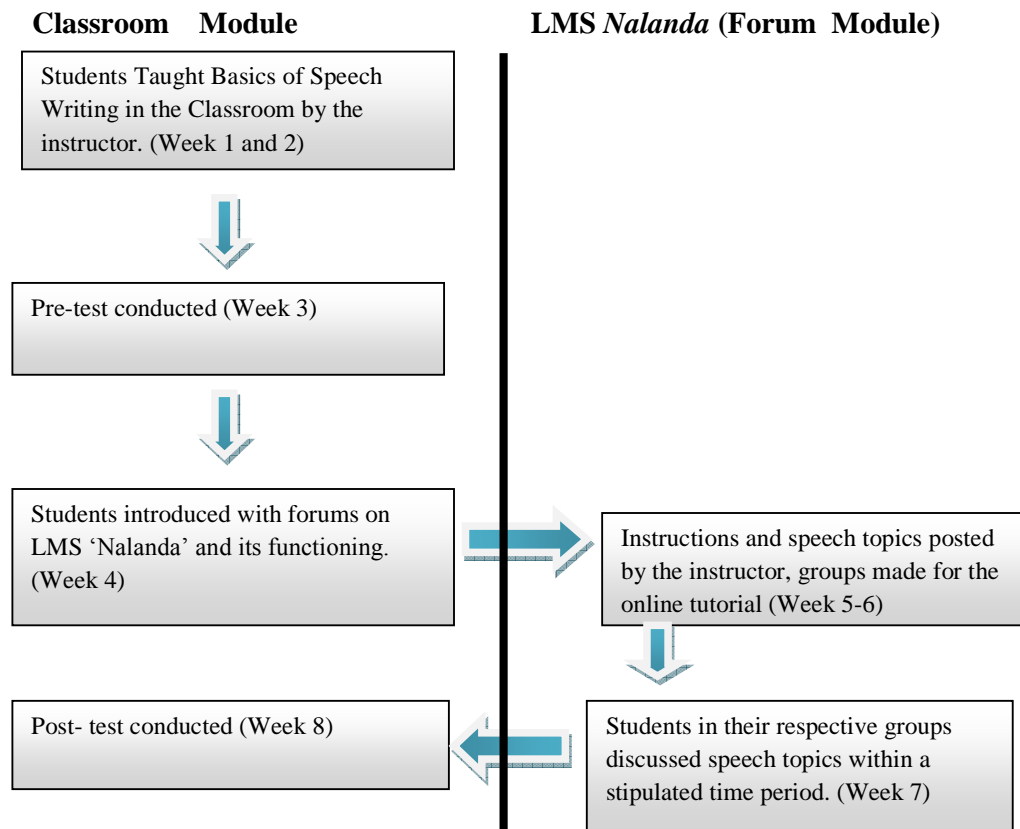


Figure 11. Integration Process of Online Forum with Classroom Teaching

Students were acquainted with the basic functioning of forums through proper instructions in the classroom and they were asked to visit *Nalanda* regularly in order

to check the assignments and tasks given. The instructor posted the details of the speech topics to be discussed, made groups and set a time limit for the discussion for one week. After the discussion was over, students were supposed to write a speech as a post test component in the classroom.

4.6 Online Forum Mediated Collaborative Writing Treatment over LMS

Nalanda

The total span of the study runs upto 8 weeks. Out of these 4 weeks (week 4- week 7) were devoted to online tutorial instructions and assignment. These did not disturb the regular class work. The online assignment of writing tutorials over LMS was incorporated as a supplement with the regular classroom activities.

- **Week 4** was devoted to briefing students about Online Forums over LMS *Nalanda*. Its functioning and accessing modalities were discussed in detail keeping in mind the objectives of the tutorial assignment of collaborative writing.
- **Week 5-6** instructions and speech topics were posted online on LMS which has the inbuilt facility of informing students via mail. So, there was surety of information being conveyed to students even if they do not login LMS regularly. Apart from this students were also instructed in the classroom to check the notices regularly. Detailed discussion regarding the online tutorial was also done in the classroom.
- **Week 7** was assigned for the online discussion. Students were free to contribute and access 24*7 during the stipulated time. Freedom of time and space was provided keeping in mind that students get enough time to do the related research, think critically and come up with quality posts which will not only enhance their learning but also of the peers.

4.7 Variables

The independent variable (IV) in the present research is the treatment provided in the form of online writing tutorial over LMS *Nalanda* forum. This has been done as a supplement to the classroom teaching in order to provide additional practice to the students in speech writing which is not possible in the classroom due to time constraints and also because the course of effective public speaking has main focus on oral practices in the classroom instead of writing. But need of practice of crafting speeches was felt and speech writing as one of the components of course handout required tutorial sessions. LMS *Nalanda* platform fulfilled this requirement and online writing tutorial was integrated with the course for the first time. Writing Skill is the dependent variable (DV) in the study. The detailed description of the DV and sub-skills has been done in chapter two on literature review and also in content analysis section of the present chapter.

4.8 Hypotheses

The hypotheses cited are based on the research question posed in introductory and literature review chapters. The question focused on finding out whether collaborative writing and discussion over online forums, when integrated with classroom teaching, help students enhance their written proficiency. Other questions are being answered through content analysis and questionnaire results.

4.8.1 Hypotheses for RQ 1

H₁: $\mu_{\text{experimental}} > \mu_{\text{control}}$ (aggregate score)

The average score of students who receive online collaborative writing treatment is greater than the average score of students who did not receive the treatment.

H₂: $\mu_{\text{experimental}} > \mu_{\text{control}}$ (LOCs)

The average score of students (for LOCs) who receive online collaborative writing treatment is greater than the average score of students who did not receive the treatment.

H₃: $\mu_{\text{experimental}} > \mu_{\text{control}}$ (HOCs)

The average score of students (for HOCs) who receive online collaborative writing treatment is greater than the average score of students who did not receive the treatment.

This chapter provides all the methodological details for the study. The study is a quasi-experimental research which was conducted in two modules- classroom and LMS *Nalanda*. The online module involves collaborative writing of speech through the operation of scaffolding. Pre-test and post-test were conducted in the classroom. Questionnaire was also distributed and collected in the classroom. Triangulated data collected in the modules has been analysed both quantitatively and qualitatively through different analysis procedures. Data analysis scheme and results have been presented in the proceeding chapter.

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Chapter 5

Analysis and Results

The present chapter includes analytical procedures and findings of the study. Analysis has been done under three sections. Section one deals with the data analysis of pre-test and post-test. Section two focuses on content analysis of the online transcripts and section three shows analysis of questionnaire of students' perceptions on the treatment. The concluding part provides an overview of all findings from a holistic perspective and tries to answer the fourth objective of the study of analysing the viability of online forum writing tutorials operating on paragogical scaffolding framework.

5.1 Data Analysis of Pre-test and Post-test

Descriptive and inferential statistics were used to analyse the data. The data was analysed using the statistical software SPSS Version 16 and Microsoft Office Excel 2007. The collaborative speech writing over LMS *Nalanda* was the independent variable whereas the students' speech writing performance in pre test and post-test was the dependent variable. The mean scores of the pre-test and post-test of experimental and control groups were analysed to determine whether there was a statistically significant difference in the speech writing performance of the students before and after the incorporation of online collaborative writing tutorial or not. The descriptive statistics analysed the tests on the mean, standard deviation and percentages and also finds out students' frequency shift for each of the nine components of speech writing. The inferential statistics analysed the difference in the mean gain scores of the speech writing performance of the students in the post-tests of experimental and control group in terms of the composite scores, HOCS and LOCS.

5.1.1 Descriptive statistics

The findings of the pre-test and post-test of experimental and control group were analysed using descriptive statistics to determine whether online collaborative writing of speech enhanced students' performance in the composite scores and in the nine writing components under two concerns in writing i.e. HOCs and LOCs.

Pre-test and Post-test scores of Experimental Group

While comparing the results (see Table 13) of pre-test and post-test scores of the experimental group's speech writing performance a few observations can be made. The study shows that students in the experimental group performed better in the post-test than pre-test for the composite scores of both HOCs and LOCs. In the composite scores of pre-test and post-test of the experimental group (see Table13), the mean score for pre-test was 10.41 and it reached at 15.53 for the post-test. The percentage increase in the mean score for the experimental group is 49.183%. Both minimum and maximum score had increased. Minimum score increased by 3 marks and maximum by 5 marks.

Table 13

Descriptive Statistics Experimental Group (Composite Scores)

	Minimum		Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	% change in mean score
Pre-test	32	3	20	10.41	3.697	
Post-test	32	6	25	15.53	4.303	49.18
Valid N (listwise)	32					

Note. N= number of participants

The mean score of HOCs in pre-test was 7.22 marks which shot up to 10.56 in the post-test score. The percentage change in the HOCs mean score was 46.26%. There was an increase in both minimum and maximum scores of HOCs in the post-test. The

mean score for LOCs also increased from 3.5 in the pre-test to 4.97 in the post-test score. The percentage change in the LOCs mean score was 42%. There is an increase in both minimum and maximum scores of LOCs in the post-test when compared to the pre-test scores (see Table 14). This showed that after the incorporation of online collaborative writing over LMS *Nalanda*, the students were able to perform better in both HOCs and LOCs of speech writing.

Table 14

Descriptive Statistics Experimental Group (HOCS and LOCS)

			Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	% change
Experim- ental Group	Pre- test	HOCs	2	14	7.22	2.859	% change in HOC mean score = 46.26%
		LOCs	1	6	3.50	1.270	
	Post- test	HOCs	4	16	10.56	3.162	% change in LOC mean score = 42%
		LOCs	2	9	4.97	1.402	

Pre-test and Post-test scores of Control Group

The comparison of the results (see Table 15) of pre-test and post-test scores of the control group's speech writing performance was also done and it was found that students in the control group did not perform so well in the post-test than pre-test for the composite scores of both HOCs and LOCs.

In the composite scores of pre-test and post-test of the control group (see Table 15), the mean score for pre-test was 10.47 and it reached at 10.84 for the post-test. The percentage increase in the mean score for the experimental group is 3.533%. Minimum score did not increase and maximum score had increased by two marks.

Table 15

Descriptive Statistics Control Group (Composite Scores)

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	% change in mean score
Pretest control gp	32	5	15	10.47	2.688	
Posttest control gp	32	4	17	10.84	3.060	3.533
Valid N (listwise)	32					

Note. N= Number of participants

The mean score of HOCs in pre-test is 6.75 marks which shoots up to 7.25 in the post-test score. The percentage change in the HOCs mean score was 7.41% which is much lesser than the percentage change of 46.26% for the experimental group (see Table 16). There is an increase only in the maximum score of HOCs in the post-test. The mean score for LOCs did not increase instead it decreased a bit from 3.72 to 3.59 marks. There was a decrease in the minimum score of LOCs and no increase in the maximum score.

Table 16

Descriptive Statistics Control Group (HOCS and LOCS)

			Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	% change
Control Group	Pre-test	HOC	3	10	6.75	1.796	% change in HOC mean score =
		LOC	2	6	3.72	1.326	7.41%
	Post-test	HOC	3	12	7.25	2.125	% change in LOC mean score = -
		LOC	1	6	3.59	1.241	3.4%

This shows that the students in the control group were not able to perform better in the post-test, whereas students in experimental group were able to perform much better in post-test (see figure 12) than pre-test.

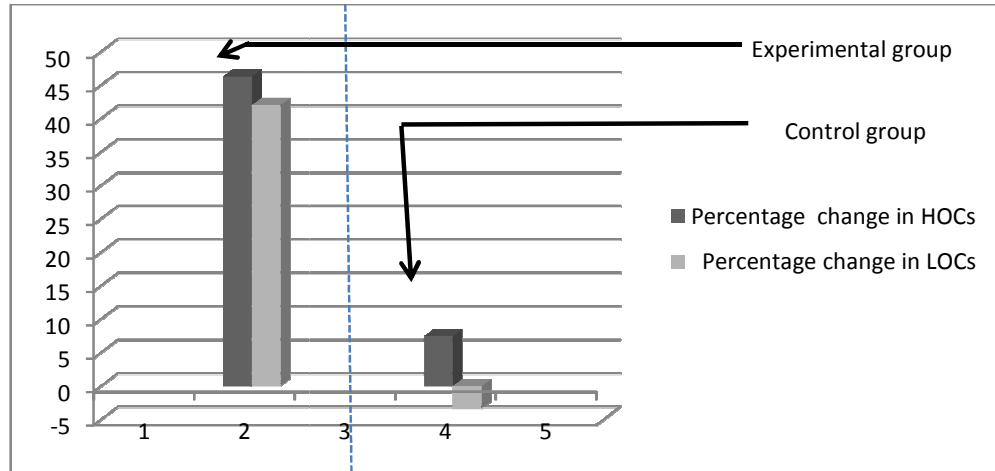


Figure 12. Percentage changes in pre-test and post-test scores for experimental and control group

Students' frequency shift for each component of speech writing

The descriptive statistics in the above section has shown changes in the composite scores of speech writing and also the changes in the composite scores of two concerns in writing i.e. HOCs and LOCs. Speech writing was evaluated on nine dimensions of speech writing categorised under HOCs and LOCs. These components are: attention grabber, speaker's credibility, thesis statement, internal preview, organisation and content, support for ideas, style, connectives and conclusion.

This section through graphical representation shows how students' performance improved over the scale decided for each dimension of speech writing. The graphs have been created for both control group and experimental group.

Each component of speech writing has been evaluated on four point scale- 0= unacceptable, 1= initial level, 2= intermediate level and 3= advanced level- to gauge the performance of students in both pre-test and post-test.

Attention grabber

First dimension for evaluating speech writing was attention grabber. For the experimental group the line graph (see Figure 13) of post-test showed a shift forward in comparison to pre-test graph which indicated that students moved ahead in proficiency level. Percentage of students at unacceptable level (15.6% to 3.1%) and at initial level (46.9% to 34.4%) decreased but it increased at intermediate (34.4% to 40.6%) and at advanced level (3.1% to 21.9%) of proficiency in the post-test.

For the control group the line graph (see Figure 13) of post-test also showed a shift but that shift is only from initial level to intermediate level. Percentage of students at unacceptable and advanced level did not change. The change was apparent from initial level to intermediate level. Percentage of students at initial level i.e. 71.9% in pre-test decreased to 50.0% in post-test whereas percentage of students at intermediate level increased from 18.8% in pre-test to 43.8% in post-test. No student was able to attain advanced level proficiency.

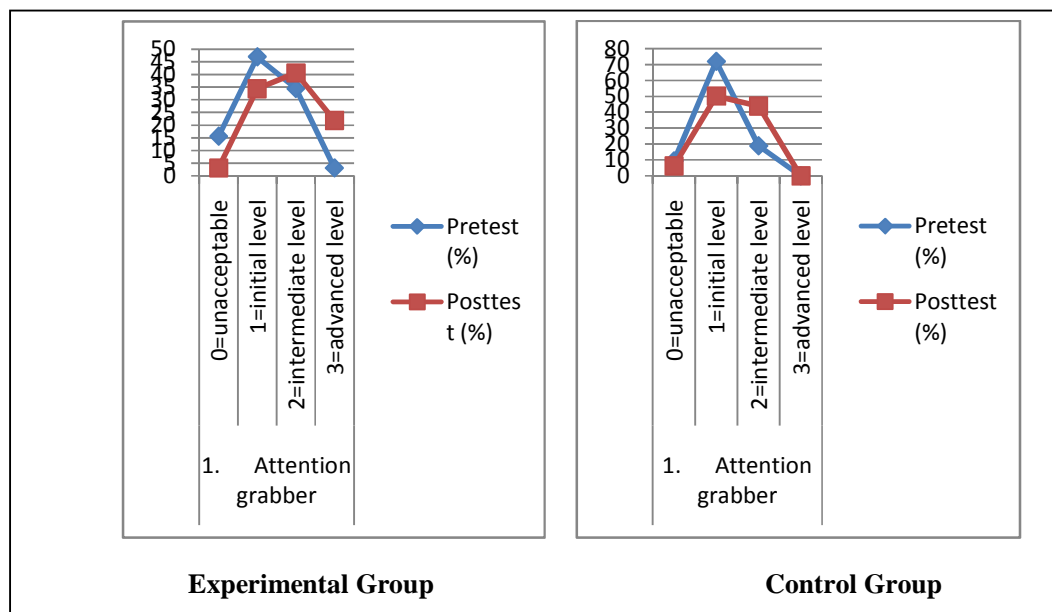


Figure 13. Percentage shift in the score of Attention Grabber

Speaker's Credibility

In the students' percentage distribution for the dimension of speaker's credibility it was found that the experimental group the line graph (see Figure 14) of post-test showed a shift forward. It indicated that students moved ahead in performance. Percentage of students at the lower proficiency level i.e. unacceptable level (59.4% to 28.1%) decreased but it increased on the initial level (21.9% to 31.2%), intermediate (15.6% to 31.2%) and advanced level (3.1% to 9.4%) of proficiency during the post-test.

For the control group the line graph (see Figure 14) of post-test did not show a shift except at initial level. The graph indicates a stagnated performance by the students of control group which depicts insignificant improvement from pre-test to post-test.

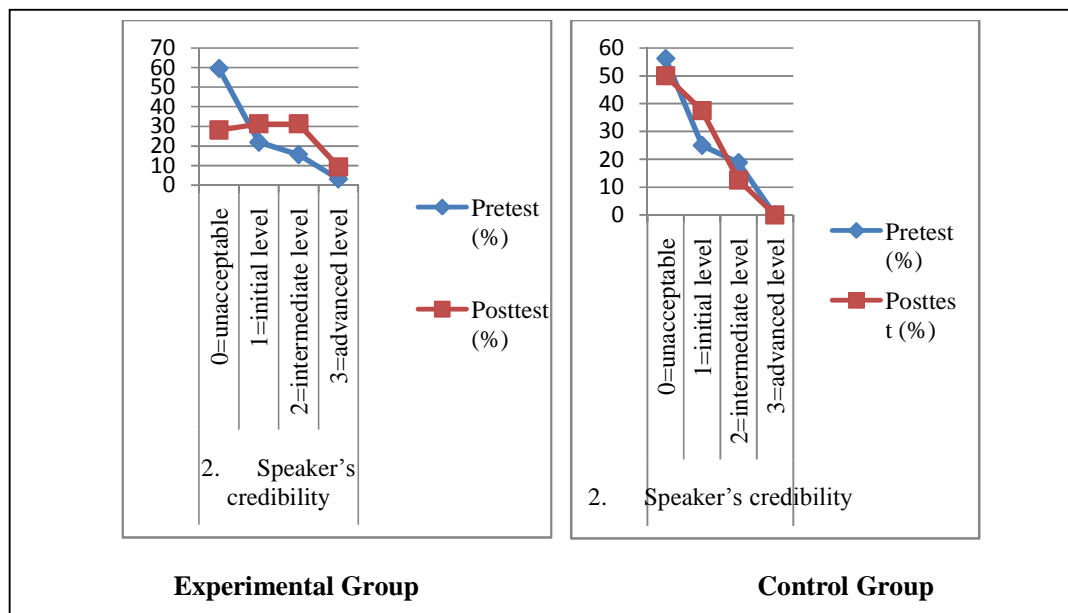


Figure 14. Percentage shift in the score of Speaker's Credibility

Thesis Statement

In the students' percentage distribution for the dimension of thesis statement it was found that the experimental group line graph (see Figure 15) of post-test showed a shift forward. It indicated that students moved ahead in performance. Percentage of

students at unacceptable level (3.1% to 0.0%) and at initial level (71.9% to 28.1%) decreased at but increased at intermediate (25% to 62.5%) and at advanced level (0.0% to 9.4%) of proficiency in the post-test.

