Indian students' understanding of good writing influenced by their past and present experiences

by

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AN ABSTRACT OF A DISSERTATION

submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree

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Abstract

English has achieved the status of a global language and the knowledge of its usage is an absolute essential for success in any field. English is the official language in more than seventy countries, including India. Over 100 languages and about 1500 dialects are spoken in India and English is the official and academic language, along with Hindi and other vernacular languages. Due to the multilingual and multicultural setting, Indian English is constantly changing as there is a continual influence between regional dialects, thus creating a complexity within the varieties of English in the field of World Englishes (Krishnaswamy & Krishnaswamy, 2017). A wide variety of the Indian English language, as well as different levels of proficiency are seen throughout the country. Knowledge of the English language has opened new avenues for the Indian students, encouraging them to pursue higher studies in native English-speaking countries like UK and the U.S. Undergraduate Indian students in the U.S. are a population quite under-represented in research and further studies are required to understand their English learning and writing experiences as second language learners of English in the English native-speaking academic environment. This qualitative multiple case study was conducted to explore what undergraduate Indian students in the U.S. understood by good writing and in what ways have their past and present experiences influenced their understanding of good writing. This study was guided by Krashen's (1982) definition of second language acquisition and second language learning, Kachru's (1992) discussion of World Englishes through the Three Concentric Circles model and Lillis's (2013) sociolinguistic study of English writing. This study focused on the undergraduate Indian students' past experiences of learning and acquiring English as a second language; their past experiences of learning English writing in multilingual and multicultural country like India; and their present experiences of writing in English as a second language in

English native-speaking academic setting. Data was collected through interviews, and focus group discussion. Reflective memos by the researcher were used to triangulate and enhance the research experience and examine the findings. This study accepted and valued each participants' different perspectives on good writing, shaped by their past and present diverse cultural, socio-economic, and linguistic experiences. Findings revealed that the participants' understanding of good writing was influenced by their socio-economic background, academic background, linguistic background, place of growing up, gender, self-perception, attitude towards English writing and the usage of the English language. Findings also revealed that their experiences of learning and/or acquiring English as a second language, and their experiences of writing in the intensive English program and the college composition class at the university also shaped their understanding of good writing.

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Dedication

Thakur, tomake janai amar ashesh pronaam

This dissertation is dedicated to my gentle and selfless husband Subhojit, for his constant support, encouragement and love. And to my beautiful, kind sister Munu, without whom this journey would have been incomplete.

Chapter 1 - Introduction

Each year, students from all over the world travel to the United States of America for higher studies. India is recorded as the country with second largest number of students on U.S. campuses. Significant amount of research is available on the academic and personal experiences of international students in the U.S. (Hyland & Milton, 1997; Becket, 2005; Downs & Wardle, 2007; Hinkel, 2009; Coolidge-Toker, 2012; Kwadzo, 2014). Researchers have studied the international students' use of the English language academically in the U.S. classrooms (Matsuda, 2006; Lovejoy, Fox & Wills, 2009; Nero, 2010) and their interactions with the native speakers of the language as part of the ESL/EFL discourse (Santos, Atkinson, Erickson, Matsuda, & Silva, 2000; Matsuda & Cox, 2004, Li, 2009). However, limited research and data exists about undergraduate Indian students' academic experiences, especially their experiences of writing in English as a second language in an American classroom. This research examines how undergraduate Indian students perceive good writing in English.

This introductory chapter is structured as follows: (1) overview of the issues, (2) statement of the problem, (3) purpose of the study, (4) significance of the study, (5) research question, (6) brief description of methodology, (7) limitations of the study, (8) definition of terms, and (9) chapter summary.

Overview of the Issues

English has achieved the status of a global language and the knowledge of its usage is an absolute essential for success in any field. Multinational organizations thriving in today's economy seek professionals and scholars from across the globe to make progress in science, medicine, technology, media, business, arts and architecture.

The chosen language for communication and documentation in these fields is English, making it a dominant, powerful, and most sought-after language for both the native and the non-native speakers. English is the official language in more than seventy countries, including India (Crystal, 2002). Over 100 languages and about 1500 dialects are spoken in India and English is one of the official and academic language along with Hindi (Mallikarjun, 2019). Due to the abundant usage of English in the society, Indian students are naturally inclined towards learning and speaking the language.

Indian students' learning and acquisition of English as a second language along with the first language acquisition of their mother-tongue can be studied through Krashen's (1982) theory of First Language Acquisition and Second Language Learning. The language learning process through instructions and grammatical rules is called Second Language Learning while the process of language development in natural, communicative situations through exposure is First Language Acquisition (Krashen, 1982). Since India is a multilingual country, children acquire their mother-tongue and simultaneously learn English and several other vernacular languages, while growing up (Annamalai, 2001; Saraf, 2014). However, students in India from a very young age, sometimes 'acquire' the knowledge of the English language, like they would acquire their mother-tongue or first language without making a conscious effort due to extensive exposure to the language in school, at home and in the society, especially at urban settings (Narang, Priya & Chaudhry, 2016). Such an opportunity to acquire proficiency in English as a second language in India is largely based on social aspects like class, age, gender, place, education, situation, and self-perception (Bolton, 2009; Chaudhary, 2013; Singh & Kumar, 2014; Narang, Priya & Chaudhry, 2016). Sociolinguists have inferred

that language proficiency may differ in one's speaking and writing abilities depending on their social, cultural and economic contexts (Coulmas, 2003; Lantolf, 2011; Lillis, 2013; Lillis & Curry, 2016). According to Lillis (2013), ideologies around 'good writing' and 'standard' language and literary practices are socially constructed through formal schooling and the positioning of the language in the society.

The prolonged and abundant usage of English as a second language in a multilingual country like India has resulted in frequent code-switching between vernacular languages, using of loan words, hybridization and other aspects of multilingualism, resulting in a new variety of English which Kachru (1982) calls the Indian English. Kachru (1982) defines English in India as a non-native variety of the language which has its significance within the Indian socio-cultural contexts. The legitimacy of Indian English and its comparison to the standard English (British English and American English) has been a popular topic amongst linguistics in the past several decades since globalization (Agnihotri, 2001; Erling, 2005; Canagarajah, 2006; Kachru, 2009; Bolton, Graddol, & Meierkord, 2011; Bolton, 2012; Bernaisch & Koch, 2016). Knowledge of the English language has opened new avenues for the Indian students, encouraging them to pursue higher studies in native English-speaking countries like UK and the U.S. According to the *2019 Open Doors Report on International Educational Exchange*, international students make up 5.5 percent of the total U.S. higher education population and in 2018, international students contributed $44.7 billion to the U.S. economy. China is the largest source of international students in the United States, followed by India and South Korea. According to the data provided by *Open Doors*

Report on International Educational Exchange (2019), 202,014 Indian students attended various universities for higher education in the U.S. in 2018.

American universities require all incoming international students to prove a certain level of English language proficiency through standardized tests like TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language) or IELTS (International English Language Testing System). Students who have low scores in these standardized tests are often advised to enroll in their university's intensive English program to strengthen their English language speaking, reading, and writing skills before they could attend university classes for their field of study (Ferris, 2016). Once admitted as full time students, all undergraduate students are required to take college composition classes in the first year and are expected to write research papers for their other college classes. Their English writing skill is one of the critical aspects essential for their success at the university (Gautam, Lowery, Mays, & Durrant, 2016).

Statement of the Problem

India is a multilingual country and English is one of the official languages. The language acquisition of English as a second language helps Indian students pursue better academic and career opportunities in countries like the U.S., where English is the first language. The variety of English that is used in India is structurally similar and yet culturally and linguistically different from the standard version of English used in the U.S. The position of Indian English as an academic variety has not been studied in context to the British and American Standard English. Since English speaking and writing proficiencies are essential for success in higher studies, especially in the U.S., the Indian students' are required to adapt to the usage of the standard American English with

their Indian English speaking and writing skills. Undergraduate Indian students in the U.S. are a population quite under-represented in research and further studies are required to understand their English learning and writing experiences in a native-speaking academic environment. For the purpose of pedagogical research, it is important to understand Indian students' experiences of learning writing in a native-speaking classroom setting, and how their sociolinguistic background influence their understanding of good writing in English.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to learn and understand how the past and present experiences of Indian undergraduate students shape their understanding of good academic writing in English. This study explored how the second language acquisition of English amongst Indian students and their social, cultural and economic background formed a variation in their English language writing practice and proficiency. Linguistic research indicates that with the advent of globalization, the world has witnessed several varieties of English, with their distinct functionalities and linguistic levels (Kachru, 2008; Berns, 2009; Bolton, 2009; Bolton, Graddol & Meierkord, 2011; Bernaisch & Koch, 2016). This study focused on the Indian variety of English and the Indian students' experiences of writing in an American classroom. This research also explored how the Indian students' opinion of good writing was formed through their past experiences of English language learning and acquisition, their sociolinguistic experiences in India, their knowledge of writing in Indian English and their present experiences of learning writing in American English.

Significance of the Study

This research study explored the undergraduate Indian students' sociolinguistic experiences and how they influenced their understanding of good writing in English. Current pool of literature focuses on international students in America and their experiences of learning English as a second language. This study focused on the factors that influence the undergraduate Indian students' understanding of academic writing, and how their sociolinguistic diversity affects their learning and practice of writing in English. This study contributes to the academic conversation regarding World Englishes by highlighting the experiences of L2 writers of English in classroom with L1 evaluators. This study also attempts to continue the much-needed academic dialogue between the fields of Second Language Acquisition and World Englishes.

Research Question

This study was guided by the research question: in what ways have past and present experiences of undergraduate Indian students influenced their understanding of good writing?

Brief Description of Methodology

This qualitative multiple case study was based on the experiences of undergraduate Indian students at a mid-western public university. The desired population was undergraduate students from India who had travelled to the U.S. for higher studies. All the Indian students who had travelled to this mid-western university for their undergraduate degree were contacted through an email. Students who responded to the email with interest were invited for a face-to-face personal interview and a focus group discussion. The interview questions were focused on the participant's personal socio-

economic background, their education and English literacy in India, their own journey of learning how to write in English, their experiences in an American English classroom, and their strengths and weaknesses in the writing process. The focus group questions were centered towards the writing instructions each participant received in India and in the U.S, their views on different levels of English proficiency in India, their perception of the function of the English language in a multilingual country like India, their concept of English being a global language and the position of Indian students in the global context, their experiences of writing in Indian English in an American classroom and their understanding of good academic writing. Four students were interviewed and seven students (three of whom participated in the personal interview) participated in the focus group discussion. The interviews and the focus group discussion were audio taped, transcribed, coded and analyzed. Memos written by the researcher were used for data triangulation and data analysis purposes. Further detailed discussion of this process is available in chapter 3.

Limitations of the Study

There were various limitations to this study, which are as follows:

1. There were a small number of students involved in the research. The sample was limited to those who were interested to participate in the study. Data collection and analysis was not intended for generalization, but for understanding individual experiences and aiding future research.

2. Data was dependent on the participants' responses, their memory, their truthfulness, and perceptions, which may or may not have been reflective of their overall experiences.

3. Researcher's presence during data collection may have influenced participants' responses.

4. The findings were based on qualitative interviews and focus group discussion. Scheduling of the interviews may have interfered with the students' normal class attendance and/or work obligations, which could have limited the time students were willing to devote to this study.

5. Not all undergraduate Indian students at an American university were included in this study. Studying a larger population may have presented different findings and insights.