For the control group the line graph (see Figure 15) of post-test did not show a significant shift except a slight backward change from intermediate level to initial level. The graph again indicated a stagnated performance by the students of control group which depicts no improvement from pre-test to post-test.

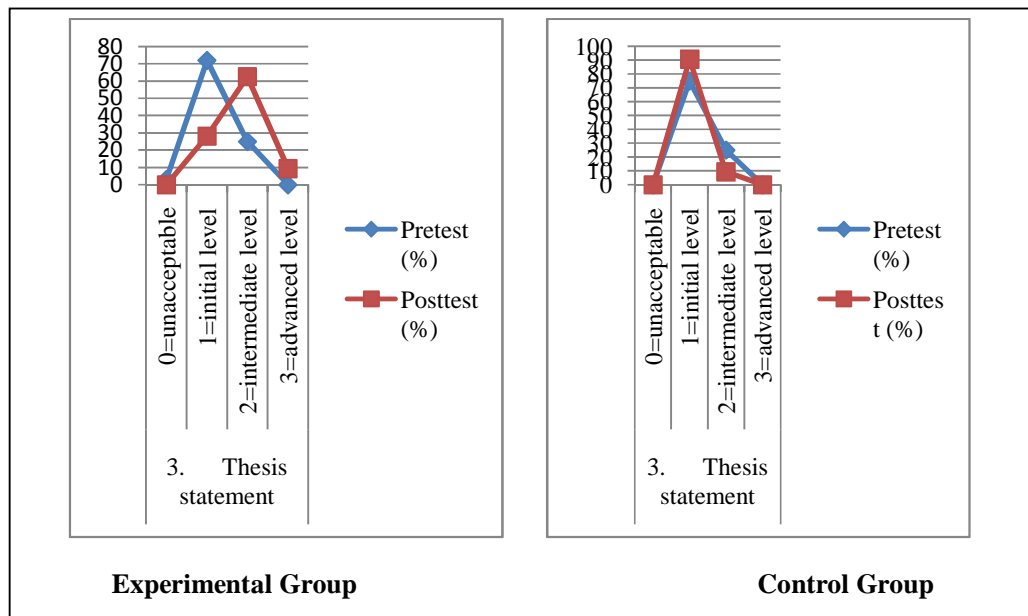


Figure 15. Percentage shift in the score of Thesis Statement

Internal Preview

In the students' frequency distribution for the dimension of internal preview it was found that for the experimental group the line graph (see Figure 16) of post-test showed a shift forward which indicated that students moved ahead in performance. Percentage of students getting the score of the minimum level i.e. unacceptable level (65.5% to 9.4%) decreased significantly and it increased on the initial level (31.2% to

59.4%), intermediate (3.1% to 28.1%) and advanced level (0.0% to 3.1%) of proficiency in the post-test.

For the control group the line graph (see Figure 16) of post-test did not show a shift except at initial level. The graph indicates a stagnated performance by the students of control group which depicts insignificant improvement from pre-test to post-test.

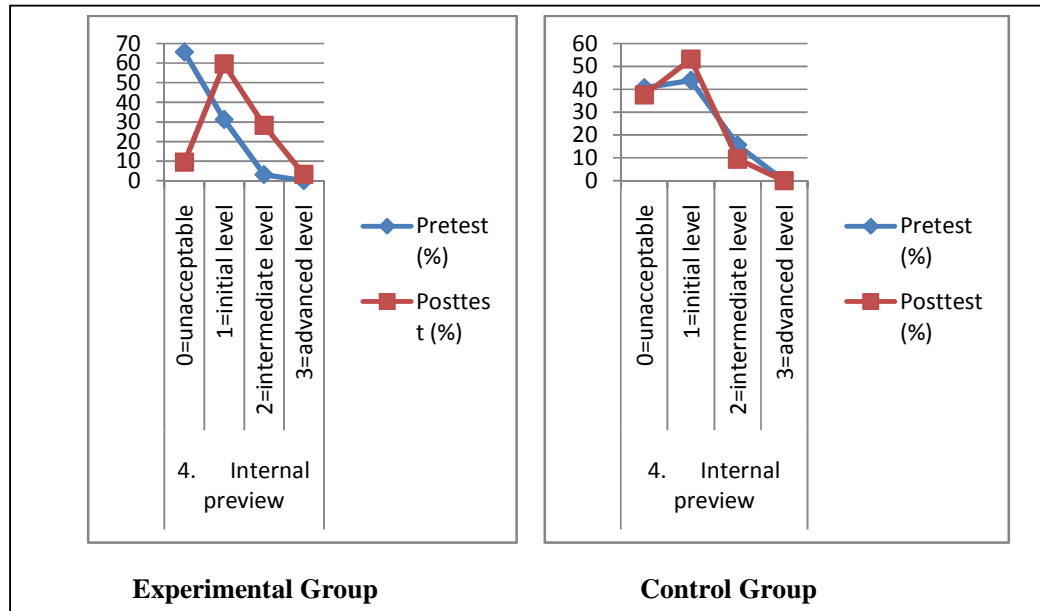


Figure 16. Percentage shift in the score of Internal Preview

Organisation and Content

In the students' frequency distribution for the dimension of organisation and content it was found that for the experimental group the line graph (see Figure 17) of post-test showed a shift forward in comparison to pre-test line graph which indicated that students moved ahead in performance. Remarkable change was noticed at initial level (with a decrease from 34.4% to 9.4%) and advanced level (with an increase from 0.0% to 21.9%). There was an increase at intermediate also from 65.5% to 68.8%.

For the control group the line graph (see Figure 17) of post-test also showed a shift but that shift is only from initial level to intermediate level. Percentage of students at

unacceptable and advanced level did not change. The change was apparent from initial level to intermediate level. Percentage of students at initial level i.e. 59.4% in pre-test decreased to 31.2% in post-test whereas percentage of students at intermediate level increased from 40.6% in pre-test to 65.6% in post-test.

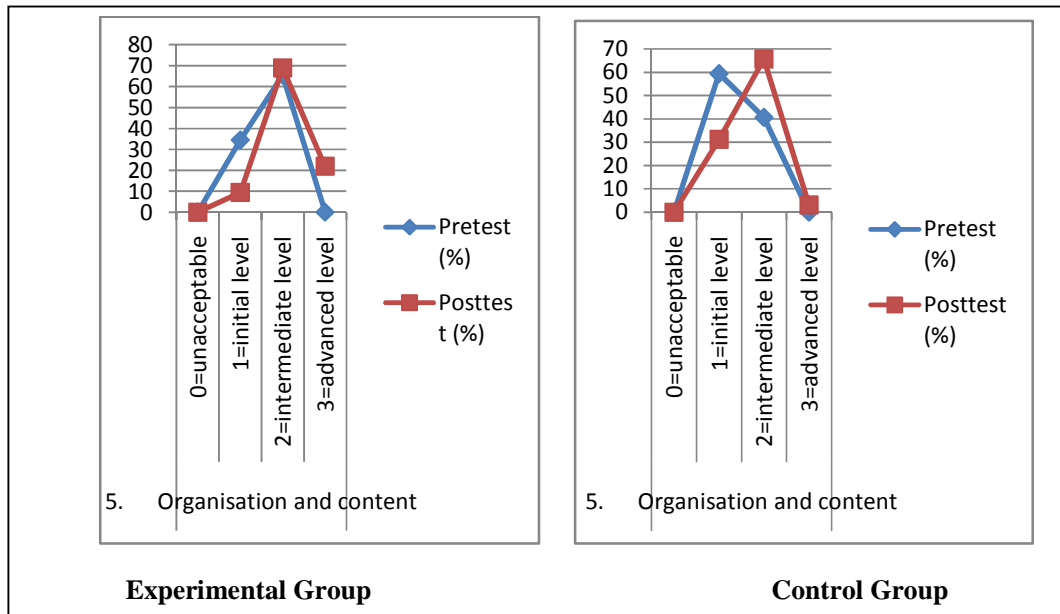


Figure 17. Percentage shift in the score of Organisation and Content

Support for ideas

For the experimental group the line graph of students' percentage (see Figure 18) for post-test was showing a shift forward which indicated that students moved ahead in performance. Percentage frequency of students getting the score of the minimum level i.e. unacceptable level (9.4% to 0.0%) and initial level (46.9% to 15.6%) decreased but it increased on the intermediate (40.6% to 68.8%) and advanced level (3.1% to 15.6%) of proficiency during the post-test.

For the control group the line graph (see Figure 18) of post-test did not show a shift but the graph indicates a stagnated performance by the students of control group which depicts insignificant improvement from pre-test to post-test.

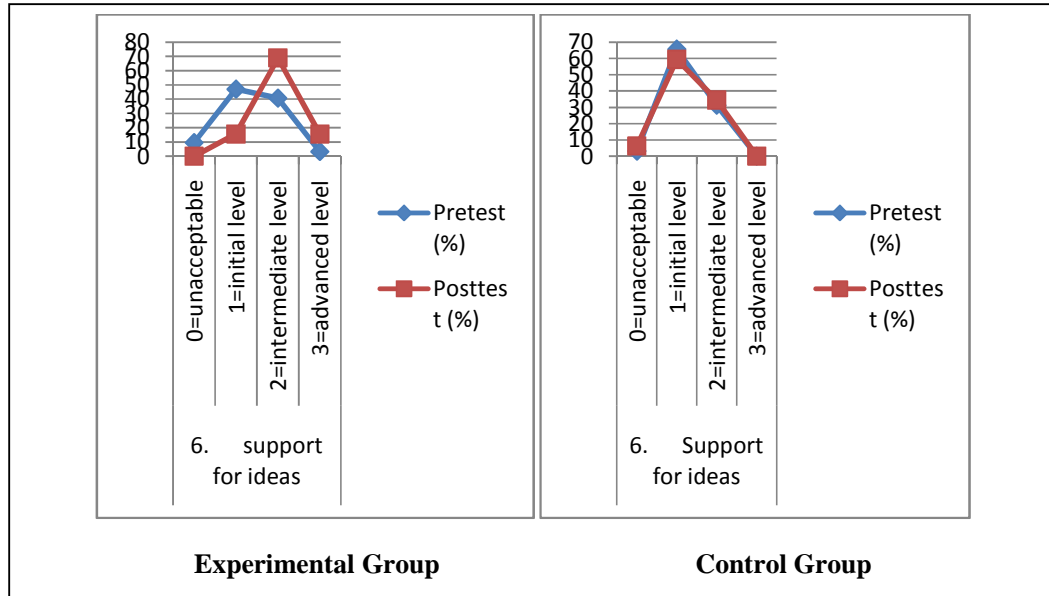


Figure 18. Percentage shift in the score of Support for Ideas

Style

For the experimental group the line graph (see Figure 19) of post-test did not show a shift. The graph indicates a stagnated performance by the students of control group which depicts insignificant improvement from pre-test to post-test.

For the control group the line graph (see Figure 19) of post-test did not show a shift. The graph indicates a stagnated performance by the students of control group which depicts insignificant improvement from pre-test to post-test.

It also indicates that student could not show any noticeable change the style of writing after experiencing the online writing tutorial.

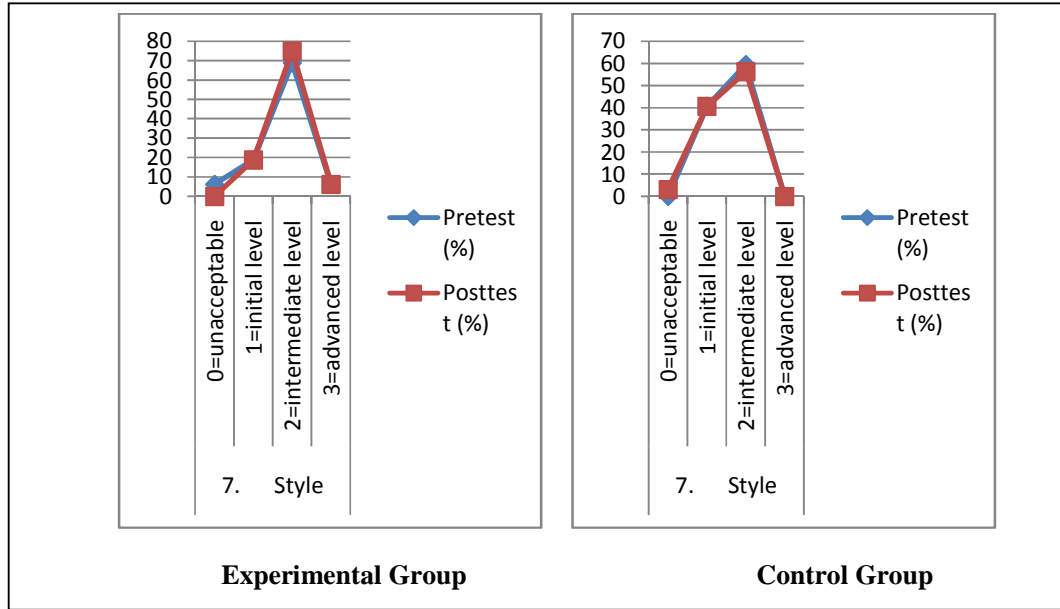


Figure 19. Percentage shift in the score of Style

Connectives

For the experimental group the line graph (see Figure 20) for post-test was showing a shift forward which indicated that students moved ahead in performance. Percentage of students at unacceptable level, decreased at initial level but it increased on the intermediate (37.5% to 75.0%) and advanced level (0.0% to 6.2%) of proficiency during the post-test.

For the control group the line graph (see Figure 20) of post-test did not show a shift. The graph indicates a stagnated performance by the students of control group which depicts insignificant improvement from pre-test to post-test.

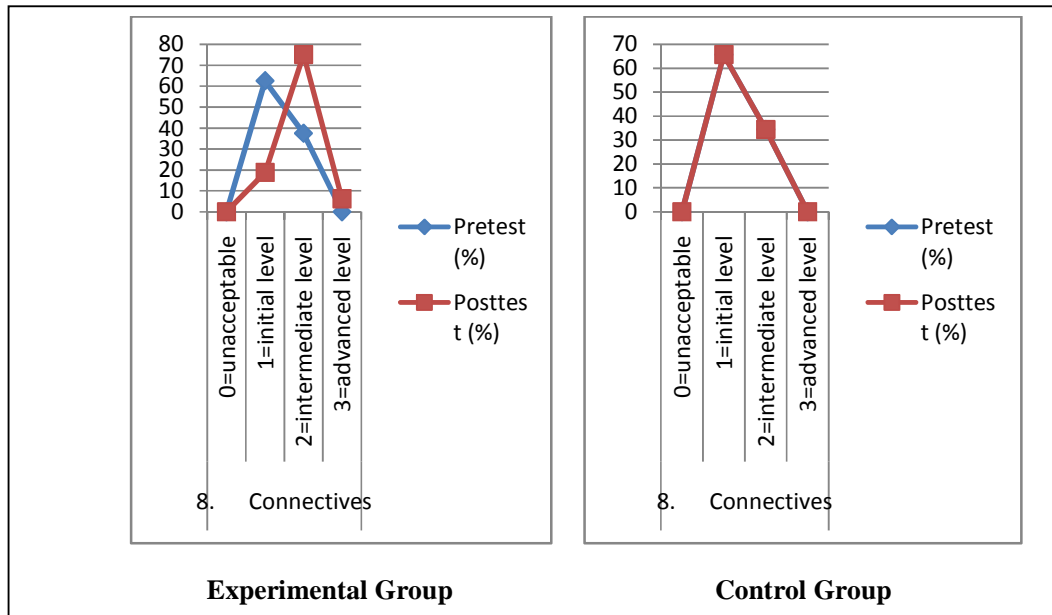


Figure 20. Percentage shift in the score of Connectives

Conclusion

For the experimental group the line graph (see Figure 21) for post-test was showing a shift forward which indicated that students moved ahead in performance. Percentage of students at unacceptable level, decreased at initial level but it increased on the intermediate (15.6% to 59.4%) and advanced level (3.1% to 9.4%) of proficiency during the post-test.

For the control group the line graph (see Figure 21) for post-test was also showing a shift forward which indicated that students moved ahead in performance. Percentage of students at unacceptable level and initial level decreased, students moved ahead with increase at intermediate level but remained same at advanced level i.e. zero. No student was able to reach at advanced level performance.

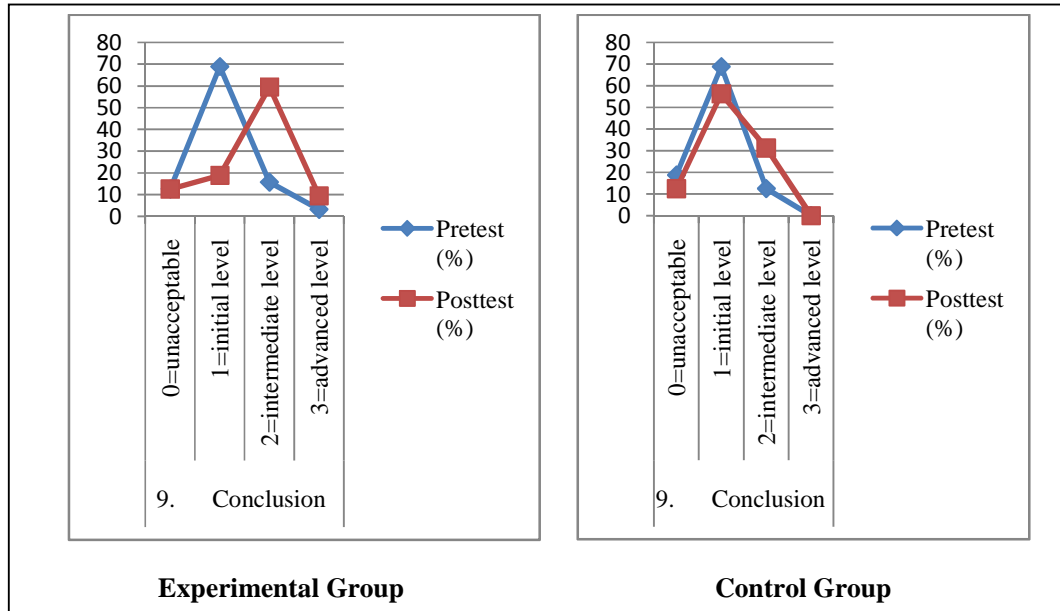


Figure 21. Percentage shift in the score of Conclusion

5.1.2 Inferential statistics

The independent samples t-test was employed in the study since there were two groups independent of each other i.e. experimental group and control group. The *t* test for independent samples is used to determine whether the means of two groups are significantly different. Effect Size is also calculated which according to Coe (2002), “is a simple way of quantifying the difference between two groups that has many advantages over the use of tests of statistical significance alone. Effect size emphasises the size of the difference rather than confounding this with sample size.”

Test of Assumptions of independent samples t-test

There are certain assumptions of independent samples t-test (Heiman, 2013, p.265) which need to be fulfilled in order to perform the test. These assumptions are tested for the research undertaken-

1. **The dependent variable measurement on a continuous scale-** in the present study the post test and pre-test results are measured on ratio scale. The highest score for the rubric designed was 27 and lowest zero.

2. **Independent variable should consist of two categorical, independent groups** - the control and experimental group are mutually exclusive groups comprising of different and equal number of students.
3. **Independence of observations**- the observations for both the groups are taken for separate individuals as control group and experimental group consists of independent students.
4. **No significant outliers**- the box plot (see Figure 22) clearly reflects that number of outliers for both control group and experimental group is one which is only 3.123 percent of the sample for each group. This constitutes a part which if deleted will not effect the study to a significant level.
5. **Dependent variable's normal distribution**- the assumption of normality was tested through Shapiro-Wilk (S-W) test. Review of the S-W test for normality for experimental group (see Table 17) (SW =.974, df = 32, p = .671), skewness (.033) and kurtosis (.210) suggested that normality was a reasonable assumption. The box plot (see Figure 22) suggested a relatively normal distribution shape. The Q-Q plot and histogram suggested normality was reasonable.

Table 17

Test of Normality Experimental Group

	Kolmogorov-Smirnov ^a			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	Df	Sig.
Pretest experimental group	.144	32	.091*	.974	32	.617

a. Lilliefors Significance Correction

*. This is the lower bound of true significance

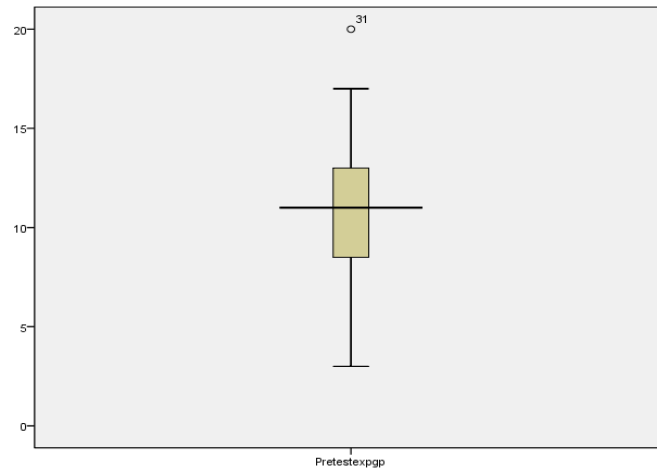


Figure 22. Box Plot Experimental Group

Review of the S-W test for normality for control group (see Table 18) (SW =.970, df = 32, p = .488) skewness (-.122) and kurtosis (-.808) statistics The boxplot (see Figure 23) suggested a relatively normal distribution shape. The Q-Q plot and histogram suggested normality was reasonable.

Table 18

Test of Normality Control Group

	Kolmogorov-Smirnov ^a			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	Df	Sig.
Pretestcontgp	.102	32	.200*	.970	32	.488

a. Lilliefors Significance Correction

*. This is a lower bound of the true significance.

- Homogeneity of variances-** Leven’s test results in SPSS indicated that it was not violated for the present research. Owing to the result in Table 20 F(1.815), p(0.000), a t-statistic assuming the homogeneity of variance was computed.

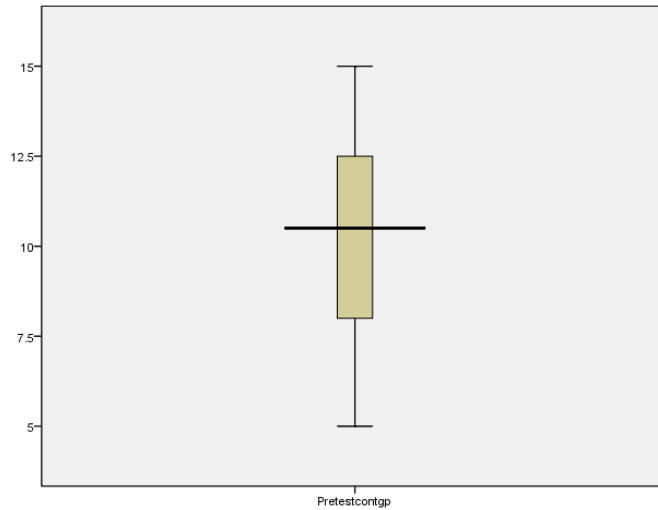


Figure 23. Box Plot Control Group

Hypothesis testing for Composite Score

Research Hypothesis

$$H_1: \mu_{\text{experimental}} > \mu_{\text{control}}$$

The average score of students who receive online collaborative writing treatment is greater than the average score of students who did not receive the treatment.

Results

The results from an independent samples t-test indicated that students who received online collaborative writing treatment (see Table 19) ($M = 15.62$, $SD = 4.210$, $N = 32$) scored much higher than students who did not receive the treatment ($M = 10.88$, $SD = 3.024$, $N = 32$). Cohen's effect size value ($d = 1.293$) suggested a high practical significance (Cohen, 1988).

Table 19

Group Statistics

	Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	Cohen's <i>d</i>
Testscore	experimental group	32	15.62	4.210	.744	1.293
	control group	32	10.88	3.024	.535	

Note. N= number of participants

The Levene's Test for equal variances yields a p- value of .183. This means that the difference between the variances is statistically insignificant. The independent samples t-test showed (see Table 20) the p value of $.000 < .05$, indicates there is significant difference between the speech writing performance of experimental and control group. The 95% confidence interval for the difference between the average scores of the two groups is 2.918, 6.582. Thus the independent samples t-test showed that the difference in speech writing performance of experimental and control group was statistically significant, $t(62) = 5.184$, $p = .000$, 95% CI (2.918, 6.582).

Table 20

Independent Samples test composite score

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
Testscore	Equal variances assumed	F	Sig.	t	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
Testscore	Equal variances assumed	1.815	.183	5.184	62	.000	4.750	.916	2.918	6.582
	Equal variances not assumed			5.184	56.263	.000	4.750	.916	2.914	6.586

**Inferential statistics for Higher order concerns
Research Hypothesis**

$$H_1: \mu_{\text{experimental}} > \mu_{\text{control}}$$

The average score of students (for HOCs) who receive online collaborative writing treatment is greater than the average score of students who did not receive the treatment.

Results

The results from an independent samples t-test indicated that students who received online collaborative writing treatment (see Table 21) (M = 10.56, SD = 3.162, N =32) scored higher than students who did not receive the treatment (M = 7.52, SD = 2.125, N =32). Cohen’s effect size value ($d = 1.228$) suggested a high practical significance.

Table 21

Group Statistics

	group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	Cohen's <i>d</i>
Test score	experimental group	32	10.56	3.162	.559	1.228
	control group	32	7.25	2.125	.376	

Note. N= number of participants

The Levene's Test for equal variances yields a p- value of .078. This means that the difference between the variances is statistically insignificant. The independent samples t-test showed the p value of $.000 < .05$, indicates there is significant difference between the speech writing performance of experimental group and control group. The 95% confidence interval for the difference between the average scores of the two groups is 1.966, 4.659. Thus the independent samples t-test (see Table 22) showed that the difference in speech writing performance of experimental and control group was statistically significant, $t(62) = 4.919$, $p = .000$, 95% CI (1.966, 4.659).

Table 22

Independent Samples Test HOCs

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	T	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
								Lower		Upper
HOC	Equal variances assumed	3.214	.078	4.919	62	.000	3.312	.673	1.966	4.659
	Equal variances not assumed			4.919	5.426	.000	3.312	.673	1.963	4.662

Inferential statistics for lower order concerns

Research Hypothesis

$$H_1: \mu_{\text{experimental}} > \mu_{\text{control}}$$

The average score of students (for LOCs) who receive online collaborative writing treatment is greater than the average score of students who did not receive the treatment.

Results

As predicted the results from an independent samples t-test indicated that students who received online collaborative writing treatment ($M = 4.97$, $SD = 1.402$, $N = 32$) scored much higher than students who did not receive the treatment ($M = 3.59$, $SD = 1.241$, $N = 32$). Cohen's effect size value ($d = 1.042$) suggested a high practical significance (see Table 23).

Table 23

Group Statistics

	group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	Cohen's <i>d</i>
Test score	experimental group	32	4.97	1.402	.248	1.042
	control group	32	3.59	1.241	.219	

Note. N= number of participants

The Levene's Test for equal variances yields a p- value of .533 (see Table 24). This means that the difference between the variances is statistically insignificant.

Table 24

Independent Samples Test LOCs

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
								Lower		Upper
LOC	Equal variances assumed	.394	.533	4.154	62	.000	1.375	.331	.713	2.037
	Equal variances not assumed			4.154	61.092	.000	1.375	.331	.713	2.037

The independent samples t-test showed the p value of $.000 < .05$, indicates there is significant difference between the speech writing performance of experimental group and control group. The 95% confidence interval for the difference between the average scores of the two groups is .713, 2.037. Thus the independent samples t-test showed that the difference in speech writing performance of experimental and control group was statistically significant, $t(62) = 4.154$, $p = .000$, 95% CI (.713, 2.037).

5.2 Content Analysis

As has been discussed in chapter 4, content analysis has been defined as a research tool used to determine the presence of certain words or concepts within texts or set of texts and also interrelation between the underlying concepts. In the present study content analysis has been done of the online transcripts to analyse the nature of writing process while students take part in online writing tutorials over online forums.

The research questions which are addressed through content analysis are:

RQ4- How and to what strength are Van Lier's features of Scaffolding operationalised in the collaborative speech writing process?

RQ5- What is the main focus of discussion while students are engaged in the process of speech writing over the forums?

Types of content analysis which will address these two questions are: conceptual content analysis and relational content analysis respectively.

Conceptual Content Analysis

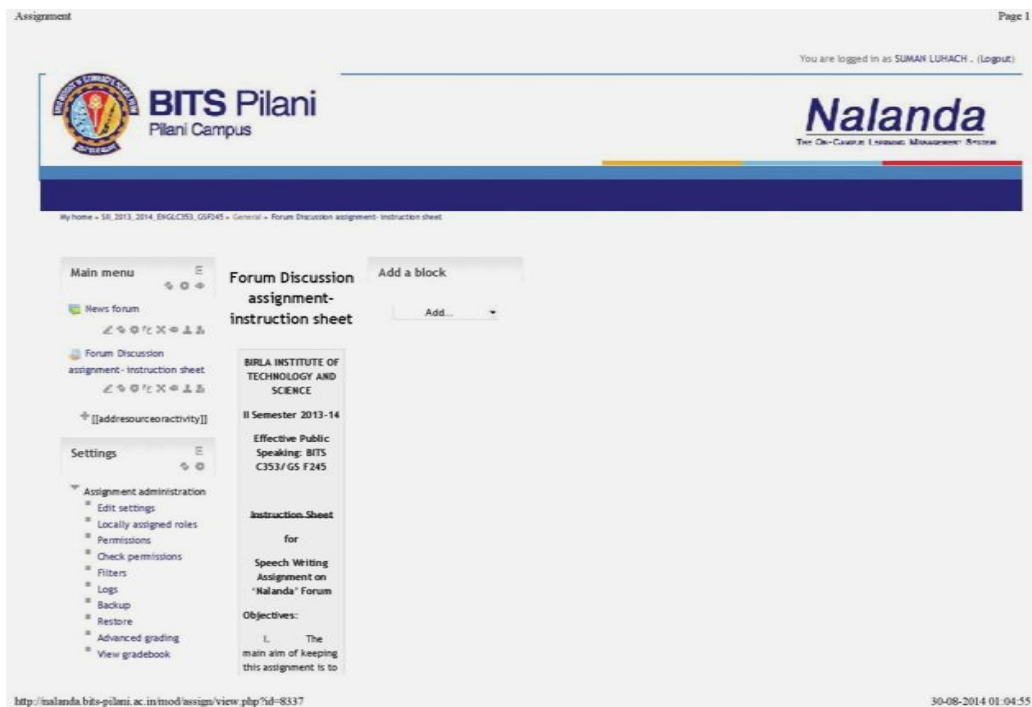
Conceptual content analysis has been described as a process involving identifying and defining a concept and tallying its presence (Busch & Paul, 2012). After a thorough understanding of the research question, categories for coding the online transcript are selected. The text for all the groups was coded following the coding scheme given in the previous chapter. If some information did not fit into any of the categories as per their indicators given, it was considered irrelevant and thus ignored.

Van Lier (as cited in Walqui, 2006, p.165) has proposed six central features of pedagogical scaffolding- continuity, contextual support, intersubjectivity, contingency, handover/takeover and flow. The above six features are be put under two broad categories of hard scaffolds and soft scaffolds.

- Hard Scaffolds
 - Continuity
 - Contextual Support
- Soft and Reciprocal Scaffolds
 - Intersubjectivity
 - Contingency
 - Flow
 - Handover/Takeover

Hard scaffolds operationalised

Van Lier's features of continuity and contextual support fit into the level of hard scaffolding. *Continuity* means activities and tasks are planned beforehand with a set time limit. *Contextual support* is provided through decisions regarding the task environment, purposes by providing learners the whole action plan of a particular task (see Figure 24)



The screenshot shows a Moodle forum discussion page for an assignment instruction sheet. The page header includes the BITS Pilani logo and the Nalanda logo. The main content area displays the forum title "Forum Discussion assignment-instruction sheet" and the assignment details: "BIRLA INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY AND SCIENCE", "II Semester 2013-14", "Effective Public Speaking: BITS C353/ GS F245", and "Instruction Sheet for Speech Writing Assignment on 'Nalanda' Forum". The objectives section states: "The main aim of keeping this assignment is to". The page also features a main menu, settings, and an "Add a block" section.

Figure 24. Contextual Support and Continuity over Online Forums

Soft Scaffolds operationalised

Lier's features of intersubjectivity, contingency, flow and handover/takeover all fall under soft scaffolding. *Intersubjectivity* comes when the students start working in groups and they start getting familiar with the task and the group members are mutually promoted to work together. *Contingency* is the necessary support provided on timely basis. This can be provided by teacher as well as students. *Flow* comes when learners are fully devoted on the task and their interaction runs smoothly with

optimum coordination. *Handover/takeover* is the students' procession towards attaining the grasp over the task and move towards appropriation. While doing content analysis of the online transcripts each feature of scaffolding proposed by Van Lier has been studied to look for actual operation of the features (see Figure 25).

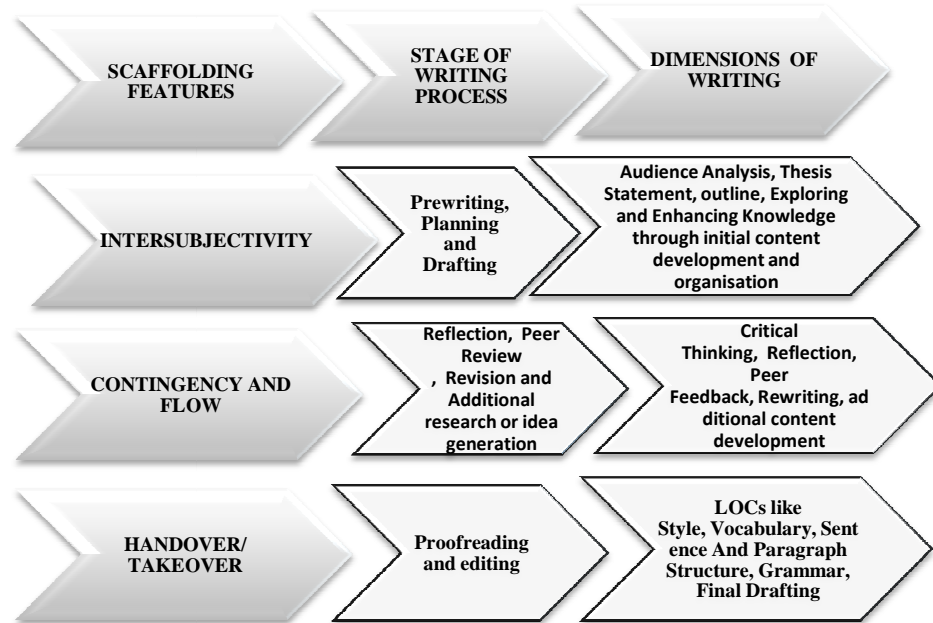


Figure 25. Soft Scaffolds, Stages of Writing Process and Elements of Writing and HOTS

Intersubjectivity

The procedural aspect of scaffolding starts with the principle of intersubjectivity. At this stage participants 'engage in harmonious exploratory talk' (Barnard and Campbell, 2005, p.8). The explorations related to writing process stages of prewriting, planning and drafting are done. For speech writing, the elements of writing corresponding to the stages of writing process are audience analysis, thesis statement,

outline, exploring and enhancing knowledge through initial content development and organisation (see Table 25).

Table 25

Categorisation for Content Analysis for the principle of intersubjectivity

Principle of Scaffolding	Generic Category (stages of writing process)	Sub-categorisation for coding (HOCs, HOTS and LOCs)
Intersubjectivity	Pre-writing and planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Audience analysis (AA) • Thesis Statement/ Focus/ Purpose (TS) • Outline (OL)
	Drafting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organisation (ORG) • Initial Content development (CD-I)

Conceptual Content Analysis for the principle of Intersubjectivity and corresponding stages of writing process

Conceptual Content Analysis ‘involves quantifying and tallying presence’ (Busch & Paul, 2012) of the elements of coding manual prepared for analysis. The scaffolding principle of intersubjectivity, writing process stages of prewriting, planning and drafting and the elements of writing corresponding to the stages of writing process in speech writing -audience analysis, thesis statement, outline, exploring and enhancing knowledge through initial content development and organisation - are analysed through conceptual content analysis (see Figure 26).