Definition of terms

EC: Expanding Circle. Group of countries like China and Russia where English is only used for international communication and bureaucracy, and has no social or institutional role. (Kachru, 1992).

EFL: English as a Foreign Language. In countries like China and Russia, where English has no political, administrative and social presence and is not used for communicative purposes on daily basis, English is used as a foreign language only for international commerce and bureaucracy (Nayar, 1997).

ELF: English as Lingua Franca. Lingua franca is a contact language used among people who do not speak the same first language, and is generally the second or third language of the speakers (Jenkins, 2012).

ESL: English as a Second Language. In countries like India and Singapore, where the main language used is a local vernacular language, English is taught as the second language to be used as an official language or as an additional main language (Leki, 1995). In the Indian context, English is seen as the language of prestige and a tool for advancement in education and career; and is used as an additional language to Hindi, for official, academic, professional and business purposes (Nayar, 1997).

IC: Inner Circle. Group of countries like the United Kingdom and the United States where English is the mother-tongue and the native language; and their English is considered as the standard form of the language by countries who are non-native speakers of English (Kachru, 1992).

IE: Indian English. The standard variety of English that is spoken and written in India

(Kachru, 1992).

L1: First Language. The mother-tongue or native language, which is acquired and learned from parents, and later in school, while growing up (Hopper, 1997).

L2: Second Language. The language which is learned in school during the early years of growing up and is used as an alternate to the mother-tongue (Hopper, 1997).

L2W: Second Language Writing. Writing done in a language other than the writer's native language(s)/mother-tongue(s) (Silva, 2016).

Mother-tongue: Language spoken in childhood by person's mother. (Mallikarjun, 2018).

OC: Outer Circle. Group of countries that were once colonized by the British empire, like India and Singapore, where English is the official language, used in areas of the government, academics, literature, finance, commerce, entertainment and social communication, along with other vernacular languages (Kachru, 1992).

SLA: Second Language Acquisition. The learning of a second language in the same way as learning and acquiring the first language by listening and speaking before reading and writing (Krashen, 1982).

SLL: Second Language Learning. The learning of a second language in the formal context of school through the study of grammar rules and the learning of vocabulary from textbooks (Krashen, 1982).

WE: World Englishes. Umbrella term referring to plurality of English Languages worldwide, including old and new varieties of English, non-native varieties of English, second language varieties of English, etc. (Bolton, 2009).

Chapter Summary

India is a multilingual country where English is used as a second language for official and academic purposes, commerce, entertainment and social communication. Due to the abundant usage of English in the society, Indian students are naturally inclined towards learning and using the language, and pursuing higher studies in countries where English is the native language. Due to the multilingual and multicultural setting, Indian version of the English language is constantly changing as there is a continual influence between regional dialects. Indian English has created a distinct place for itself globally along with the other varieties of English, including the standard forms used in UK and the U.S. The linguistic distinction between the Indian English and the English in the U.S. creates a complexity that is often experienced by the Indian students who have travelled to the country for higher education. In order to ensure academic success, it is important to understand Indian students' experiences of learning writing in a classroom setting where English is primarily used as a first language, since their academic background in studying English as second language often causes different levels of English proficiency. This study explored how the past and present experiences of the undergraduate Indian students influenced their understanding of good writing in English. The study examined how the students' awareness of their second language acquisition, their sociolinguistic background in India and their usage of the Indian English formed their understanding of good writing. This qualitative multiple case study was based on the undergraduate Indian students who were pursuing their undergraduate degree from one mid-western public university. Limitations to the study were noted as being related to small sample size, reliance on participants' responses and interference with the participants' daily schedules.

Chapter 2 - Review of Literature

Literature review relevant to this research study, discussed in this chapter, is primarily divided into three parts: English language education in India, English composition for Indian students in the U.S. and the theoretical frameworks used in this study. The first part focused on the history and functions of the English language in a multilingual country like India, the role of the English language education in making higher studies in native-speaking countries more accessible to Indian students, and the academic use of English as a second language by International students in native-speaking countries. The second part focused on the migration of Indian students to the universities in the U.S. for undergraduate studies, the academic and language proficiency requirements in the Intensive English Programs and the requirements and structure of English writing assignments in an English composition classroom at the university. The final part of the literature review comprises of the three theoretical perspectives used in this study: Krashen's (1982) distinction between second language acquisition and second language learning, Kachru's (1992) discussion of World Englishes through the Three Concentric Circles model and Lillis's (2013) sociolinguistic study of English writing where variation is articulated at the levels of use (functions, genres, practices), levels of user (age, social class, gender, ethnicity) and levels of linguistic phenomena (monolingualism, multilingualism, dialect, accent).

History of English Language in India

History of the English language influence and expansion in India dates back to the very beginning of the 17th century. Indians have ever since had a controversial history with the language but today it is one of the most important and widely sought-after

languages in the country. India was colonized by the British Empire for three hundred years and the bilingualism of English in India is closely connected with the beginnings of colonization (Mathai, 1951; Kachru, 1983). The British landed in India for trade in 1608 through the East India Company, and by 1757, had established their rule on the Indian subcontinent (Krishnaswami & Krishnaswami, 2017). Before the advent of the British in India, Sanskrit was the language of the scholars, used for administration, diplomacy, education, literature, and sciences; followed by Prakrit, Pali, Magadh then Arabic-Persian (Chaudhary, 2001). Kachru's (1983) study of the history of the English language in India provides a detailed account of how English was introduced to the Indian subcontinent. He states that the missionaries, the East India Company, and a local sub-group of Indians were catalyst in bringing English to India. Around 1614, missionaries from across the continent made efforts to enter the Indian mainland to spread Christianity, but only became effective after 1659, when the missionaries were allowed to use the ships of the East India Company. The missionaries helped many poverty-stricken Indians by giving them food and shelter through the church. Interactions with the missionaries introduced the English language to many Indians. Indian merchants began learning the English Language so they could establish the business with the East India Company. Later, few wealthy Indian elites, like Raja Ram Mohan Roy, who had travelled to Great Britain for art and scholarship, returned with the opinion that English should be introduced in the education system of India for advancement in academic, scientific and international endeavors.