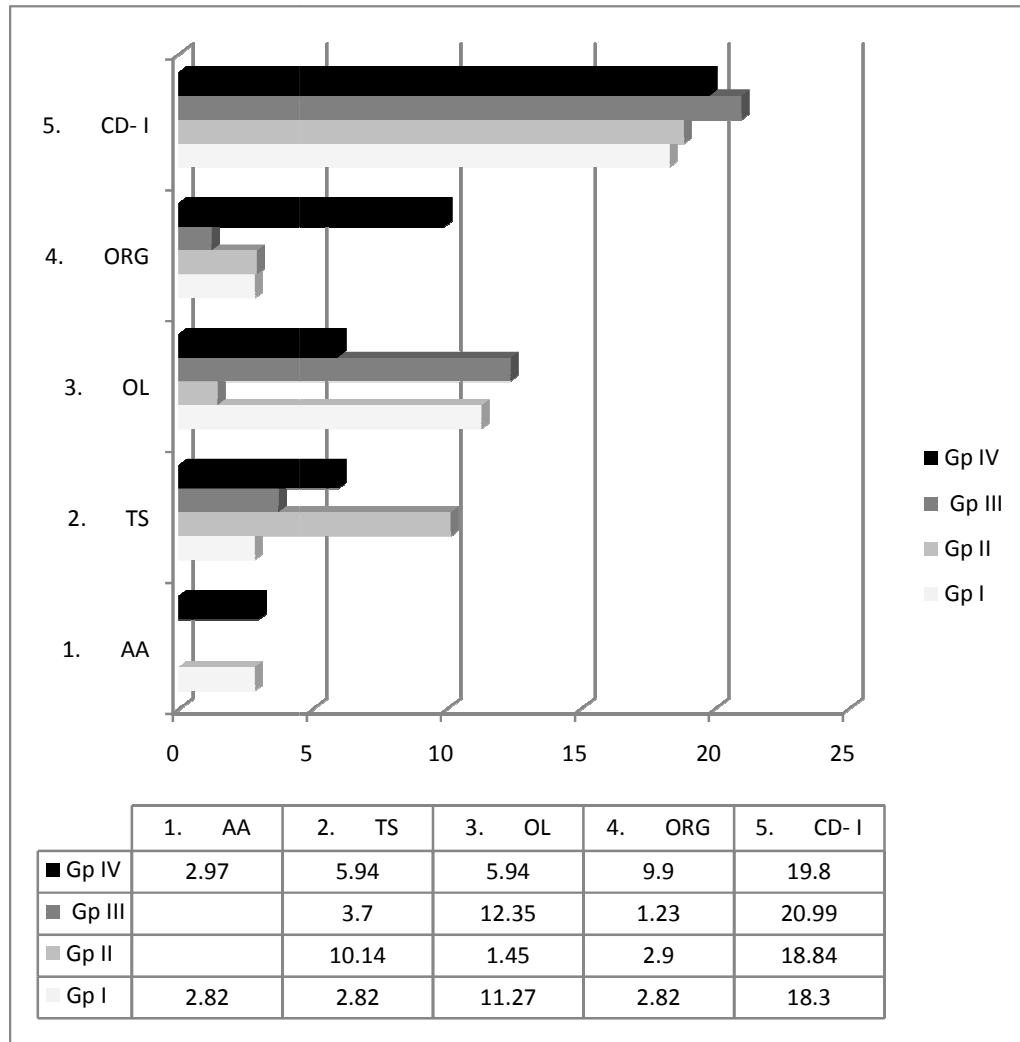


Figure 26. Conceptual Content Analysis for Intersubjectivity

The graph (see Figure 26) presents percentages of posts for each stage of writing process and each element of writing in all the four experimental groups. Following observations can be made from the resulting bar graph:

- Pre-writing and Planning:** The stage of pre-writing and planning consists of three elements of speech writing – audience analysis (AA), thesis statement (TS) and outline (OL). The focus of collaborative writing had been more on TS and OL in comparison to AA for all the four groups. The statistics shows

the following results- AA (Gp I-2.82%, Gp II- 0%, Gp III- 0%, Gp IV- 2.97%); TS ((Gp I-2.82%, Gp II- 10.14%, Gp III- 3.70%, Gp IV- 5.94%) and OL (Gp I-11.27%, Gp II- 1.45%, Gp III- 12.35%, Gp IV- 5.94%).

- **Drafting:** The stage of drafting consists of two elements of writing- organisation (ORG) and initial content development (CD-I). Focus on ORG by all groups is - Gp I (2.82%), Gp II (2.9%), Gp III (1.23%), Gp IV (9.9%). Each group had some discussion on the aspects related to organisation. But all the four groups have highest no. of contribution for posts related to initial content development (CD- I) – Gp I (18.3%), Gp II (18.84%), Gp III (20.99%), Gp IV (19.8%). All groups were independent of each other's contribution and students of one group could not look at the nature of contributions made by other groups. This shows that when the principle of intersubjectivity is operationalised students of all the four groups tried to develop maximum content for their respective speech topics. This is being done along a brief but seemingly necessary discussion on the elements of pre-writing and planning.

Contingency and Flow

The second and third procedural principles of Scaffolding are contingency and flow respectively. The students after developing intersubjectivity come in flow with each other. Interaction through posts increases and “in the flow of interaction, the help that each student seeks and provides is contingent upon what has been posted in previous messages: elements are changed, added, or deleted” (Barnard and Campbell, 2005, p.8). The contingent elements of the writing process are reflection and peer review, revision and additional research/idea generation. The corresponding elements of

speech writing are critical thinking, self regulation and additional content development respectively (see Table 26).

Table 26

Categorisation for Content Analysis for the principles of Contingency and Flow

Principle of Scaffolding	Generic Category (stages of writing process)	Sub-categorisation for coding (HOCs, HOTS and LOCs)
Contingency and flow	Reflection and peer review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Critical thinking (CT)
	Revision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Critical thinking: self-regulation • (CT-SR)
	Additional research or idea generation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional Content development (CD-A)

Conceptual Content Analysis for the principle of contingency and flow and corresponding stages of writing process

The scaffolding principle of contingency and flow, writing process stages of reflection and peer review, revision and additional research or idea generation and the elements of writing corresponding to the stages of writing process in speech writing - critical thinking, self regulation and additional content development respectively - are analysed through conceptual content analysis (see Figure 27).

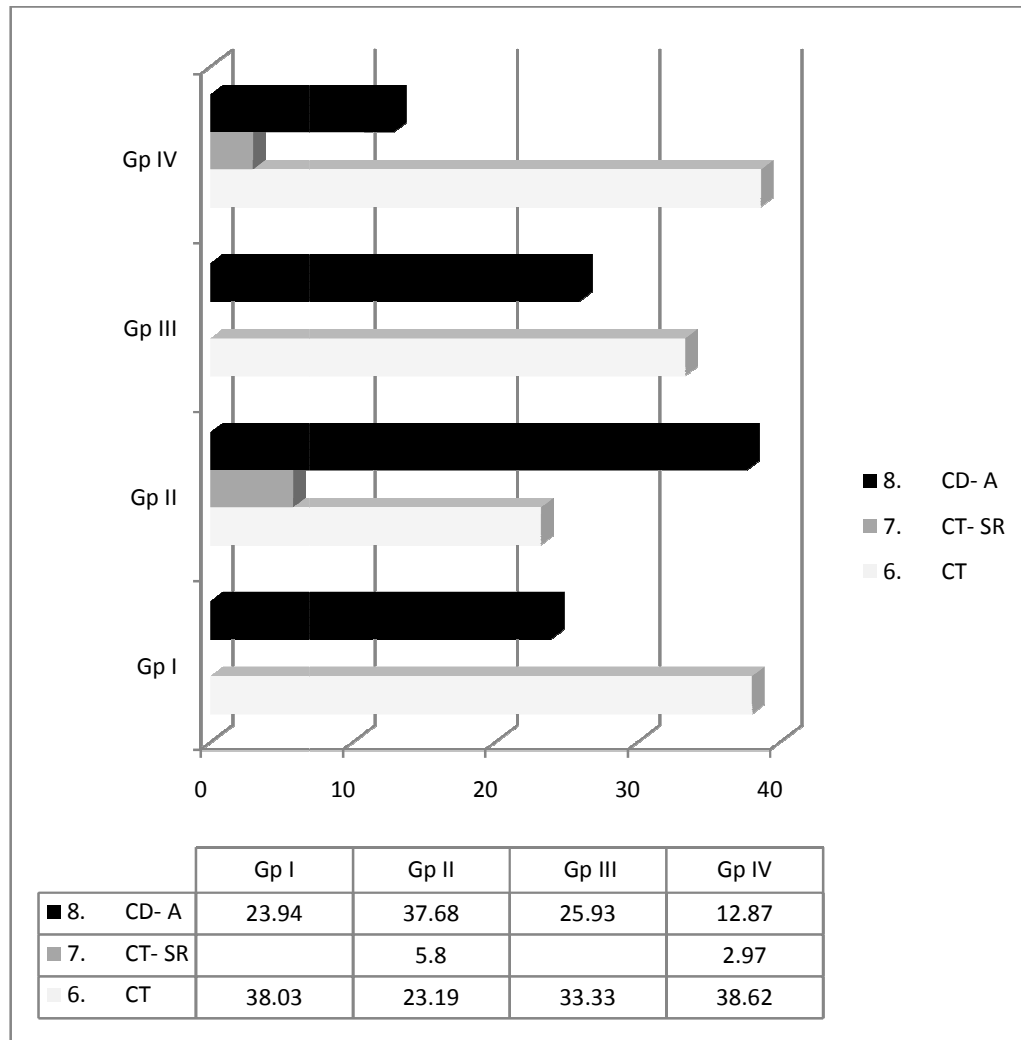


Figure 27. Conceptual Content Analysis for Contingency and Flow

The graph (see Figure 27) presents percentages of posts for each element of writing in all the four experimental groups. Following observations can be made from the resulting bar graph:

- Reflection and peer review:** This stage of writing process consists of critical thinking (CT) element of HOTS in speech writing. The contribution of critical thinking has been highest among all the elements of LOCs, HOCs and HOTS in the collaborative writing of speech writing. All the groups have highest number of posts related to reflection and peer review. The data shows these

percentages – Gp I (38.08%), Gp II (23.19%), Gp III (33.33%) and Gp IV (38.62%).

- **Revision:** this stage has been taken into account only for individual changes or amendments in the contribution as other students only suggest, changes or acknowledging gaps are done by those whom these changes have been suggested. The HOTS involved at this stage of writing process is self regulation(CT-SR) which is a part of critical thinking. Results show that not much students do that. Gp I and Gp III students don't even have any contribution related to this stage of writing process. Gp II (5.8%) and Gp IV (2.97%) have little focus.
- **Additional research or idea generation:** This stage of writing process is identified with additional content development (CD-A). It can be observed from the graph that students even after a good amount of contribution done for CD-I also try to explore the possibilities of more data for the speech. All groups have good contribution for CD-A- Gp I (23.94%), Gp II (37.68%), Gp III (25.93%), Gp IV (12.87%).

Handover/Takeover

The fourth procedural principal of scaffolding is handover/takeover. The writing process stage associated with this principle of scaffolding is proofreading and editing. The elements of writing for these stages of writing are sentences and posts suggesting changes in LOCs in writing which are spellings, punctuation marks, grammar and sentence and paragraph structure (see Table 27).

Table 27

Categorisation for Content Analysis for the principles of Handover/Takeover

Principle of Scaffolding	Generic Category (stages of writing process)	Sub-categorisation for coding (HOCs, HOTS and LOCs)
Handover/takeover	Proofreading and editing	LOCs (Sentences/posts suggesting correction in errors in spellings, punctuation marks, grammar and sentence and paragraph structure).

Conceptual Content Analysis for the principle of handover/takeover

Proofreading and editing are associated with LOCs in writing. It can be observed from the graph (see Figure 28) that LOCs account for minimum level of contribution by students in online collaborative speech writing assignment.

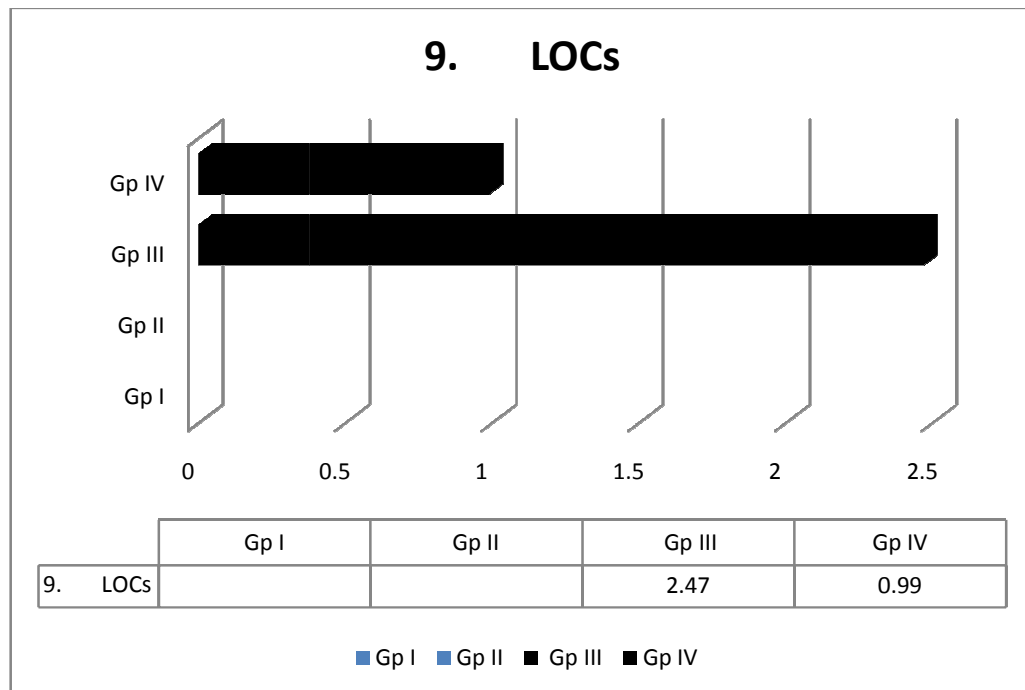


Figure 28. Conceptual Content Analysis for Handover/Takeover

Gp I and Gp II had no discussion on LOCs while Gp III (2.47%) and Gp IV (0.99%) had very less no. of posts on LOCs of writing.

Relational Content Analysis

Relational Analysis, as the name suggests, explores the relationship among different concepts identified. It has its main focus on semantic relationships. (Busch & Paul, 2012). The concepts identified while doing conceptual analysis have been carried further for relational analysis. Conceptual analysis did the frequency count of presence of the identified parameters but relational analysis seeks to take it further to know sign, strength and direction of writing process as a part to understand its nature.

Results of Relational Content Analysis

Total four groups of eight students in each group participated in online discussion. Thus, online transcripts of these groups were coded and analysed. Figure 29 gives an overview of the type of transcript saved and analysed.

The sample transcript belongs (see Figure 29) to GpIII. It shows how the discussion activity was conducted over LMS *Nalanda*. The transcripts run over to many pages for all the groups. These discussions have been coded and categorised.

Table 28 shows total no. of posts for each group and the distribution of posts in different categories.



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Nalanda
THE ON-CAMPUS LEARNING MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

My home ▶ SII_2013_2014_ENGLC353_GSF245 ▶ Speech Writing Assignment ▶ Speech Writing through online discussion forum ▶ topic for discussion

Search forums

Main menu

[News forum](#)
[Forum Discussion](#)
[assignment- instruction sheet](#)

Settings

Forum administration
 Edit settings
 Locally assigned roles
 Permissions
 Check permissions
 Filters
 Logs
 Backup
 Restore
 Subscription mode
 Show/edit current subscribers

Course administration

Switch role to...

My profile settings

Display replies flat, with oldest first ▼

Move this discussion to ... ▼ Move

topic for discussion

by SUMAN LUHACH . - Tuesday, 18 March 2014, 10:38 AM

1. As a teacher trainer, you have asked the teachers to reflect on the importance of grades in the teaching and learning process. Take your stand and draft an effective speech to substantiate.

[Edit](#) | [Delete](#) | [Reply](#)

Re: topic for discussion

by SHUBHAM SHARMA . - Wednesday, 19 March 2014, 7:13 PM

IMPORTANCE OF GRADES IN TEACHING AND LEARNING PROCESS

Hello Group members !
Let us locate ourselves and begin the discussion .
Before we begin designing the content let us try to take our initial stances.

Grades have been a part of the educational experience for decades.
As far as I believe they are important to evaluate the impact of teaching, to communicate with students' parents, and as a source of motivation for the students.

Well that's my current notion. Hope to have a healthy discussion, to substantiate the speech.

Please reply as the time ticks away.

Regards

[Show parent](#) | [Edit](#) | [Split](#) | [Delete](#) | [Reply](#)

Re: topic for discussion 2

by SHUBHAM SHARMA . - Friday, 21 March 2014, 2:11 PM

Hello Friends. The time is running out. And We haen't even started the discussion. Here is a little outline we could start working on. It is far from complete and we can discuss the improvements and work over it. Please Reply . We have only 3 days left

IMPORTANCE OF GRADING IN TEACHING AND LEARNING PROCESS

By Shubham Sharma, Teacher Trainer

Introduction:

I Attention Catching Fact about Grading

Figure 29. Online Forum Discussion Transcript

Table 28

Number of Posts for Each Category and Group

Coding categories	GpI	GpII	GpIII	GpIV
1. AA	2	3		
2. TS	2	6	3	7
3. OL	8	6	10	1
4. ORG	2	10	1	2
5. CD- I	13	20	17	13
6. CT	27	39	27	16
7. CT- SR		3		4
8. CD- A	17	13	21	26
9. LOCs		1	2	
10. Total	71	101	81	69

Pareto chart construction for all groups

Pareto charts are constructed to check the exact frequency of posts when it was observed that only a few items contribute to the maximum. Out of the total nine coding parameters it was observed that critical thinking and content development contributed to the maximum (see Figure 30, 31, 32, 33).

It has been observed that irrespective of the groups in which students interacted, about 80 percent of the discussion through writing is composed of three components which are- critical thinking (CT), content development –initial (CD-I) and content development- additional(CD-A).

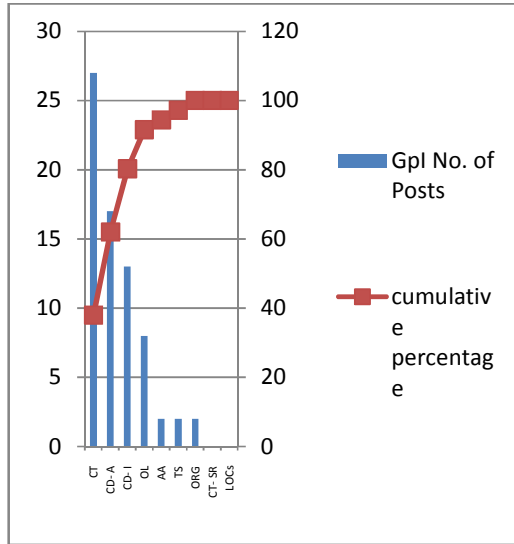


Figure 30. Pareto Chart Group I

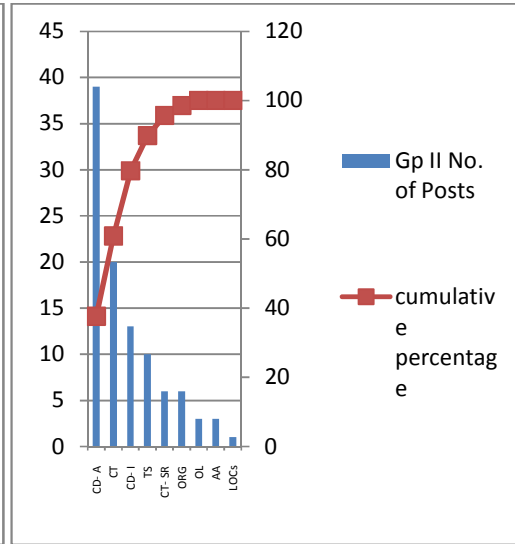


Figure 31. Pareto Chart Group II

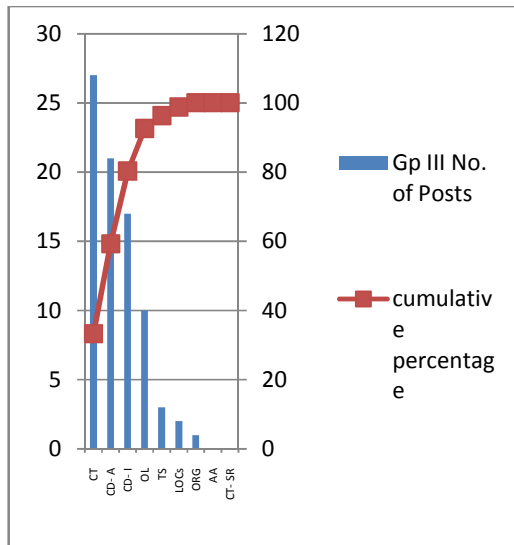


Figure 32. Pareto Chart Group III

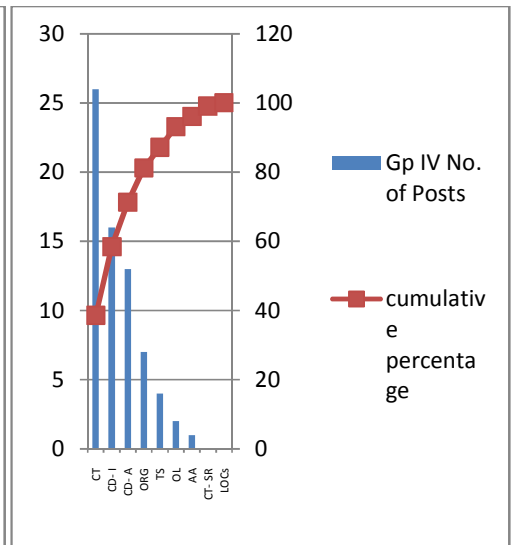


Figure 33. Pareto Chart Group IV

It is a common observation for almost all the groups (see Table 29) except Gp IV where though its not 80 percent but major contributor with 70 percent.