The British ruled India from 1757 through the East India Company till 1858, when the East India Company was dissolved and the British Empire officially colonized

India. As India came under the political domination of the British Empire, this political phase firmly established the English language in South Asia (Kachru, 1983).

Table 2.1 Timeline of British rule in India (Krishnaswami & Krishnaswami, 2017)

1608	British landed in India for trade
1757	East India Company started ruling India
1828-35	The Governor directed that Western education should be imparted to Indians through English
1828-40	District English Schools were set up
1833	English as a subject was introduced in colleges nationwide
1835	The Manifesto of English education in India was introduced
1837	Missionaries provided large number of facilities for learning English. English became the language of the administration and judiciary
1844	Subordinate office positions were opened up to Indians
1854	Education policy of East India Company was introduced.
1857	Universities in Bombay, Calcutta, and Madras were established.
1858	British Empire colonized India
1947	India gained independence from the British rule

The British ruled India for two hundred years, as shown in Table 2.1, and during this time, recommended that English be made the language of government, administration, education and commerce. According to Agnihotri (2001), the British Empire's interest to rule India politically, economically and socially was not just limited to the desire to spread Christianity and to conduct trade but also to 'westernize' and 'civilize' the natives. This prolonged process of instilling civility and morality into the

Indians through English translated into both negative and positive emotions towards the English language (Viswanathan,1987). While the natives considered English as the high-class language of the *sahibs* (English gentry), it also became the language of oppression and colonization. These emotions would later create complexity in the retainment of the English language post-independence (Agnihotri, 2001).

During the rule of the British Empire in India, the British opened several schools and colleges where English became the language of mass education (Krishnaswamy & Krishnaswamy, 2017). The British Educational policy required the teachers to acquire both English proficiency and vernacular proficiency to convey useful information regarding obedience to the British Empire to the students (Agnihotri, 2001). The students, however, could not study vernacular languages in the institutions. According to Viswanathan (1988), with the beginning of the twentieth century, there was severe reaction by the Indian natives to the British Educational policy due to the inclusion of English language and exclusion of any vernacular languages. Leaders like Gandhi, Gokhale, and Zakir Hussain, joined the voices for linguistic freedom, paving a path for fight for the political and social freedom. A few leaders, however, encouraged bilingualism of English with the native languages since they recognized the importance of education and language in social reform. The National Council of Education was formed in 1906, and English was taught as a compulsory subject along with vernacular languages as medium of instruction. For the first time, books and teaching materials were published in vernacular languages, thus initiating the process of conducting higher education in the language of the learners (Agnihotri, 2001). Yet, as Viswanathan (1987) observes, there was no sensitivity to multilingualism in the society and English remained

the language of dominance. It was the beginning of the socio-economic divide through English language learning and usage that we still see today

India got independence from the British rule in 1947. For several years following independence, India continued with the education policies establish during the British rule and English gradually became an integral part of the education system (Kachru, 1983). Post colonialism, several natives from the now-independent British colonies, including most Indians, reacted negatively to the retention of the English language, as it was a reminder of former dominance and oppression, but all pursuit failed (Agnihotri, 2001). Contrary to the expectations, Schneider (2011) observes that the English language has been retained in all those countries, as a national language or with some special status. In 1966, nine years after India's independence from the British Empire, the Government of India through the Kothari Commission, mandated that English be taught from school level, and any student who graduates from a degree course have adequate spoken and written command in English. (Agnihotri, 2001). According to Kachru (2008), although the political control of the British ended in 1947, it did not include the end of the English language in India. Not only did it survive with the other languages in India, for many decades it also remained as only the language of the elite.

Multilingualism in India

India is a multilingual country where individuals acquire, learn and communicate in more than two languages effectively (Mallikarjun, 2019). Romaine (1995) defines multilingualism as an individual's knowledge of multiple languages, and the ability of using some languages with more competence than others. According to Deumert (2011), multilingualism is defined by a degree of knowledge, ranging from knowledge of a few

words to full competency in more than one language. Chomsky (1972) theorized that children have a natural inclination towards learning languages so they acquire proficiency in their first language while growing up, and that any other language they learn during puberty or later cannot achieve the same level of proficiency. However, Deumert (2011) argues that in case of multilingual first language acquisition, children grow up learning more than one language simultaneously, so they can obtain native-like proficiency in all the languages they are regularly and consistently exposed to. Romaine (1995) defines 6 possibilities of multilingual acquisition in childhood, as shown in Table 2.2.

Table 2.2 Multilingual acquisition (Romaine, 1995)

Type 1: 2 Home languages	Each parent speaks different language. One parent language dominant in society.
Type 2: Non-dominant home language I	Each parent speaks different language. Both non-dominant languages. Exposure to dominant language outside home – friends, neighbors.
Type 3: Non-dominant home language II	Parents speak same language, non-dominant. Outside home – non-dominant. Exposure to dominant language in school.
Type 4: Double non-dominant home language	Each parent speaks different language. Both non-dominant. Exposure to dominant language in school.
Type 5: Non-native language by one parent	Both parents speak same language, dominant. One parent addresses in non-native, non-dominant language.
Type 6: Language mixing, code-switching	Both parents are multilingual. Family, friends, neighbors, multilingual. Parents address regularly in more than one language.