Table 29

Major Contributory Elements in Online Forum Discussions for all Groups

Coding parameter	Gp I	Gp II	Gp III	Gp IV
Critical thinking	38.03%	23.19%	33.33%	38.62%
Content development-initial	23.94%	18.84%	20.99%	19.8%
Content development-additional	18.3%	37.68%	25.93%	12.87%
Total	80.27%	79.71%	80.25%	71.29%

5.3 Questionnaire Analysis

The Questionnaire which was designed to get students' perception on their experience of participation in online forum writing tutorial of the speech writing through process based approach of writing (refer appendix B) consisted of items framed on five point likert scale: *SA = strongly agree; A = agree; U = uncertain; D = disagree; SD = strongly disagree*. These items were meant to judge students' perceptions under three sections- HOCs and HOTS, LOCs and Online Forums (OLFs). These three sections have been discussed separately while analysing the students' responses. Since all the questions individually are Likert-type items, so the frequencies of the responses have been analysed through stacked bar graph representation and each section being Likert-scale has been analysed through mean (M) and standard deviation (SD).

Figure 34 sums up the percentages of responses to first section of the questionnaire. 32 students who were part of experimental group filled the questionnaire. Eleven questions were framed for getting students' responses on whether the assignment helped them discuss and improve upon higher order concerns in writing and higher

order thinking skills or not. Questions designed in the section dealt with concepts like critical thinking, content development, and organisational aspects of speech writing.

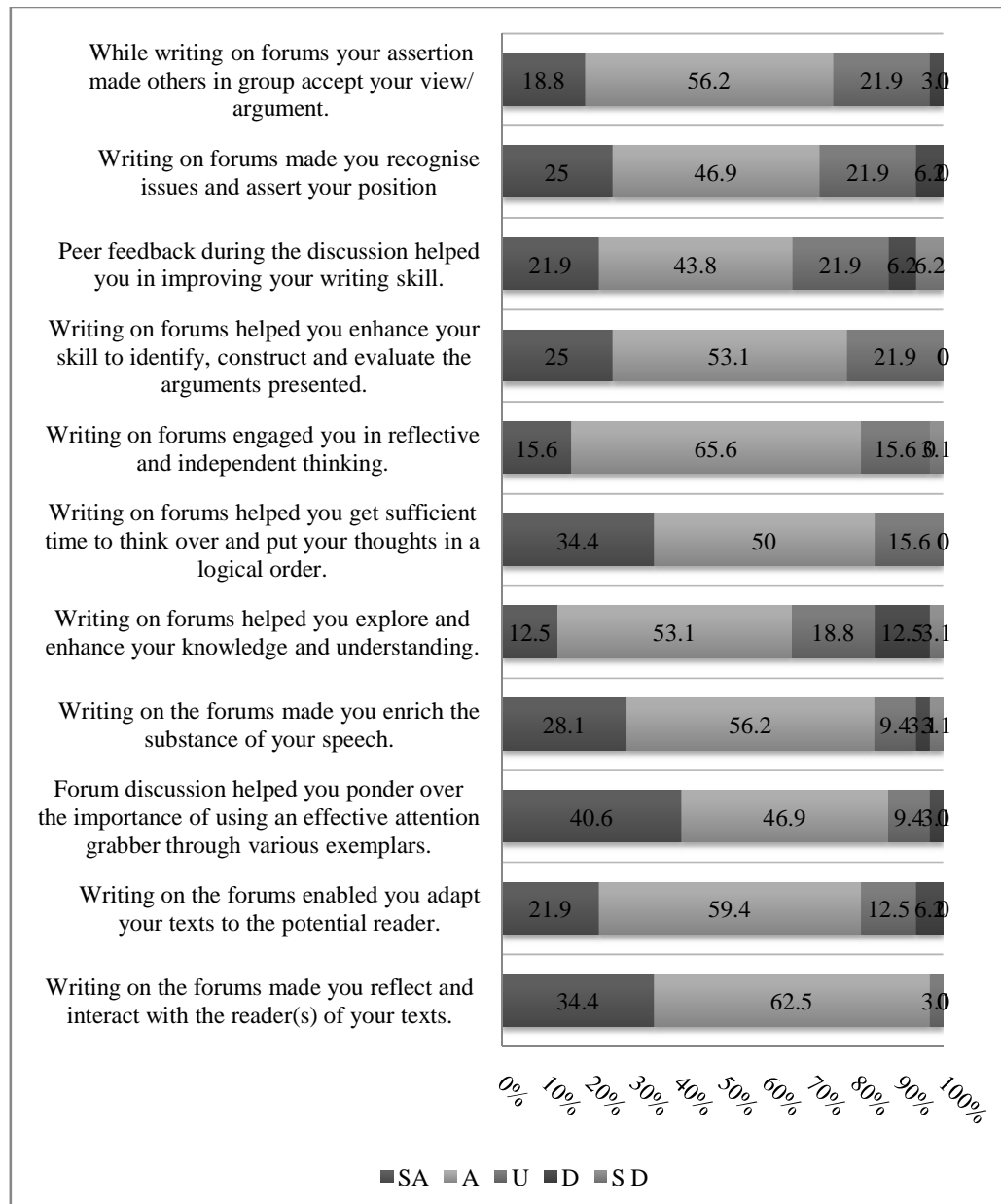


Figure 34. Students’ responses to questions based on HOCs and HOTS

It is notable in the Figure 34 that students agree that online forum discussions helped them to be more attentive to focus on higher order concerns in writing being reflective, interactive, argumentative and explorative. Descriptive statistics results

compiled in Table 30 (Mean values in between 1-2.5) also vindicate the agreeable perception of the students. It reflects that students agreed with the benefits associated with online writing tutorials and admitted that it has helped them enhance their HOCs and HOTS.

Table 30

Descriptive Statistics for questions based on HOCs and HOTS

Questions	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Reflect and interact with readers	32	1.69	.535
Adapt text for readers	32	2.03	.782
Attention grabber	32	1.75	.762
Enrich substance	32	1.97	.897
Explore and enhance knowledge	32	2.41	.979
Sufficient time to think and put thoughts logical order	32	1.81	.693
Reflective and independent thinking	32	2.09	.777
Construct and evaluate arguments	32	1.97	.695
Peer feedback	32	2.31	1.091
Recognise issues and assert	32	2.09	.856
Made others accept your view	32	2.09	.734
Valid N (listwise)	32		

Students were able to adapt their text according to the audience. They were also able to frame catchy attention grabbers. Peer feedback helped them to reflect and then enrich the knowledge and content of the speech.

Figure 35 sums up the percentages of responses to second section of the questionnaire. Five questions were framed for getting students' responses on whether the assignment helped them enhance their understanding and usage of lower order concerns in writing or not. Questions designed in the section dealt with use of connectives, style, diction, sentence and paragraph structure and spellings.

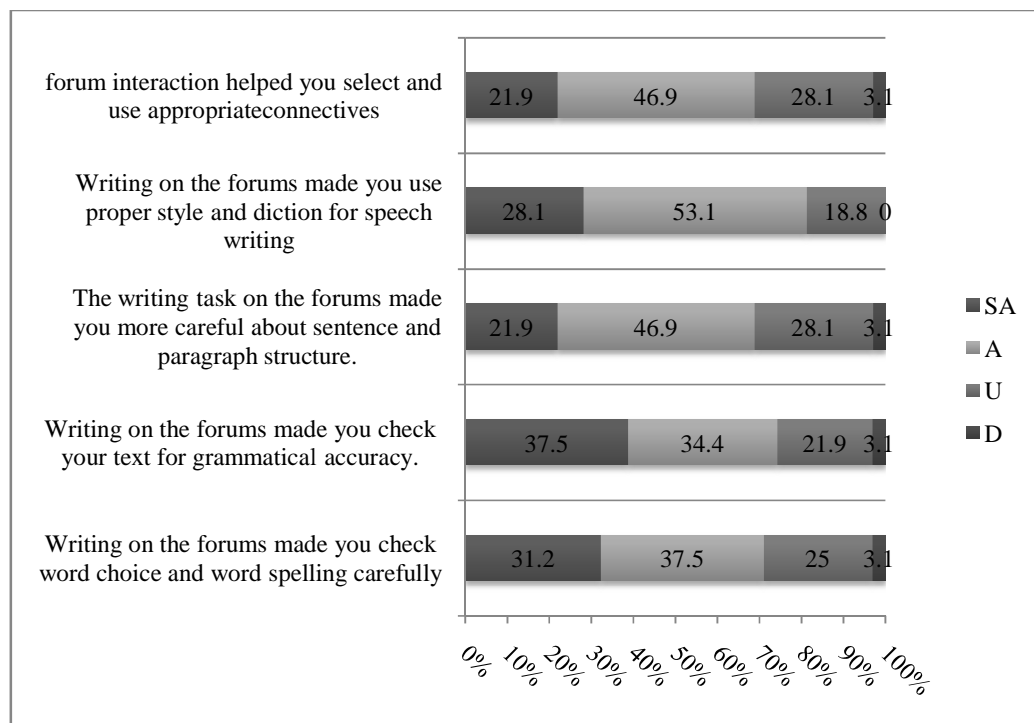


Figure 35. Students' responses to questions based on LOCs

It is notable in the Figure 35 and descriptive statistics results compiled in Table 31 (Mean values in between 1-2.5) that online forum discussions helped students to be more attentive to focus on lower order concerns in writing. They agree that the

writing tutorial helped them to be more careful and accurate while constructing sentences.

Table 31

Descriptive Statistics for questions based on LOCs

Questions	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Connectives	32	2.22	.832
Sentence and para structure	32	2.13	.793
Grammar	32	2.00	1.016
Style	32	1.91	.689
Word choice	32	2.09	.995
Valid N (listwise)	32		

But, there are around 20-25% students (see Figure 36) who have responded ‘uncertain’ for a few items which suggest they didn’t realise whether the tutorial helped them working on their LOCs or not. At the same time there is very little percentage of students who have disagreed with the benefits.

Figure 36 sums up the percentages of responses to third section of the questionnaire. Ten questions were framed for getting students’ responses on whether the writing tutorials over online forums helped to be effective and conducive for practicing writing skills or not. Questions designed in the section dealt with efficacy, motivation, comfort level and quality over the online tutorials.

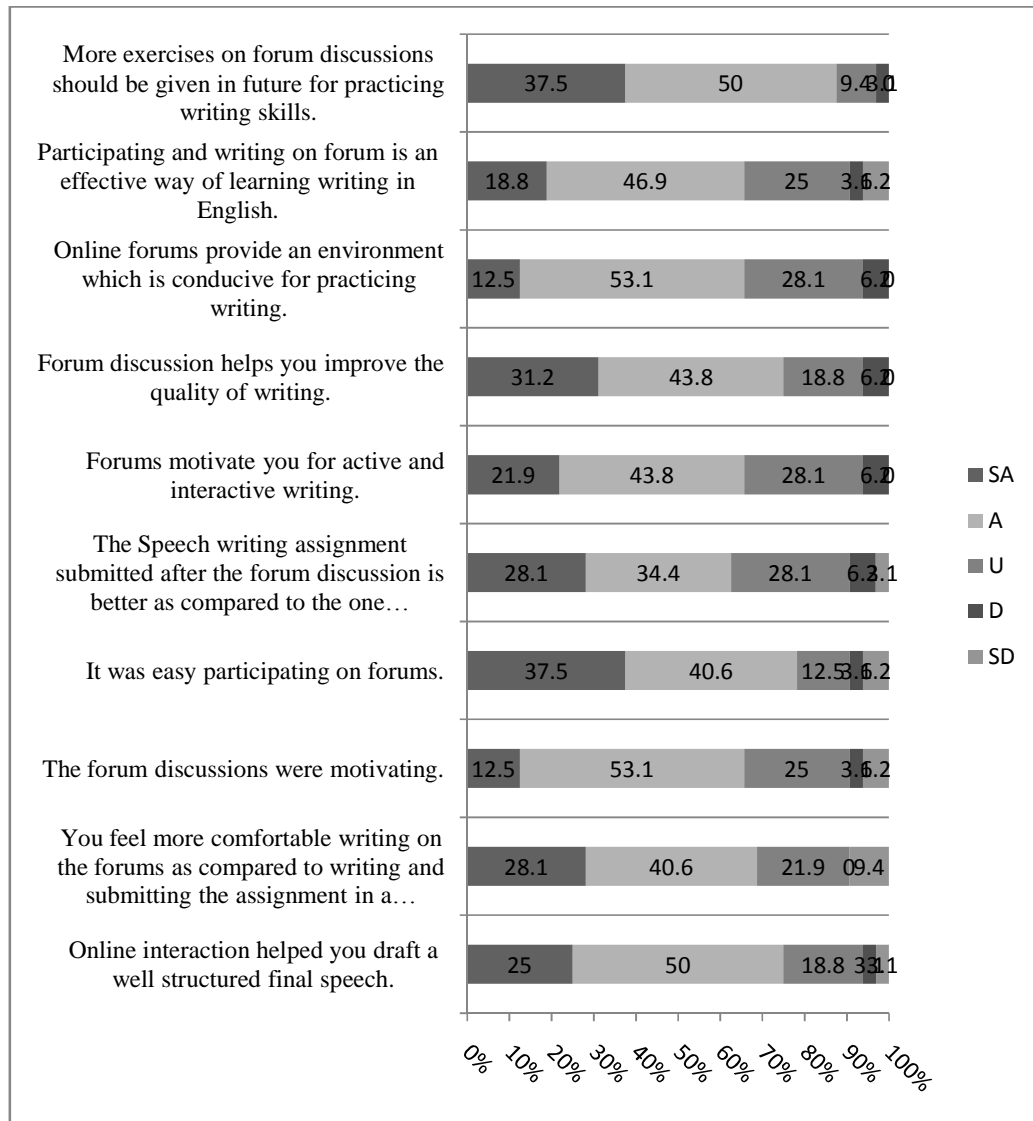


Figure 36. Students' responses to questions based on OLFs

It can be seen in Figure 36 that students agree that online forum discussions were easy, motivating, interactive and effective platform for learning writing skills. They agree to a great extent (37.5% =SA, 50%= A) that more exercises in future should be incorporated with writing courses. Descriptive statistics of the responses (see Table 32) also portray online forum writing tutorial experience in a constructive light. Mean score for the responses on all items come in the range of 1-2.5.

Table 32

Descriptive Statistics for questions based on OLFs

Questions	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Well-structured final speech	32	2.09	.928
More comfortable on forum	32	2.22	1.157
Motivating	32	2.37	.976
Easy to participate	32	2.00	1.107
Better speech after discussion	32	2.22	1.039
Active and interactive learning	32	2.19	.859
Improve quality of writing	32	2.00	.880
Conducive for practicing writing	32	2.28	.772
Effective for learning writing	32	2.31	1.030
More exercises in future	32	1.81	.859
Valid N (listwise)	32		

It can be concluded from the findings of questionnaire analysis on all the three sections – HOCs and HOTS, LOCS and OLFs that students have found online writing tutorials over LMS *Nalanda* motivating, comfortable and effective means to enhance writing skills through peer feedback, content development and critical thinking.

5.4 A holistic view of the whole process and results

The fourth objective of the study was to investigate the viability of using online forums for collaborative learning of writing. And, that has been done through

discussions and inferences drawn from the results of all the methods adopted. A holistic view of the results (see Table 33) gives a distinct account of the study.

Content analysis results have shown that the scaffolding features which are operationalised to the maximum are contingency and flow. These features entail reflection, peer review, revision, idea generation and additional research through critical thinking and content development. It can be inferred that students had focused more on knowledge construction and peer feedback. There is no cue of focusing on LOCs during collaborative writing. Even relational content analysis results have shown that strength of LOCs being discussed while collaborative writing is negligible. Contrary to the fact, pre-test/post-test results show improvement in LOCs along with HOCs. Not only this but students responses on questions related to LOCs show that students agree to get benefited in their lower order concerns in writing through collaborative practice.

Table 33

Experimental group's triangulated result analysis

OCERALL RESULTS				INTERPRETATIONS
Pre-test/post-test Experimental Group	Descriptive	HOCs	46.26 % increase	Improved
		LOCs	42 % increase	Improved
	Inferential	HOCs	Cohen's d= 1.228	Improved by large Magnitude
		LOCs	Cohen's d= 1.042	Improved by large Magnitude
Content Analysis	Conceptual	Van Lier's Features	Contingency and flow	Indicates maximum peer feedback and collaboration
		Stages of writing process	reflection, peer review, revision, idea generation and additional research	Indicates maximum knowledge construction and interdependence for inputs on writing

	Relational	HOCs and HOTS	Critical thinking and content development (initial and additional)	Maximum strength of these two components for all the groups
		LOCs	Negligible discussion	<i>Very less focus on LOCs while doing collaborative writing</i>
Questionnaire	HOCs and HOTS based Qs	M	1.95	Students agree to get benefited
		SD	.991	
	LOCs based Qs	M	2.07	Students agree to get benefited
		SD	.865	
	OLFs based Qs	M	2.02	Students agree that OLFs as good platform for writing tutorials
		SD	.800	

Table 33 clearly shows that throughout the study there had been two major divisions- higher order concerns in writing + higher order thinking skills and lower order concerns in writing. During collaborative writing over online forums on LMS *Nalanda*, the balance is clearly skewed towards HOCs and HOTS but, the results of pre-test/post-test analysis are quite balanced. It implies that students have experienced a holistic improvement in their speech writing abilities through the intervention.

The concluding chapter discusses the findings of all the methods of data analysis and draws implications.

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Chapter 6

Conclusion

The main purpose of this study was to develop a pedagogical scaffolding framework which can be implemented with online writing tutorials of college students with a process based approach to writing. A methodological triangulation was adopted to collect as well as to investigate the research from multiple perspectives. The methods developed in the study were used to determine:

1. Enhancement in writing skills after the online writing tutorial treatment.
2. Operationalisation of features of Scaffolding given by Van Lier while students are engaged in online writing tutorials. Also, to determine frequency, strength and direction of writing process over online forums through conceptual and relational content analysis.
3. Students' overall experience of the intervention.
4. A holistic view of the whole process and results of the methods adopted to analyse the results.

6.1 Enhancement in writing skills after the online writing tutorial treatment

Pre-test and post-test were conducted to see if students show improvement in their speech writing skills after experiencing a week long online writing tutorial over LMS *Nalanda*. Change in the proficiency level in speech writing skills was gauged through descriptive and inferential statistics

6.1.1 Result Discussion and implications of Descriptive Statistics

The descriptive statistics analysed the pre-test and the post-test on mean, standard deviation and percentages and observed students' frequency shift for each of the nine components of speech writing. A comparison of the pre-test/post-test scores of experimental and control groups reflected that the experimental group outperformed

the control group in post-test. The percentage increase in speech writing score of experimental group was higher on the parameters of both HOCs and LOCs.

Experimental group has shown improvement of 42.26% in HOCs and 42% in LOCs (see Table 13, 14 and 15). Whereas, increase of 7.41% is seen for HOCs in control group but it has performed negatively for LOCs by 3.4%. It implies that students got benefited through online writing tutorials and had been able to discuss the nuances of speech writing in detail which helped them gain expertise in structure and content of speech. Component wise change in the level of proficiency for each component of speech writing was done through a graphical observation and analysis of frequency shift over the measurement scale. Each component was evaluated on four point scale- 0= unacceptable, 1= initial level, 2= intermediate level and 3= advanced level. Table 34 provides an overview of shift in proficiency level for each component of speech writing for both experimental and control group.

Table 34

Frequency Shift of Students for Each Component of Speech Writing Skill

	Experimental Group				Control Group			
	(0)	(1)	(2)	(3)	(0)	(1)	(2)	(3)
Attention Grabber	-	+	-	+	N	-	+	N
Speaker's credibility	-	+	+	+	N	+	N	N
Thesis Statement	-	-	+	+	N	+	-	N
Internal preview	-	+	+	+	N	+	-	N
Organisation and content	N	-	+	+	N	-	+	N
Support for ideas	-	-	+	+	N	N	N	N
Style	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
connectives	N	-	+	+	N	N	N	N
conclusion	N	-	+	+	-	-	+	N

Note. - = decrease in students' frequency
 + = increase in students' frequency
 N = no change (stagnant)
 (0) = Unacceptable level (1) = Initial level
 (2) = Intermediate level (3) = Advanced level

Table 34 reflects that shift of students performance sets a trend from unacceptable and initial level to intermediate and advanced level in experimental group except 'style'. More stagnation has been seen in the control group's performance. It implies that control group lacked the dynamism which was experienced by experimental group because of their participation in writing tutorials and which resulted in improvement and positive shift in experimental group students' proficiency in speech writing.

6.1.2 Result discussion and implications of Inferential Statistics

T-test for independent samples was run to determine whether the means of experimental and control group are significantly different. Hypothesis testing results show that average score of students who receive online collaborative writing treatment is significantly greater than the average score of students who did not receive the treatment on the entire score range- composite, HOCs and LOCs score.

For composite score analysis (see Table 19) the effect size ($d= 1.293$), HOCs score analysis (see Table 21) the effect size ($d=1.228$) and LOCs score analysis (see Table 23) the effect size ($d=1.042$) were found to exceed Cohen's (1992) convention for a large effect ($d = .80$). It shows that the magnitude of treatment is large on all the scores. It also implies that students if engaged in online writing tutorials may improve significantly by shifting towards intermediate and advanced levels of proficiency in a particular genre of writing.

6.2 Operationalisation of Scaffolding

The six central features of scaffolding given by Van Lier (as cited in Walqui, 2006) have been observed for their operationalisation through stages of writing, elements of writing and higher order thinking skills. This attempt had been taken to carry forward the study conducted by Barnard and Campbell (2005). The study made an effort in the

direction of taking it up for college students through online interaction and exploring process writing. But this did not give the detailed analysis of writing process corresponding to the stages of writing. And, it was also not substantiated with tangible changes (quantity and quality) in performance of the student. In addition to these, the principles given by Van Lier had been analysed without outlining any schema in which these principles are operationalised. The present research provided a paragogical scaffolding framework which incorporated the six principles along with specifying the types and levels of scaffolds operating at each stage of implementation of scaffolding in online tutorials integrated with classroom teaching of speech writing. And also, it tried to find out the frequency, strength and direction of writing process over online forums through conceptual and relational content analysis. The results obtained through content analysis indicated the following pattern (see Figure 37) at work:

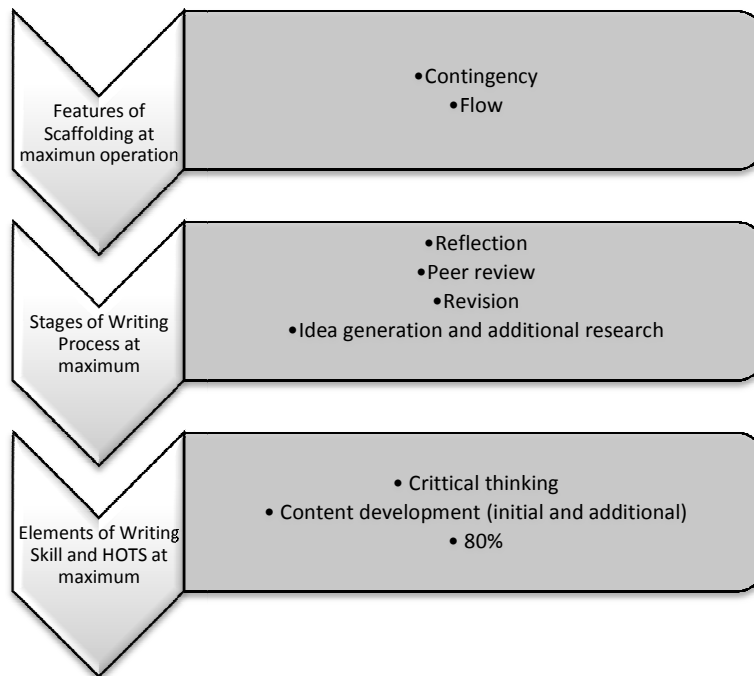


Figure 37. Frequency, strength and direction of scaffolding features and writing process and writing elements

The results of content analysis indicated that the scaffolding features operationalised most during online tutorials were contingency and flow. Maximum consultation is required when students start writing and post initial drafts of their writing with maximum interdependence on each other. As writing is a recursive process so the stages operational during writing process were reflection, peer review, revision, idea generation and additional research. Critical thinking and content development (initial and additional) elements contributed to almost 80% of the online forum writing tutorials posts' content. It also implies that students' collaborative participation in online writing tasks helped them hone their critical thinking and writing skills hand in hand.

The results obtained through content analysis have focused on soft and reciprocal scaffolding. But, this did not undermine the importance of hard scaffolds which are important for setting contextual and continual support. Hard scaffolds provide the structural support through setting writing tasks and work plan. Operation of hard scaffolds cannot be shown statistically as it is set in the form of handouts or instruction sheet (refer appendix C) given by the teacher. Van Lier's features of scaffolding corresponding to hard scaffolds are continuity and contextual support. This also implies that enabling of these features is in the hands of the moderator. These are instrumental and if well worked out, can extract maximum benefit out of soft and reciprocal scaffolds by providing right direction to the students during process of collaborative learning. In the present research, collaborative speech writing tasks acted as context and time of one week for collaborative writing was set to define continuity.

6.3 Students' overall experience of the intervention.

Students' responses on questionnaire clearly implied that they felt benefited after experiencing online writing tutorials. They agreed that collaborative writing helped them work on both HOCs and LOCs of speech writing and HOTS. Their responses for HOCs specific to speech writing and HOTS can be summed up under following major points:

- **Audience Analysis:** audience analysis plays a crucial role in framing a speech. Same speech topic can be developed into different ways depending on the audience. Students agreed (21.9% strongly agree, 59.4% agree, see Figure 34) that sufficient time and discussion enabled them to finally adapt their text according to the expected audience.
- **Content Development:** Students agree (12.5 % strongly agree, 53.1% agree, see Figure 34) that online forums proved to be a great platform for knowledge construction after proper understanding. This adds strength to the content analysis results where content development is a major contributory element during discussions.
- **Attention grabbers:** Importance of attention grabbers is well acknowledged in speech writing. Responses of students to this element of speech writing were also amazing. 40.6% strongly agreed and 46.9% agreed (see Figure 34) that the discussions helped them framing good attention grabbers. They posted variety of attention grabbers and with mutual critique and agreement zeroed down for the most suitable and attractive attention grabbers.
- **Organisation:** Regarding organisation of thoughts also students have shown very positive responses (34.4% strongly agree, 50% agree see Figure 34) and

have agreed that collaborative writing over online forums helped them analyse and put their thoughts in logical order.

- **Critical Thinking:** Students' responses (see Figure 34) clearly imply that writing tutorial on forums engaged them in critical thinking. Moreover, they got enough time to think over and construct apt arguments and give answers to others' queries after proper consideration and reflection.

The other responses on the items framed for the parameters of HOCs and HOTS suggest that online forum discussions helped students improve in speech writing skills being interactive and explorative.

Regarding items framed for LOCs students agreed that the collaborative writing helped them to be cautious in mechanics of writing- using appropriate connectives, proper style and diction, grammar and spellings (see Figure 35).

The last section of the questionnaire dealt with online forums as a platform of learning. Students (SA 37.5% and A 50%, see Figure 36) favoured that more exercises of this nature should be given in future for practicing writing skills as it is a conducive and effective way of learning writing. They were able to draft better speeches afterwards.

Questionnaire results imply that online writing tutorials help students to make advancement in writing proficiency and critical thinking. So, incorporating such tutorials with other writing courses may be helpful to the students to practice writing outside classroom boundaries.

6.4 Implications of the study

The major implications of the study have been underlined as under:

1. The results of the study indicate the need of incorporating online writing tutorials into language classrooms.
2. Positive results of *Scaffolding* incorporated into the study suggest the need of proper consideration of supports and mechanisms which operate during collaborative writing. This understanding of mechanisms at play during collaborative writing helps in apposite planning of writing tasks.
3. The study highlights the importance of peer feedback and implies that environments which facilitate such positive interdependence and collaboration should be created by teachers in writing courses. Such learner- centric approach helps students automate both their thinking and writing process.
4. Writing instructors need to realise the importance of process based approach in teaching writing and also need to put efforts towards making students active knowledge constructors rather than just being passive hoarders of knowledge.
5. Learning management systems if explored and utilised to the optimum can prove to be very useful when regular classroom teaching has time, space and administrative constraints. Thus, the study promotes integrating LMS as supplementary to classroom instruction.
6. Critical thinking can be fostered by engaging students into thoughtful collaborative writing tasks.
7. It also implies that students if engaged in online writing tutorials may improve significantly by attaining intermediate and advanced levels of proficiency in a particular genre of writing such as speech writing, report writing, essay writing etc.

6.5 Directions for future research

There are many limitations of the study which have been acknowledged in the introductory chapter. But those limitations do not belittle the value of the findings of the study as those may stalk some possibilities for future research. The implications of the paragogical scaffolding framework and its implementation outcomes may be extrapolated in other writing courses with larger number of students which may further help in generalising the results of the present study.

In addition, students can be interviewed to get a deeper insight into their experience of participating in online writing tutorials. This would also add strength to the triangulated results. And, may also highlight a concern or issue which remained subsided in the present study.

With the theory, methodology and findings this research attempt has added to existing understanding on scaffolding and its implementation in online writing tutorials (Barnard & Campbell, 2005) and has proposed to extend the present research concerning the paragogical impact on a larger sample size, on other writing courses and with more instruments of data collection and analysis.

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APPENDIX

(A)

Speech Writing Rubric

Name: _____

Topic: _____

Marks →	0	1	2	3	Total
1. Attention grabber	No attention grabber	Ineffective attention grabber	Grabber somewhat attracts the attention and connects to the purpose	Impressive and perfectly connecting attention grabber	
2. Speaker's credibility statement	Fails to establish the credibility/ gives no reason to be a suitable person to speak on the topic.	Gives superficial information.	Gives reasons to some extent for being a suitable person but not able to connect properly with the topic through research or experience.	Gives clear reasons for listening to/ extensive research on the topic /personal experience/ providing crucial information with a desire to bring some change.	
3. Thesis statement	Incorrectly defined or no thesis statement.	Poor or inconsistent statement of purpose	Expresses thesis statement but imprecisely	Creative, insightful and/or skillfully designed thesis statement	
4. Internal preview	Gives wrong or no preview	Unclear preview of the speech	Somewhat clear preview of the speech	Clear preview of the speech	

	Marks →	0	1	2	3	Total
5.	Organi- zation and Develop- ment	Inadequate organization and/or development	Some organization evident, but inconsistent	Partially connects ideas within document and to other sources and ideas;	Effective organization contributes to full development of written presentation. Points are logically developed and flow logically from one idea to the next	
6.	Support for ideas	Inappropriate or no details to support thesis	Includes some, but not adequate and logical support for arguments	Advances argument with some evidence and references	Expertly advances argument with well-researched evidence and documentation	
7.	Style	Ineffective use of language for the writer's purpose and audience.	Limited use of language, including lack of variety in word choice and sentences, may hinder support for the writer's purpose and audience.	Moderate command over language, word choice and sentences, average support to the writer's purpose and audience.	Command over language, including effective and compelling word choice and varied sentence structure, clearly supports the writer's purpose and audience.	
8.	Use of connectives (Transi- tions and signposts)	Not at all able to connect the ideas	Ineffective use of the connectives	Connectives are used to some extent.	Strong connectives are used creating a lasting impression.	

9. Conclusion		Sudden or on conclusion. No clinchers used.	Ineffective conclusion. Not emphasized main points and lacks clarity.	Included some of the main points with little emphasis and some clarity.	Emphasized main points with effective clinchers and summarized speech with clarity.	
10. TOTAL						

(B)

Questionnaire

Dear Student,

You are requested to share your experience of online forum mediated collaborative learning experience of speech writing. There is no right or wrong answer for these questions. But your honest responses will help in determining the efficacy of the assignment. Please respond to all sections of the questionnaire. All the information will be kept confidential.

PART A

Name:

Age:

Course:

Educational qualification:

Sex: M [] F []

Date:

Group: 1 [], 2 [], 3 [], 4 [], 5 [], 6 [], 7 [], 8 [], 9 [], 10 [] (Tick your group)

- 1) Are you a registered student of On- campus Learning Management System (LMS) *Nalanda*?
 - a. Yes []
 - b. No []

- 2) If yes, how have you utilised *Nalanda* along with classroom learning? (**Tick the appropriate box/es**)
 - a. Checking your marks and grades []
 - b. Checking course updates and handouts []
 - c. Submitting assignments []
 - d. Posting queries to the teacher []
 - e. Blogging []

- f. Forum discussions (before the present assignment) []
- g. Any other, specify

3) Have you used forum discussions for collaborative learning purposes before?

- a. Yes [] b. No []

4) If yes, specify the nature of learning task (chosed from the options)

- a. Clarifying doubts
- b. Knowledge building
- c. Writing practice
- d. Project work discussion
- e. Any other, specify.....

PART B

Definitions and some explanations regarding the major elements of the questionnaire have been given below.

Higher Order Concerns (HOCs) in writing: Audience analysis, content, organisation, critical thinking, reflection, argumentative skills, persuasive skills, synthesis.

Lower Order Concerns (LOCs) in writing: Style, Sentence and paragraph structure, word choice, grammatical accuracy, use of connective devices.

Online Discussion Forums: An Internet forum, or message board, is an asynchronous online discussion site where people can hold conversations in the form of posted messages. Within a forum's topic, each new discussion started is called a 'thread', and can be replied by as many people as are participating with an equal level of right.

Please read each statement and indicate your degree of agreement or disagreement by a tick mark (✓) in the appropriate box.

SA = strongly agree; A = agree; U = uncertain; D = disagree; SD = strongly disagree

S.no.	Statement	SA	A	U	D	SD
	HOCs					
1.	Writing on the forums made you reflect and interact with the reader(s) of your texts.					
2.	Writing on the forums enabled you adapt your texts to the potential reader.					
3.	Forum discussion helped you ponder over the importance of using an effective attention grabber through various exemplars.					
4.	Writing on the forums made you enrich the substance of your speech.					
5.	Writing on forums helped you explore and enhance your knowledge and understanding.					
6.	Writing on forums helped you get sufficient time to think over and put your thoughts in a logical order.					
7.	Writing on forums engaged you in reflective and independent thinking.					

8.	Writing on forums helped you enhance your skill to identify, construct and evaluate the arguments presented.					
9.	Peer feedback during the discussion helped you in improving your writing skill.					
10.	Writing on forums made you recognise issues and assert your position					
11.	While writing on forums your assertion made others in group accept your view/ argument.					
LOCs						
12.	Writing on the forums made you check word choice and word spelling carefully					
13.	Writing on the forums made you check your text for grammatical accuracy.					
14.	The writing task on the forums made you more careful about sentence and paragraph structure.					
15.	Writing on the forums made you use proper style and diction for speech writing					
16.	Forum interaction helped you select and use appropriate connectives.					
ONLINE DISCUSSION FORUMS						
17.	Online interaction helped you draft a well structured final speech.					
18.	You feel more comfortable writing on the forums as compared to writing and submitting the assignment in a traditional mode.					
19.	The forum discussions were motivating.					
20.	It was easy participating on forums.					

21.	The Speech writing assignment submitted after the forum discussion is better as compared to the one submitted in the classroom individually.					
22.	Forums motivate you for active and interactive writing.					
23.	Forum discussion helps you improve the quality of writing.					
24.	Online forums provide an environment which is conducive for practicing writing.					
25.	Participating and writing on forum is an effective way of learning writing in English.					
26.	More exercises on forum discussions should be given in future for practicing writing skills.					

(C) Instruction Sheet

You are logged in as SUMAN LUHACH . (Logout)



BITS Pilani
Pilani Campus

Nalanda
THE ON-CAMPUS LEARNING MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

My home ► SII_2013_2014_ENGLC353_GSF245

Turn editing on

Main menu

- News forum
- Forum Discussion assignment- instruction sheet

Settings

- Course administration
 - Turn editing on
 - Edit settings
- Users
- Filters
- Grades
- Backup
- Restore
- Import
- Reset
- Question bank

Switch role to... M

y profile settings

News forum
Forum Discussion assignment- instruction sheet

BIRLA INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY AND SCIENCE

II Semester 2013-14

Effective Public Speaking: BITS C353/ GS F245

Instruction Sheet

for

Speech Writing Assignment on 'Nalanda' Forum Objectives:

I. The main aim of keeping this assignment is to foster the learning of speech writing by making it more learner centred as one can learn better by doing and getting peer feedback. So, it's the group's responsibility to create an effective community of practice.