Type 1 is when they have two home languages and each parent speaks a different language to the child from birth. The language of one parent is dominant language in the society where the family lives. Type 2 is non-dominant home language I when each parent speaks a different language to the child from birth and both parents speak non-dominant language to the child at home. Child is exposed to the dominant language

outside of home, with neighbors, and friends. Type 3 is the non-dominant home language II when parents speak the same language which is non-dominant. Neighbors, and friends speak the same non-dominant language and the child is exposed to the dominant language only once he/she starts schooling. Type 4 is the double non-dominant home language when parents speak different languages, both of which are non-dominant, and the child is exposed to the dominant language only once he/she starts schooling. Type 5 is when non-native language used by one parent and parents speak the same language which is dominant. One parent addresses the child in a second/third language. Type 6 is language mixing and code-switching when both parents are multilingual, neighborhood, friends and family are multilingual, and parents address the child regularly in more than one language. For Types 1, 2, and 5, there can be changes in proficiency across time. While for Types 3, 4, and 6, multilingual child has continued opportunity to use more than one language. One of the most common features of multilingualism is code-switching between individuals. Romaine (1995) defines code-switching as the effortless behavior of alternating between two or more languages in the same conversation, to express ideas, emotions and thoughts in every respect, linguistically and socioculturally. When in a group, Cenoz (2013) reflects that multilingual speakers often choose a common language, according to the competency of both parties, to communicate, and mark social identities or group affiliations.

Other linguistic features experienced in a multilingual society are diglossia, bilingualism and language split. According to Hickey (2007), diglossia is a situation where there is a division between two languages or two varieties of the same language such that one variety ('high' variety) is used is public sectors like media, schools,

universities, government offices, etc., while the other variety ('low' variety) is used in domestic life, with family and friends. For example, Spanish (high) and Guarani (low) in Paraguay. Romaine (1995) defines bilingualism is the situation in which two languages share the same status in a country and are used by people irrespective of function or social class. For example, English and French in Canada. Bilinguals often illustrate code-switching, where speakers move from one language to another and back again within the same sentence (Deumert, 2011). Cenoz (2013) defines language split as a situation in which the same language has been split into two varieties due to political reasons and are forcibly differentiated to maximize differences between two countries. Annamalai (2001) cites that when India and Pakistan were separated politically, it was decided that India would continue using Hindi, written from left to right in the Devanagari script, while Pakistan would now call it Urdu, written from right to left in the Persian variant of Arabic. Cenoz (2013) states that once language split has been introduced, the differences become real with time, with change in vocabulary and word choices. According to Romaine (1995), and as seen in the above examples, a multilingual society witnesses a complexity in language competency, language use and language popularity with time.

India is linguistically diverse with hundreds of languages and mother-tongues. According to the 2011 census in India, there are two national languages: Hindi and English; and twenty-two scheduled languages: Hindi, Telegu, Bengali, Marathi, Tamil, Urdu, Gujrati, Kannada, Malayalam, Oriya, Punjabi, Kashmiri, Sindhi, Assamese, Sanskrit, Bodo, Dogri, Konkani, Maithili, Manipuri, Nepali, and Santali (See Figure 2.1). Apart from these scheduled languages, the Government of India recognizes over 190 vernacular language varieties and 1369 mother-tongues (Graddol, 2000).

Figure 2.1 Linguistic landscape of India (Mallikarjun, 2018)

Linguistic landscape of India

- Hindi - 43.63%
- Bengali - 8.03%
- Marathi - 6.86%
- Telugu - 6.7%
- Tamil - 5.7%
- Gujrati - 4.58%
- Urdu - 4.19%
- Kannada - 3.61%
- Non-scheduled languages - 3.28%
- Odia - 3.1%
- Malayalam - 2.88%
- Punjabi - 2.74%
- Assamese - 1.26%
- Maithili - 1.12%
- Santali - 0.61%
- Kashmiri - 0.56%
- Nepali - 0.24%
- Sindhi - 0.23%
- Dogri - 0.21%
- Konkani - 0.19
- Manipuri - 0.15%
- Bodo - 0.12%
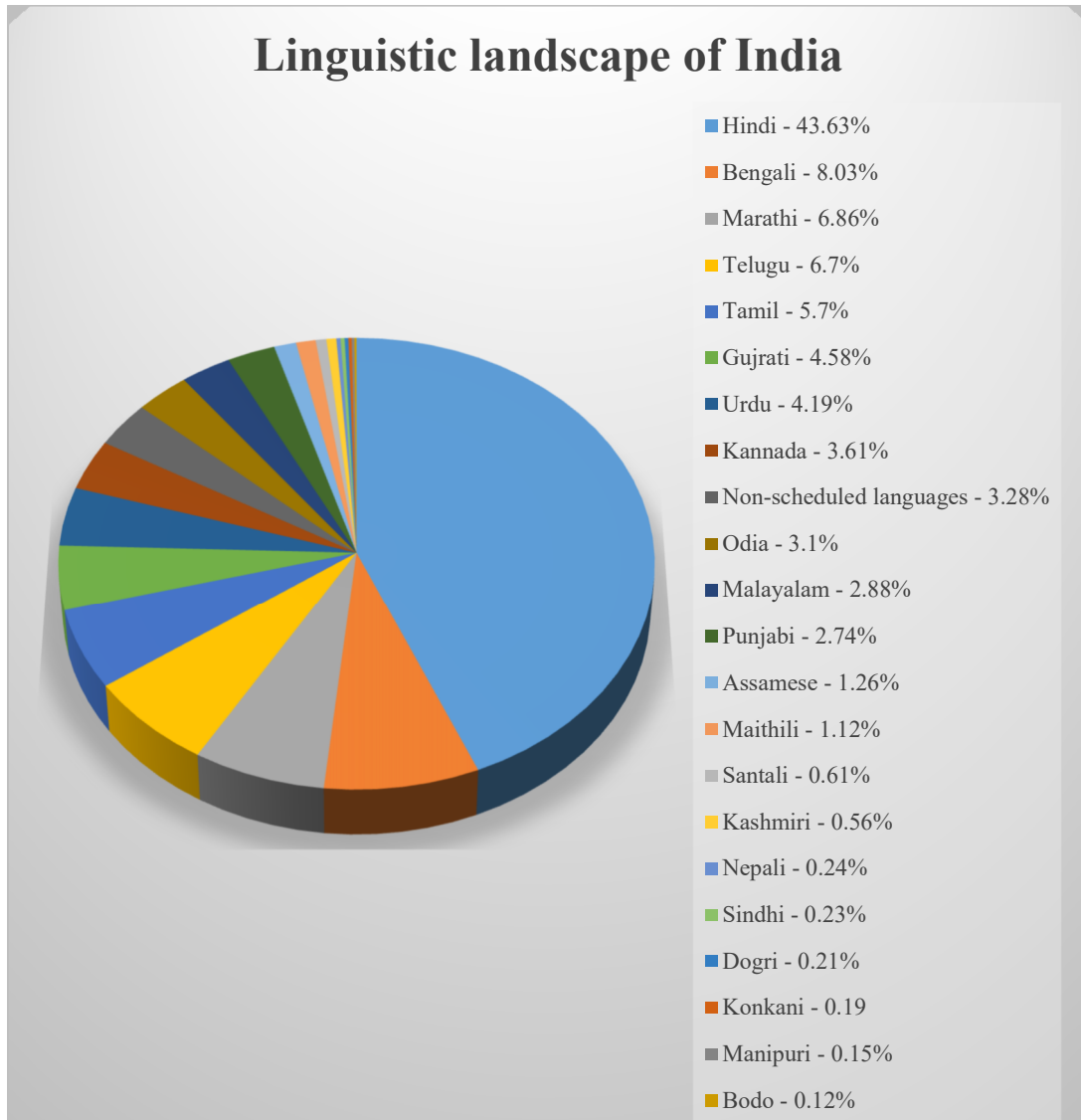
India is divided into twenty-eight states and seven union territories on the basis of language (see Figure 2.2). Agnihotri (2001) theorizes that none of the Indian states are monolingual and the presence of English education and usage along with the coexistence of vernacular languages, creates a rich complexity within the multilingual society of India. According to Chaudhary (2001), almost none of the languages in India enjoy equal status, although mother-tongue has a special place in every individual's life.