II. Focus on the nuances of all the elements of speech writing with adequate content.

Methodology:

I. Speech topics for discussion will be posted on LMS 'Nalanda' forum on 18 March 2014.

II. The whole class will be divided into equal groups.

III. You are required to locate your groups and start discussion.

IV. Time limit will be set for the whole discussion. The online discussion can be done from 18 March 2014, 5 p.m. to 24 March 2014 p.m. No posts will be accepted after 24 March, 5 p.m.

V. Minimum no. of posts required from each student will be 10

VI. Your contribution will be evaluated not only in terms of number of posts but also the quality of the content of your posts. So, try to contribute effectively. Participation in the discussion for the sake of participation will not do.

VII. Though you can start a new thread in the discussion but try to comment on the running thread of discussion. That will work upon your cognition and reflection on others'

Search forums

Advanced search ?

Latest news

Add a new topic...

SUMAN LUHACH . 23 Mar, 18:35
24 hrs left!

SUMAN LUHACH . 22 Mar, 13:12
Regarding Forum Discussion Assignment

SUMAN LUHACH . 20 Mar, 13:13
Details of Group Members

SUMAN LUHACH . 18 Mar, 10:00
Instruction Sheet for Online forum discussion assignment

SUMAN LUHACH . 14 Mar, 16:16
Instruction sheet for online forum discussion assignment- in advance

Older topics ...

Upcoming events

There are no upcoming events

Go to calendar...
New event...

Recent activity

Activity since Tuesday, 25 March 2014, 11:37 AM

Full report of recent activity...

Nothing new since your last login

posts will help you enhance your critical thinking as well as written expression.

VIII. Discussion and feedback shall include all the general elements of speech writing - outline, content, organisation (with all the elements of introduction, main body and conclusion) and language usage.

Writing Components Criteria/
Traits

Content relevance, subject knowledge

Organization coherence, fluency, clarity, logical sequencing (introduction, main body and conclusion)

Language use sentence construction, word choice and connectives, grammatical accuracy

Speech Writing Assignment

Speech Writing through online discussion forum

Topic 2

Topic 3

Topic 4

Topic 5

Topic 6

Topic 7

Topic 8

Topic 9

Topic 10

Topic 11

Topic 12

Topic 13

(D) Group III (Sample Transcript)

You are logged in as SUMAN LUHACH . (Logout)



BITS Pilani
Pilani Campus

Nalanda
THE ON-CAMPUS LEARNING MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

My home ► SII_2013_2014_ENGLC353_GSF245 ► Speech Writing Assignment ► Speech Writing through online discussion forum ► topic for discussion

Search forums

Main menu

- News forum
- Forum Discussion
- assignment- instruction sheet

Settings

- Forum administration
 - Edit settings
 - Locally assigned roles
 - Permissions
 - Check permissions
 - Filters
 - Logs
 - Backup
 - Restore
- Subscription mode
- Show/edit current subscribers

Course administration

Switch role to...

My profile settings

Display replies flat, with oldest first ▼

Move this discussion to ... ▼ Move



topic for discussion

by SUMAN LUHACH . - Tuesday, 18 March 2014, 10:38 AM

1. As a teacher trainer, you have asked the teachers to reflect on the importance of grades in the teaching and learning process. Take your stand and draft an effective speech to substantiate.

[Edit](#) | [Delete](#) | [Reply](#)



Re: topic for discussion

by SHUBHAM SHARMA . - Wednesday, 19 March 2014, 7:13 PM

IMPORTANCE OF GRADES IN TEACHING AND LEARNING PROCESS

Hello Group members !

Let us locate ourselves and begin the discussion .

Before we begin designing the content let us try to take our initial stances.

Grades have been a part of the educational experience for decades.

As far as I believe they are important to evaluate the impact of teaching, to communicate with students' parents, and as a source of motivation for the students.

Well that's my current notion. Hope to have a healthy discussion, to substantiate the speech.

Please reply as the time ticks away.

Regards

[Show parent](#) | [Edit](#) | [Split](#) | [Delete](#) | [Reply](#)



Re: topic for discussion 2

by SHUBHAM SHARMA . - Friday, 21 March 2014, 2:11 PM

Hello Friends, The time is running out. And We haen't even started the discussion. Here is a little outline we could start working on. It is far from complete and we can discuss the improvements and work over it. Please Reply .We have only 3 days left

IMPORTANCE OF GRADING IN TEACHING AND LEARNING PROCESS

By Shubham Sharma, Teacher Trainer

Introduction:

I Attention Catching Fact about Grading

II Who am I? (For Developing Speaker's Credibility)

III Why are we here (Statement of Thesis)

IV Preview: We'll talk about the various purposes of Grades. The various challenges related to grading and ways to make grading more efficient and important

Body:

I What purpose do Grades serve?

A As a means of communicating

B As a source of motivation

C As an evaluation

(a) Of the effectiveness of teaching methodology

(b) Of the student work and his potential

II Challenges in Grading

A

B

III Making Grades More Efficient

Conclusion:

I

II

III

[Show parent](#) | [Edit](#) | [Split](#) | [Delete](#) | [Reply](#)



Re: topic for discussion 2

by SHYAM KALITA . - Friday, 21 March 2014, 2:34 PM

Hi Friends,

Our good friend has developed an outline for the discussion. I would like to thank him for organizing our thought process. Jumping to the crux of the discussion, firstly, I would like to share my version of definition of grading. '*Grading is an instrument that helps a third person figure out the intellectual capability of the person who has been graded.*'

Building on the premises of my definition of grading, the current model of grading deployed in Indian education system is serving the following purposes :

- o Create a pre-conceived notion about a person's capability by looking at their grades.
- o Become a tool for eliminating rather than selecting.
- o Help one (teacher) strategise the approach to situation by judging the average grades of his/her class.

Having mentioned these points, there are certain merits and demerits to this whole system. Lets discuss the merits first.

Merits

- o Create competition in the crowd to increase the average level
- o Help one discover his/her true potential.
- o Extract the cream on the bases of the grades.

De-Merits

- o People who cannot take the stress are further pushed towards failure.
- o Generates situations of rivalry than competitiveness.
- o Define ones orientation to just getting the required grades.

I hope I have touched base with most of the points mentioned in the outline. However, there are certain aspects that might have missed my attention as I have always seen only one side of

[Show parent](#) | [Edit](#) | [Split](#) | [Delete](#) | [Reply](#)**Re: topic for discussion 2**by **SHUBHAM SHARMA** . - Friday, 21 March 2014, 11:58 PM

Hello Again Friends !

First of all I'd like to thank Shyam for putting forth some interesting points that we could include in our speeches. One Important point that comes out from Shyam's points is about the rationale behind sorting. Do we really need to sort people ? Are we doing so in order to segregate students by ability and teach them separately?

I don't have the answers, perhaps some group members could help me with this.

Here is something i've been thinking for the conclusion, please suggest what do you think about it :

What i believe is that the best evidence of a teacher's success comes from observing student's behavior rather than from grades.

whether they continue arguing about some topic after the class is over?

whether they come home talking about something they learned today ?

whether they read on their own time ?

Where interest is sparked, skills are usually acquired. Of course, interest is difficult to quantify, but the solution is not to return to more conventional measuring methods; it is to acknowledge the limits of measurement.

It would be great if you could help me with my ideas for the outline and contribute to the discussion.

Regards
Shubham

[Show parent](#) | [Edit](#) | [Split](#) | [Delete](#) | [Reply](#)**Re: topic for discussion 2**by **RISHAV GOPALKA** . - Saturday, 22 March 2014, 4:49 PM

Grading provides students with feedback on their own learning. clarifying for them what they understand, what they don't understand and where they can improve. grading provide feedback to instructors on their student learning, information that can inform future teaching decision.

Grades are used as evaluation of students works, it's important that grades accurately reflects the quality of students.

[Show parent](#) | [Edit](#) | [Split](#) | [Delete](#) | [Reply](#)**Re: topic for discussion 2**by **RISHAV GOPALKA** . - Saturday, 22 March 2014, 4:58 PM

Purpose of grading:-

1.as an evaluation of student work.

2.as means of communicating to students,parent,graduates school, professional school and future employees about a students performance in college and potential for futher success.

3.as a source of motivation to student for for continued learning and improvement.

4. means of organizing a lesson, a unit, or a semester in that grades marks transition in a course and bring closure to it.

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Re: topic for discussion 2

by [RAHUL PRIYADARSHI](#) . - Saturday, 22 March 2014, 9:34 PM

Hello friends.
It's good to see a healthy discussion going on.

While I was going through your posts, I saw the word '**Motivation**' being used several times which forced me to question myself - 'Do I seriously get motivated to do well in a course due to grading?'

What effect does grading has when it comes to motivation and learning outcomes?

Firstly, when it comes to grades, I feel the interest in learning is diminished.

Second,the students would prefer easier tasks- not because they are lazy, but because they are rational.

After all, the point is to get an A, the odds are better if they avoid taking intellectual risks. For example, taking easy courses and managing an A.

Thirdly, I feel students tend to think in a more superficial manner and they forget what they learned more quickly, when grades are involved.

So, when we stress on the impact of grading on '*Motivation and learning outcomes*', we should surely mention both the sides of the coin.

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Re: topic for discussion 2

by [RAHUL PRIYADARSHI](#) . - Saturday, 22 March 2014, 11:17 PM

To put it positively, students who are lucky enough to be in schools or universities where they don't get letter or number grades are more likely to want to continue exploring whatever they're learning, more likely to want to challenge themselves, and more likely to think deeply. The evidence on all of these effects is very clear, and it applies to students of all ages.

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Re: topic for discussion 2

by [RAHUL PRIYADARSHI](#) . - Saturday, 22 March 2014, 11:39 PM

Referring to Shubham's question in which he talked about **Sorting**, I would like to say that whatever use we make of sorting, the process itself is very different and often incompatible with the goal of helping students to learn.

One major concern is whether grades themselves are reliable enough to allow students to be sorted effectively. For instance, how about the variation when the work is evaluated by more than one teacher.

Also, according to me, the performance of students does not improve if they are graded more stringently and conversely, it doesn't lead students to do inferior work if the grading is made easy.

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Re: topic for discussion 2

by [SHUBHAM SHARMA](#) . - Sunday, 23 March 2014, 11:46 AM

Hello Rahul,

If we consider the case other way round, in the cases where we don't have tutorial tests, we tend to skip classes. Also we study mostly when the exams are near. It is we who are at the wrong end. I personally feel that if we love the subject and study it with interest we not only gain great knowldege about it but easily manage good grades as well.

But how shall we develop an interest into the subject? When we read the text or go to the lectures, and why would a lazy person,go to the tutorial at 8 AM in the morning? Only if it carries marks . Thus grades are essential to motivate you initially.

Once you start loving the course, grades become immaterial . This is what i personally believe .

Short comings of this is that student read only for the test and do not develop an interest, this happens more due to the way of teaching than the way of grading.

Thus contrary to popular opinion, the rationale behind grading is very correct.

This is what i think. My opinion may be wrong . I'm open for a healthy discussion.

As far as the minus points about gradings are concerned . Here are few different flaws I could think of for improvement.

1. Amount of time spent by teacher on 1 answer sheet.
2. Grading is often outsourced to assistants
3. It is not subjective (Are essays completely read ? if yes we dont need marks for it , more importantly we need suggestions)
4. Personal impression on teacher counts.

Eg: A friend wrote the same answer and got marks because it was checked by a different TA.

As far as the points expressed regarding my previous doubt about sorting are concerned , I'd like to thank my dear friend for adding new dimensions to my outlook of grading.

Hope to see more discussion. :)

Regards

Shubham

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Re: topic for discussion 2

by [RISHAV GOPALKA](#) . - Sunday, 23 March 2014, 11:53 AM

Grades are not the measure of a person nor are they even the sole of measure of academic accomplishment. They are only one rather imperfect reflection oh how much u have learned in your various courses.

people can learn a education without making high grades, and some students who makes straights as may concentrate so much on getting them that really miss their education . But grades are the one of the concrete and particular things society uses to juges what u are likely to accomplish in the future.

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Re: topic for discussion 2

by [SHREYANSH GANDHI](#) . - Sunday, 23 March 2014, 7:03 PM

Hello Shubham,

I agree with you on the fact that continuous grading forces students to be more consistent than they would be on their own. But at the same time, if their education means strict textbook learning with no room, then the system is turning students into trained "parrots" rather than achieving the true goal, which is tapping students' true potential.

I guess the above would be the shortcomings of grading. However, I feel that its not the grades that should be in question, rather what students are graded upon. I feel that textbook learning is essential to an extent, the rest should be left up to a student's imagination.

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Re: topic for discussion 2

by [SHREYANSH GANDHI](#) . - Sunday, 23 March 2014, 7:53 PM

As for the missing points in the above mentioned outline, I would like to suggest the following:-

II Challenges in grading

- A. grades often don't quantify the true talent/skills/potential present in students.
- B. grades often divide students into groups.

III Making grades more efficient

A. Students must be offered more practical experience than just classroom teaching.

B. More learning through projects, papers and online resources.

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Re: topic for discussion 2

by [SHYAM KALITA](#) . - Sunday, 23 March 2014, 8:49 PM

Hi Guys,

Looks like I missed a lot in between. Building on premises of the above discussion, I would like to share the following views :

Challenges in Grading

The significance of grading is known to the current education system, however when it comes to evaluate, most of the people are at a loss on how it is done. '*Grading till date is an objective measure*'. This in self shows that one is not adding perspective in evaluation. This is only hard-core formulated process is adopted for evaluation.

This system of grading actually leads to a potential loss of true talent.

Making grades more efficient

The current education system is build in a order of elimination. Grades are the operating tool. To make grades more efficient, changes to the approach of teaching and evaluation needs to be change. The following model is what I shall propose :

- o More practical approach in evaluation - Group Discussions, Interviews, Case Studies to be incorporated
- o Grading should not be subject knowledge based. It should be based on subject knowledge implementation
- o Grading should be subjective.

After sharing my points, I would add more points to the conversation upon which we should spend some time.

1. Difficulties faced during grading
2. Link between teaching & grading (Should the teacher grade?)

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Re: topic for discussion 2

by [SHREYANSH GANDHI](#) . - Monday, 24 March 2014, 12:22 AM

The link between a teacher and grading is a good point to be questioned. There always exists a certain level of bias within the teacher or the person who is checking the answer sheets(refer to the before mentioned TA example). Even if the teacher happens to be unbiased, there are some subjects where the answers are truly subjective(like literature) and hence grading in such situations is even more challenging.

Grading truly matters if the students are interested in the subject. The interest can be generated by an influential teacher. Teachers must evolve themselves with an intention of having a crucial impact on the students. I have personally felt the effects of having such a teacher(who shall remain unnamed :P).

On the topic of motivation, grades can sometimes inspire a student to do even better. If you get good grades in the early stages, you might be inclined to give the subject more attention.

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Last 24 hours

by [SHUBHAM SHARMA](#) . - Monday, 24 March 2014, 1:00 AM

Hello friends. As we enter the last few hours of discussion. It is essential to review our work so

far and see what areas need more discussion. Going back to the outline could be a good idea

Introduction:

I Attention Catching Fact about Grading **(STILL REMAINING)**

II (For Developing Speaker's Credibility) (can be done individually)

III Why are we here(Statement of Thesis) **(STILL REMAINING)**

IV Preview: We'll talk about the various purposes of Grades . The various challenges related to grading and ways to make grading more efficient and important

Body:

I What purpose do Grades serve?

A As a means of communicating

B As a source of motivation (Darker side of coin Nicely elaborated in Rahul's comment (could be included in challenges), positive side elaborated in my reply)

C As an evaluation

(a) Of the effectiveness of teaching methodology.

(b) Of the student work and his potential

II Challenges in Grading. **(Points added by Shreyansh and Shyam)**

A. grades often don't quantify the true talent/skills/potential present in students. (Discussed quite elaborately)

B. grades often divide students into groups. :

C '*Grading till date is an objective measure*'. (Why? To be discussed . Subjective grading:: how to do?)

III Making Grades More Efficient

Students must be offered more practical experience than classroom teaching.

B. More learning through projects, papers **(Students may again copy , plagiarism is a ground reality (how to avoid?))** and online resources.

- o More practical approach in evaluation - Group Discussions, Interviews, Case Studies to be incorporated (Very important point)
- o Grading should not be knowledge based. It should be based on implementation (True. Point could be discussed more)
- o Grading should be subjective. **(How? Should be discussed)**

Conclusion: **(Not discussed)**

What i believe is that the best evidence of a teacher's success comes from observing student's behavior rather than from grades.

whether they continue arguing about some topic after the class is over?

whether they come home talking about something they learned today ?

whether they read on their own time ?

Where interest is sparked, skills are usually acquired. Of course, interest is difficult to quantify, but the solution is not to return to more conventional measuring methods; it is to acknowledge the limits of measurement.

Other points to be added **(Suggested by Shyam)::**

1. Difficulties faced during grading (

1. Amount of time spent by teacher on 1 answer sheet.
 2. Grading is often outsourced to assistants
 3. It is not subjective (Are essays completely read ? if yes we dont need marks for it , more importantly we need suggestions)
 4. Personal impression on teacher counts.
- Eg: A friend wrote the same answer and got marks because it was checked by a different TA.)

1. Link between teaching & grading (Should the teacher grade?)(To be discussed)

These are my observations/summary. To err is human and i might have missed a few things Please point the mistakes. And other things we could discuss in the last 24 hours

Regards

Shubham

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Re: topic for discussion 2

by [RAHUL PRIYADARSHI](#) . - Monday, 24 March 2014, 5:44 AM

Hello all.

I would like to appreciate everyone for putting their points firmly and trying to shape a proper outline. Now, after I have gone through your posts, I would like to reply to them one by one.

Firstly, starting from where **Shreyansh** left the argument of the impact of having an influential teacher, I would like to mention our teacher Suman Ma'am whose posts urged me to comment on the forum.

Her posts suggest that we should participate actively in this assignment because it offers us the freedom, flexibility to put forth our opinion helping us to become critical thinkers and leaders.

Now, I am participating more actively in this discussion because of my interest and the scope for creativity, without thinking about the grades. Although I would refrain myself to stress more on this as the topic of discussion isn't the importance of ways of teaching, but the importance of grading.

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Re: topic for discussion 2

by [RAHUL PRIYADARSHI](#) . - Monday, 24 March 2014, 5:54 AM

Also referring to Shreyansh's second point that once we get good grades in a subject, we develop interest in it and start working hard, I would like to ask- What about the people who didn't score well in the first phase of grading evaluation? Aren't they demotivated?

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Re: topic for discussion 2

by [RAHUL PRIYADARSHI](#) . - Monday, 24 March 2014, 5:43 AM

Dear **Shubham**, I was waiting for someone to question this.

There are no such benefits of giving grades which can balance against those three powerful negative consequences which I mentioned in the earlier post - except what you mentioned like developing interest initially by attending tutorial sessions.

I would like to strengthen my point mentioning them crisply -

1. Grades are **subjective** - The differences of grading between teachers is so huge, how can the grades really inform anyone of anything?
2. Grades are often **meaningless** - You can't really explain what a D is without reference to a C and B. As it is often mentioned that grading style of IITs are different from BITS. The meaning of a C grade varies from college to college.