Figure 2.2 Languages in India

CHINA

JAMMU &
KASHMIR
Kashmiri, Urdu

HIMACHAL
PRADESH
Hindi, Pahari

PUNJAB
Punjabi

UTTARAKHAND
Hindi

ARUNACHAL
PRADESH
*Miji, Apotanji,
Merdukpen, Tagin,
Adi, Honpa,
Bangini-Nishi*

NAGALAND
*Ao, Konyak,
Angami, Sema,
Lotha*

MEGHALAYA
Khasi, Jaintia, Garo

SIKKIM
*Bhutia, Hindi,
Nepali, Lepcha,
Limbu*

HARYANA
Hindi

PAKISTAN

NEPAL

BHUTAN

ASSAM
Assamese

RAJASTHAN
Rajasthani, Hindi

UTTAR PREDESH
Hindi

BIHAR
Hindi

MANIPUR
Manipuri

GUJARAT
Gujarati

MADHYAPRADESH
Hindi

JHARKHAND
Hindi

WEST
BENGAL
Bengali

BANGLA-
DESH

MIZORAM
Mizo

CHATTISHGARH
Hindi

ORISSA
Oriya

MYANMAR
(BURMA)

MAHARASTRA
Marathi

TRIPURA
*Bengali, Kokborok,
Tripuri*

TELANGANA
Telugu, Urdu

GOA
Konkani

ANDHRA
PRADESH
Telugu, Urdu

KARNATAKA
Kannada

TAMIL NADU
Tamil

KERALA
Malayalam

SRI
LANKA

The general definition of a mother-tongue is the language that is spoken at home by the mother and is naturally acquired by the child while growing up (Mallikarjun, 2017). In a multilingual country like India, mother-tongue is uniquely different from other languages since it may or may not be learnt by the child in school. Khubchandani (2001) asserts that when a person declares their mother-tongue, it may or may not be

her/his primary language for communication. According to Pandit (2011), mother-tongues are not often associated with the formal learning of the language structure but is strongly related to the person's social identity and loyalty to the community. A person's shared mother-tongue community, the regional group, and the religious alliance, all aspects contribute in creating an identity for the person, adds Ramanathan (2007). Although each state in India is a multilingual region, there is a dominant mother-tongue that is widely spoken, and an identity that is associated with the speaker (Singh & Kumar, 2014). For example, (see Figure 2.2) a person who lives in or has roots from the state of West Bengal and whose mother-tongue is Bengali, is identified as a Bengali person. Likewise, a person from Gujrat, who speaks Gujrati is also known as a Gujrati person. A known fact amongst Indians, states Kachru (2008), that a person will always have loyalty to their state/region first. It has also been observed that many Indians from the southern part of the country, hesitate to accept their knowledge of Hindi, which is primarily perceived as an northern Indian language, to show allegiance to their own vernacular language and community (Khubchandani, 2001; Annamalai, 2001).

In India, it is very common for an individual to grow up learning and using several languages, where each language has a function and purpose in society. According to the 2011 census, forty-one languages are used for education, fifty-eight languages are taught as school subjects and eighty-seven languages are used in the media (Mallikarjun, 2018). Due to the growing migration of population across states for trade, occupation, and education, Indians have learnt new languages and forgotten a few (Singh & Kumar, 2014). According to a linguistic study conducted by Saini (2018), people in general believe that while it is okay to know one or two vernacular languages in rural areas in

India, it is absolutely essential to know at least English and Hindi if one is living and working in an urban area. The study also reveals that students in general had positive attitude towards learning a foreign language (French/German/Spanish) in school. As Mallikarjun (2019) summarizes the linguistic usage on basis of purpose in India, mother-tongues and vernacular languages are used as home languages with family and friends in India; Hindi and English are used as dominant work languages (Hindi serves as both home and work language for many) and the knowledge of foreign language is considered as an added bonus for international opportunities.