3. Grades are **misguiding** - I don't believe grades motivate students to learn. They motivate students to get grade. This neglects the creativity and the flexible problem solving capabilities of the student.

4. Grades are often **invalid** - If a kid is working at 100% of his ability and is failing, do we grade on his achievement or effort?

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Re: last 24 hours

by [RAHUL PRIYADARSHI](#) . - Monday, 24 March 2014, 5:56 AM

After we have discussed all the pros and cons of the current grading system, I would like to improvise a little and suggest some alternate solutions. Also, I believe that this can be a smart way of concluding the speech taking into account the advantages and disadvantages of the current grading system.

1. **Individual Learning Projects with Rubrics** - Project based or rather say, self-directed learning makes long life learners and trains students how to complete real world research and tasks. Rubrics provide students with a road map for success and teachers with a more objective way to evaluate student progress. Although while designing rubrics, one shouldn't be too vague, else it might lend itself to subjectivity. Focus should be given on the performance, process, and progress, and not solely on the final product.

2. **Observations, Anecdotal Records, and Progress Monitoring** - In most jobs, performance is measured via observations, anecdotal records, and progress monitoring meetings. The teaching profession is no different. Students can be assessed on the basis of creativity, innovation, flexibility, communication, collaboration skills, and more using these tools.

3. **Portfolios** - Portfolios are an excellent way to document, monitor, and assess student growth. They also serve as incredible motivators which enhance student effort. Whether the portfolio is online or in files, parents will love being able to physically see their student's progress.

I guess that taking the risk and trying one of these new methodologies has the power to successfully transform the instructional effectiveness, student learning, and parental involvement.

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Re: last 24 hours

by [RISHAV GOPALKA](#) . - Monday, 24 March 2014, 11:41 AM

Grading process should be made more efficient by:-

1. Creating assignments that have clear goals and criteria for assesment.The better students undstand what you're asking them to do the more likely they will do it.!!

2.Using different grading scales for different assignments. Grading scale includes:

-letter grades pluses and minuses for paper, essays etc.

-100 point numerical scale for xams.

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Re: last 24 hours

by [SHREYANSH GANDHI](#) . - Monday, 24 March 2014, 12:38 PM

Now, there are a few components missing. Here are my contributions to the outline and overall content matter.

The attention grabber:-

We could give examples of Albert Einstein, Thomas Edison and Bill Gates, who achieved greatness without having a consistent education. This could be used to illustrate the fact that grades are not the complete measure of the potential present in students.

Thesis Statement:-

Grades, in their current state, are not good enough to achieve education's true goal, shaping young minds and help them achieve their best. We need to make grades more inclusive of

students' innovation and creativity.

Making grades more efficient:-

If a student is genuinely interested in what is taught, he/she usually doesn't plagiarise. But it is not possible for all students to be interested in everything. I feel that instead of the current rigid course structure, the system should be more dynamic. Each student must have the flexibility to change his/her course structure based upon the student's needs and desires.

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Re: last 24 hours

by [RISHAV GOPALKA](#) . - Monday, 24 March 2014, 12:40 PM

Grading process is an integral part of instruction, as it determines whether or not the goals of education are being met. Grading process affects decisions about grades, placement, advancement, instructional needs, curriculum, and, in some cases, funding. Grading process inspire us to ask these hard questions: "Are we teaching what we think we are teaching?" "Are students learning what they are supposed to be learning?" "Is there a way to teach the subject better, thereby promoting better learning?"

Today's students need to know not only the basic reading and arithmetic skills, but also skills that will allow them to face a world that is continually changing. They must be able to think critically, to analyze, and to make inferences. Changes in the skills base and knowledge our students need require new learning goals; these new learning goals change the relationship between Grading process and instruction. Teachers need to take an active role in making decisions about the purpose of Grading process and the content that is being assessed.

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Re: last 24 hours

by [RISHAV GOPALKA](#) . - Monday, 24 March 2014, 12:42 PM

When Grading process works best, it does the following:

Provides diagnostic feedback

- o What is the student's knowledge base?
- o What is the student's performance base?
- o What are the student's needs?
- o What has to be taught?

Helps educators set standards

- o What performance demonstrates understanding?
- o What performance demonstrates knowledge?
- o What performance demonstrates mastery?

Evaluates progress

- o How is the student doing?
- o What teaching methods or approaches are most effective?
- o What changes or modifications to a lesson are needed to help the student?

Relates to a student's progress

- o What has the student learned?
- o Can the student talk about the new knowledge?
- o Can the student demonstrate and use the new skills in other projects?

Motivates performance

For student self-evaluation:

- o Now that I'm in charge of my learning, how am I doing?
- o Now that I know how I'm doing, how can I do better?
- o What else would I like to learn?

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Re: last 24 hours

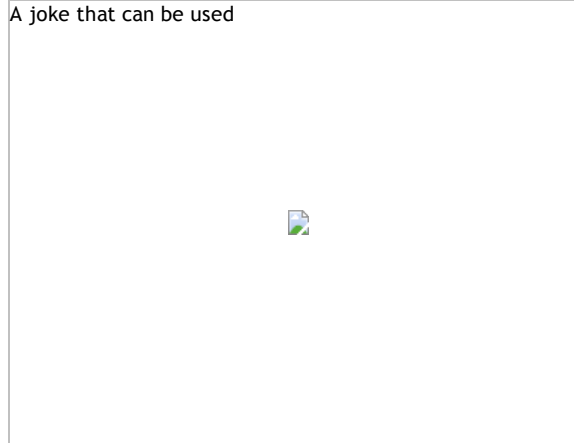
by [SHUBHAM SHARMA](#) . - Monday, 24 March 2014, 2:34 PM

Now that we have discussed enough about the content and it has been quite organized .We could now lastly decide the **kind of tone to be kept**. I mean we as a teacher instructor can not let our sentiments dominate the speech. As it appears from the sentiments expressed by Rahul, Shreyansh,Shyam,Rishav, me and others current system is heavily flawed but we have to be constructive about it right?

Also we need to discuss the **connectives** for going from one part to other. I guess for the negative aspects we could use connectives like but , on the contrary etc. While talking about the positives we could use as well as, also etc. It would be great if someone could tell the connectivis while going towards conclusion..

We need to prevent the speech from getting boring . We could use a joke like the one below. If you people have any other ideas to prevent the speech from getting boring. Please add.

A joke that can be used



Fluency needs to be established within the various kind of ideas we'll be talking about . This can be done by including little stories about how children start cheating because of grades etc.

Any other ideas are most welcome .

Regards
Shubham

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Re: last 24 hours

by [SHAKIR MOHAMMAD HASNAIN](#) . - Monday, 24 March 2014, 3:47 PM

Hello friends,

Sorry for being too late in the discussion. Almost all the things have been covered by my dear friends, nothing much has been left for me to say but still few of the points which I would like to bring to the table would be:

Grades: Demotivating people who are not doing well? This is a chip having two sides attached to it. Well, its actually difficult to say is it really demotivating the people who are not able to do well? In my view the competitiveness which everyone was talking about earlier was only in the case if you are in the competition but what if that you have missed the train in the beginning only? There is no motivation for the student to wrap up the left outs and still catch the train, it becomes the other way round for him. the last thought of losing the grade and still carrying on is the thought which never motivates him rather he takes it on an easier go.

Hence, my point here is if you people say motivating is the cause for keeping grades, then it is not true in every case. It is subject to your initial stand.

Regards,

Mohammad Shakir.

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Re: last 24 hours

by [SHREYANSH GANDHI](#) . - Monday, 24 March 2014, 3:26 PM

Adding to the points discussed above, student-teacher relationships are critical to true learning.

Many teachers don't show any interest in connecting with the students. Hence, certain measures to increase their interaction must also be taken.

To make the grading process achieve its best, its important to redefine the significance and meaning of grades. Grades must measure a student's overall tenacity to learn, the aptitude required to learn, and the extent to which a student is performing against what he actually can.

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Re: last 24 hours

by [SHAKIR MOHAMMAD HASNAIN](#) . - Monday, 24 March 2014, 3:32 PM

Hello,

As Shubham said earlier we can start it either a joke or have a joke in the middle so that the speech does not become boring and also does not affect the fluency, one suggestion could be:

A conversation between two students

A: Have you prepared for the test tomorrow?

B: No, what can happen at the most? I will get a 'D', that is OK.

Here we can show that the students are not motivated if they have missed on it in the beginning and it acts out in a negative sense for the people who are on a lower side.

Regards,
Mohammad Shakir.

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Re: last 24 hours

by [SHAKIR MOHAMMAD HASNAIN](#) . - Monday, 24 March 2014, 3:37 PM

Hello,

Also, we have discussed a lot upon the beginning and the body, what we need to do is concentrate on the conclusion part and suggest the remedies so that the grading system as a whole can be beneficial for all the students and not a particular sector.

So, people please suggest a few remedies that can be of a great help for the teachers and the students and we can put it in a motivating manner for the people.

One of the solutions can be like the student still has a great chance of scoring a good grade even if he is not performing well at a particular instance but if he is showing a great will to do well in the future and putting efforts for the same, some type of selective grading can also be done.

What are your views people for the conclusion?

Regards,
Mohammad Shakir.

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Re: last 24 hours

by [SHAKIR MOHAMMAD HASNAIN](#) . - Monday, 24 March 2014, 3:45 PM

Hello,

As Shreyansh suggested in the conversation, we can start the speech with an attention grabber like giving the examples of great people like Albert Einstein and moreover giving the lights of people who were college drop outs like Mark Zuckerberg, Steve Jobs and Bill gates who did not think about grades but of the greater good and did well even when they dropped out of the college.

So grades were not the measure of the success for them but they decided their own destiny and rewrote their fate.

Regards,
Mohammad Shakir.

**Re: last 24 hours***by SHAKIR MOHAMMAD HASNAIN . - Monday, 24 March 2014, 3:55 PM*

Hello people,

Since we are running out of time and that I joined the discussion late, I appeal to everyone to participate in the final hour and lets complete the discussion and give it the final touch it requires.

Regards,
Mohammad Shakir.

**More Merits***by SHREYANSH GANDHI . - Monday, 24 March 2014, 4:09 PM*

I think that since the speech right now contains more of negative criticism of grades, we must add some more merits of the current grading system.

- o Satisfactory alternative for the time being
- o allows judging of students by an external party to an extent on a purely academic level.

Please write some of the advantages that anyone might've experienced from the current grading system.

**Re: More Merits***by SHAKIR MOHAMMAD HASNAIN . - Monday, 24 March 2014, 4:21 PM*

Hello,

That is true Shreyansh, some of the advantages may be as follows:

- o competitive spirit
- o a check on your understanding
- o a universal method to judge someone's academic caliber
- o a motivation for someone to perform well
- o a platform for recognition

These are some of the advantages, which can be used for the content.

**Final outline***by RAHUL PRIYADARSHI . - Monday, 24 March 2014, 6:54 PM*

Our discussion has covered both the merits and demerits of the grading system. Let's draft the final outline of the speech now -

Introduction:**I History of Grading System -**

It's necessity was realized and it evolved as a major part of our education system.

II Attention Catching Fact about Grading

Examples of Albert Einstein, Thomas Edison, Abraham Lincoln and Bill Gates, who achieved greatness with only few years of formal education. This illustrates the fact that grades are not a complete measure of the potential present in students.

III For Developing Speaker's Credibility (can be done individually)**IV Statement of Thesis**

Grades, in their current state, are not good enough to achieve education's true goal, shaping young minds and help them achieve their best. We need to make grades more inclusive of

students' innovation and creativity.

V Preview: We'll talk about the various purposes of Grades . The various challenges related to grading and ways to make grading more efficient and important.

Body:

I What purpose do Grades serve?

- i) Creates a pre-conceived notion about a person's capability by looking at their grades.
- ii) Becomes a tool for eliminating rather than selecting.
- iii) Helps one(teacher) strategise the approach to situation by judging the average grades of his/her class.

II. Advantages of Grading system-

- i) As a means of communicating
- ii) As a source of motivation
- iii) As an evaluation
 - (a) Of the effectiveness of teaching methodology.
 - (b) Of the student work and his potential

III Disadvantages of the Grading system

- i) When it comes to grades, I feel the interest in learning is diminished.
- ii) The students would prefer easier tasks- not because they are lazy, but because they are rational. After all, the point is to get an A, the odds are better if they avoid taking intellectual risks. For example, taking easy courses and managing an A.
- iii) I feel students tend to think in a more superficial manner and they forget what they learned more quickly, when grades are involved.

IV Challenges in Grading system

- i) Grades are **subjective** - The differences of grading between teachers is so huge, how can the grades really inform anyone of anything?
- ii) Grades are often **meaningless** - You can't really explain what a D is without reference to a C and B. As it is often mentioned that grading style of IIT's are different from BITS. The meaning of a C grade varies from college to college.
- iii) Grades are **misguiding** - I don't believe grades motivate students to learn. They motivate students to get grade. This neglects the creativity and the flexible problem solving capabilities of the student.
- iv) Grades are often **invalid** - If a kid is working at 100% of his ability and is failing, do we grade on his achievement or effort?

V Improvements to the current grading system

- i) **Individual Learning Projects with Rubrics** - Project based or rather say, self-directed learning makes long life learners and trains students how to complete real world research and tasks.
- ii) **Observations, Anecdotal Records, and Progress Monitoring** - In most jobs, performance is measured via observations, anecdotal records, and progress monitoring meetings. The teaching profession is no different. Students can be assessed on the basis of creativity, innovation, flexibility, communication, collaboration skills, and more using these tools.
- iii) **Portfolios** - Portfolios are an excellent way to document, monitor, and assess student growth. They also serve as incredible motivators which enhance student effort. Whether the portfolio is online or in files, parents will love being able to physically see their student's progress.

Conclusion

We can't totally deny the advantages and the disadvantages of the grading system. The solution is to extract the good and eliminate the bad.

I believe that taking the risk and trying one of the new methodologies mentioned in the alternate ways of grading system, has the power to successfully transform the instructional effectiveness, student learning, and parental involvement. Furthermore, it will gauge the true potential of a student on the broad spectrum of creativity and innovation. It will bring in the element of learning more over getting marks, thus fulfilling the true goal of education.

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PUBLICATIONS

(A) Research Papers in Journals

1. Lata, Pushp, and Suman Luhach. "An Exploratory Investigation Of Online Forum Mediated Collaborative Learning Of Speech Writing: A Case Study." *i-Manager's Journal on English Language Teaching* 4.1 (2014): 18.
2. Lata, Pushp, Umesh Dhayani, and Suman Luhach. "Inculcating Critical Thinking among Engineering Graduates through Public Speaking Course." *ELT Research Journal* 2.4 (2014): 156-166.

(B) Research Papers in Conference Proceedings

1. Lata, Pushp and Suman Luhach. "Online Collaborative Language learning: Opportunities and Challenges". Published in Proceedings of *International Conference on Empowering the English Language Classroom*, MNIT Jaipur. New Delhi: Excellent Publishing House, 2013. 105-117.
2. Lata, Pushp and Suman Luhach. "Integrating Web 2.0 Tools for Enhancing Collaborative Writing Skills: Challenges and Prospects". Published in *Interfacing ELT with Culture and Technology: Directions for New Classrooms*, edited International Conference Proceedings, 3rd ELT@I International Conference, BITS, Pilani. New Delhi: Jain Brothers, 2012. 83-90.

(C) Papers Presented in Conferences

1. “An Insight into Practice, Outcomes and Challenges of a shift from Pedagogy to Paragogy: A BITS Pilani case study”. Enabling Pedagogies in Higher Education: Project E-QUAL Academic Conference, Shiv Nadar University, Greater Noida, 26-27 March 2015.
2. “Scaffolding Online Writing Tutorials Integrated with Classroom Teaching in Tertiary and Higher Education: A Conceptual Framework”. International Conference on The Impact of Social Changes on English Language and Literature: An Overview of Past 100 Years, Lingaya’s University, Faridabad, 7-8 February, 2014.
3. “Online Collaborative Language learning: Opportunities and Challenges”. International Conference Empowering the English Language Classroom, MNIT Jaipur, 19-20 January, 2013.
4. “Integrating Web 2.0 Tools for Enhancing Collaborative Writing Skills: Challenges and Prospects”. BITS Pilani, 3rd ELTAI International Conference Interfacing Language, Culture and Technology, Pilani, 8-9 October, 2012.

(D) Workshops and Conferences

1. *Line by Line: The Habits and Practices of Writing*, SNU English Annual Conference, Shiv Nadar University, Greater Noida, 19-20 February, 2016.
2. *Teacher Training Workshop on Writing Pedagogy*, Shiv Nadar University, Greater Noida, 18 February, 2016.
3. *National Workshop on Research Methodology*, BIMTECH, Greater Noida, 31 May- 2 June, 2013.

Brief Biography of the Candidate

Ms. Suman Luhach, is a Research Scholar in the Department of Humanities and Social Sciences at BITS, Pilani. She has been associated with this Department since August, 2011. She did her M. Phil. (English Literature) and Post Graduation (English Literature) from Maharaja Ganga Singh University, Bikaner in year 2009 and 2007 respectively. She was second rank holder at university level during post graduation for which she was awarded **Prof. SBL Rawat Memorial Trust Award**. She has also done a professional development course from RELO, U.S Embassy, New Delhi on *Exploring Web 2.0: Tools for classroom Teaching and Professional Development* for which she got a certificate of **Outstanding Achievement**. She has also been awarded Institute Fellowship of Birla Institute of Technology and Science (BITS), Pilani during the academic years 2011- 2014 for pursuing Ph.D.

Her teaching and researching areas include Technical Communication, Information and communications Technology (ICT) and English Language Teaching (ELT), Online Collaborative Language Learning, Computer assisted Language Learning (CALL), and Contemporary Literary Theories.

Brief Biography of the Supervisor

Prof. Pushp Lata has been associated with Department of Humanities and Languages, Birla Institute of Technology and Science, Pilani since 1994. She did her **P.G.D.T.E. from CIEFL, Hyderabad** and **Ph.D. from University of Rajasthan, Jaipur, India**. In her academic career spanning over 21 years she has held various teaching and administrative positions at BITS, Pilani. She is an accomplished academic and has completed one UGC Major Research Project. Currently she is guiding 3 PhD students. She has acted as the Head, Department of Languages at BITS, Pilani from August 2010 to September 2012. She has delivered talks and lectures at several workshops on Effective Communication, Managerial Communication, Soft Skills and Group Discussions and Job Interviews. She organized an International Conference on *Interfacing Language, Culture and Technology* on 8-9 October 2012. She has acted as subject Expert on various selection committees. She has been the editor of BITSCAN, a semester magazine from 2008 to 2014. She has got 41 articles published in various anthologies and attended various national and international conferences and workshops. She has authored nine books. Some of the titles are *Communication Skills* and *English Language and Communication Skills* published by Oxford University Press, New Delhi, *Communicate or Collapse, Communicate to Conquer* published by PHI, *Soft Skills: Cornerstone for Professional Success, Interfacing ELT with Culture and Technology* and *Integrating Web 2.0 Technology and Culture in ELT* by Jain Brothers, Delhi.