In India, Hindi is the language commonly understood in major parts of India (except the four south-Indian states) along with the vernacular languages of each region. English also co-exists with Hindi and the vernacular languages in all parts of the country. As Mohan (2000) puts it, regional languages are used at home, Hindi is used with friends and English in office space; only elite use English in both spaces. English is also the language of cultural expression of the elite (Ghosh, 2001). Chaudhary (2013) has a little different take on the above theory. He asserts that English in India has no region or group. Since English is considered the language of success, prestige, money, and fame, those who have access to the language, may have the opportunity to become an elite with time, hard work and luck (Chaudhary, 2013). Annamalai (2001) states that the four southern states of India: Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Kerala and Tamil Nadu, do not identify with Hindi as their own language and show more preference to English than Hindi; but also adds that the rest of India identifies with Hindi as their national linguistic identity. Mohan (2000) and Ghosh (2001) suggest that the elites of the country, however, identify with English language more than Hindi. In a study conducted by Chand (2011),

elites were generally found to have low proficiency in speaking in Hindi and even lower proficiency in writing in Hindi. Banerjee (2014) states that to have low proficiency in Hindi suggested sophistication, wealth, and "more" elite, while the lack of English language knowledge and education is often misunderstood as a sign of poverty. The English language has created a social distance and inequality in the society where the more fluency brought more prestige in the society (Chaudhary, 2013). According to Gargesh (2009), English is no longer just a link language between people who speak different vernacular languages, it is a symbol of economic uplift and upward social mobility. Schneider (2011) analyzes that in a multilingual country like India, people did not just learn the English language to succeed in this day and age of globalization, it has much more social and cultural significance related to class and economy.

English is abundantly used in education, commerce, media and bureaucracy and is considered as the tools for social and economic success and power in India (See Appendix). While people are comfortable with their vernacular languages, English language knowledge is seen an essential requirement that one must have along with the knowledge of their mother-tongue (Chaudhary, 2001). The main reason for the popularity of English as a second language in India, according to many linguists (Agnihotri, 2001; Graddol, 2010; Susikaran, 2012; Chaudhary, 2013; Banerjee, 2014; Mallikarjun, 2018) is the benefit of having a neutral language that prevents preferential treatment to any one mother-tongue or vernacular language in the government policies. Schneider (2011) argues that the initiative from the Indian government to include English in the national and state educational curricula also helped in the cultural assimilation of the language. English is taught in most schools in India today, but it is still spoken and used on daily

basis at home by only a small fraction of the total population, who are urban, wealthy and educated (Agnihotri, 2001; Bolton, Graddol, & Meierkord, 2011). Post-independence, multilingualism was seen as an impediment to the country's progress and English seemed like the best choice for international discourse despite only 10% of English speakers with native proficiency in India. With a lot of resistance to the above ideology by the local groups, and the government's initiation in including vernacular languages in education and the administration, English managed to co-exist and flourish with the vernacular languages in India (Groff, 2016). Although, English language usage is uneven in society due to the urban-rural divide; quality of education; age, gender, ethnicity, religion, and caste of the learner, etc (Mallikarjun, 2018), the status and role of English in India is undergoing rapid change with its widespread presence in multimedia, education, international commerce and international bureaucracy.

English is widely used, along with Hindi and regional languages, in the print media, broadcast media, social media, advertising and the entertainment industry. According to Mallikarjun's (2018) study on India's print media, 114,820 publications were registered in 2017, wherein the largest number of publications were in Hindi with 46,587 and second largest were in English with 14,365. Apart from Hindi and English, newspapers and periodicals in India are also published in other 187 languages and dialects. According to Bolton (2012), the indulgence of entertainment through Hindi, English and vernacular languages; the use of Hindi, English and the vernacular at the workplace; and the use of English in public spaces, more so in the urban areas, along with the local language, is a common sight today. It was also observed that Indians from both urban and rural sectors communicated through social media, mostly using English and

Hindi (Bolton, et al, 2011). Since English has more audience reach than any other language worldwide, and with the various multinational companies having consumers worldwide, English naturally becomes their chosen language for advertising and outreach. According to Bhatia (2009), in the age of rapid globalization, Indian media customizes product name, logos and even the content of the message to communicate with the multicultural, multilingual Indian people. Multinational companies 'Indianize' their otherwise English catchy phrases so the message gets across, he states. Bhatia (2009) further adds that the new 'mantra' of globalization means homogenization of the language, like using 'mantra' instead of the word 'characteristics' or 'secret charm' etc., so the Indians get the actual essence of the word. It is important to mention here that 'mantra' is a Sanskrit word and has a deeper connotation in the Indian society.

The use of English in various national and international platforms by Indians is a recent post-globalization phenomenon. According to Gargesh (2009), Indians began to see the benefit of being proficient in English only after the advent of globalization in India in 1991. For several decades, post-independence, people did not accept English as their own language. It remained the exclusive embellishment of the select elite. The initial resistance to English post-independence and the impersonal teaching of the language in schools for decades thereafter, changed completely with globalization (Agnihotri, 2001). People realized that the knowledge of English could open opportunities regarding career and education, not just nationally but also internationally. According to Azam, Chin, and Prakash (2012), the general attitude towards learning English language became more positive when Indians realized that those who had English language speaking and writing skills were paid more than those who did not have

the required English language skills . Parents became keen to educate their children in English and the time when students lacked interest and motivation in learning English due to the fear of social isolation (Scoon, 1971) took an opposite turn. Today, throughout India, there is a homogenous belief amongst Indian from all sectors of life, that English education and proficiency is not just a useful skill but also possesses a transformative power to socially and economically uplift the middle-class and bring out the lower-class from poverty and oppression (Ghosh, 2001; Graddol, 2010; Susikaran, 2012). Despite years of debates and controversies over the legacy of the English language in India, it has acquired the status of the most preferred language in education today.

English Education in India

Despite the usage of multiple languages in a multilingual country like India, there has been a display of preference towards the learning and teaching of English in schools. After the independence of India from the British rule, the government of India established the Ministry of Education and English became the associate official language along with Hindi. Indian Education system went through several initial commissions to draft the foundation of the current educational policies, as shown in Table 2.3. In order to establish a structure in language and communication at the central and state levels, The Central Advisory Board of Education (CABE) proposed a 'Three Language Formula' in 1956 which was modified by the Kothari Commission (1964-1966) into the three-language formula of the education system of India (Agnihotri, 2001; Gupta, 2007; Petrovic & Majumdar, 2010). This formula required children to study their mother-tongue and vernacular languages in school along with Hindi and English. Recommendations were that students' medium of instruction for 12 years would be their mother-tongue or the

regional/state language; that students would be required to study Hindi or English for 10-12 years; and that the students will need to study one of the scheduled languages or a foreign language for 3-5 years (Petrovic & Majumdar, 2010).

Table 2.3 Timeline of post-independence Education reform in India (Krishnaswami & Krishnaswami, 2017)

1947	India became independent
1950	Indian Constitution granted English as an associate language along with Hindi
1955	Indian Council for Secondary Education was formed
1956	Indian states formed on the basis on Indian languages
1961	National Council for Educational Research and Training (NCERT) was formed. English and vernacular languages were retained as medium of instruction in school
1962	English to continue as the associate official language
1964-6	Indian Education Commission was formed
1968	National Policy on Education was released

This formula has been implemented in schools nationally, although different schools follow various versions of the formula. According to Agnihotri (2001), the three-language formula was an attempt by the government to "accommodate the interests of group identity (mother-tongue and regional languages), national pride and unity (Hindi) and administrative efficiency and technological progress (English)" (p. 189). The three-language formula also aimed to break the linguistic divide between the northern and the southern states in India (Rajan, 1992). Through this formula, the vision was to have the people residing in the southern states: Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Kerala and Andhra Pradesh, learn Hindi and the northern states will reciprocate by learning a Southern language: Kannada, Tamil, Malayalam and Telegu. This never happened. The southern

states saw this formula as an imposition of Hindi and the Northern states did not see any benefit in learning the southern languages and opted for learning Sanskrit to meet the requirements of the formula. While Hindi continued to be perceived as a forced language, the popularity of English increased as a link language and an academic language. According to Schneider (2011), the formula failed to promote multilingualism in English, Hindi, and a regional language due to the resistance of south Indian regions (where Hindi is hardly used) to adopt Hindi and the lack of interest of north Indian regions in learning a southern language.

The Kothari Commission Report (1964-1966) recommended a common school system nationwide that would include tuition-free education for students from all regions of the country and the maintenance of a national standard of education. There have been several issues due to which the above recommended common school system could not be completely successful. Gupta (2007) cites some of the reasons being deep-rooted in the socio-economic disparities prevalent in the country. The private school provide better qualified teachers, better education and better resources to the students, so the rich prefer to send their children to private schools as opposed to the government schools. Ramanathan (2007) opposes this discrepancy in education based on money and argues that this is one of the main reasons for the hierarchy of English over native languages. Initially, the report faced a lot of opposition from organizations who were against English education. As described by Agnihotri (2001), the *Angrezi Hatao Andolan* (Movement for the removal of the English language from the school curricula) in 1989 claimed that children learn best when taught through their mother-tongue; innovative ideas can happen only in native languages; learning in a non-native language alienates the learner

psychologically and linguistically. They also argued that English was the language of colonization and slavery which divides the rich and poor and causes the loss of the native languages. The movement did not provide any scientific explanations to support their claim and received strong opposition from groups who were in support of the English language education. A revised National Policy on Education was released in 1979, that relaxed the three-language formula rules for the states and explained the importance of the English language education for upwards social mobility, access to knowledge and power, better occupations, intellectual status, trade/commerce, and national networking and diplomacy (Krishnaswami & Krishnaswami, 2017).

With the beginning of the twenty-first century, schools all over India began incorporating their own versions of the three-language formula. Kaul and Devaki (2001) compiled a list of the versions as (a) four or more languages as media of instruction: regional language of the state, language of largest minority of the state, Hindi, English; (b) three languages as media of instruction: regional language of the state, Hindi, English; (c) two languages as media of instruction: Hindi, English; and (d) one language as medium of instruction: English. Annamalai (2001) studied the school of north-east India and his findings of the three-language formula implementation serves as an example of the list provided by Kaul and Devaki (2001). In his findings, Annamalai (2001) states that the schools provided several options for first language: Assamese, Bengali, English, Gujrati, Hindi, Lushai, Malayalam, Marathi, Modern Tibetan, Nepali, Oriya, Punjabi, Gurmukhi, Santali, Sadani, Telegu, Tamil and Urdu. As can be noted, some of these languages are not from the twenty-two scheduled languages but are spoken locally in north-east India. The second language offered was English. However, if a student

selected English as their first language, then their option for second language would be Bengali. For the third language, the students had choice between a classical language (Pali, Sanskrit, Arabic, Latin, Persian, Syrian), a modern foreign language (French, German, Portuguese, Tibetan) or a modern Indian language (Sanskrit, Assamese, Bangla, Bodo, Dogri, Gujarati, Hindi, Kashmiri, Kannada, Konkani, Maithili, Malayalam, Manipuri, Marathi, Nepali, Oriya, Punjabi, Tamil, Telugu, Santali, Sindhi, and Urdu). As evident, students get a lot of choice of languages, but Meganathan (2011) observes that not every school has a teacher available for each language, therefore, for many schools, the options are many on paper but few in reality.

In 2000, The National Curriculum Framework reviewed that the three-language formula was not being following in its spirit in all states and that many urban schools do not provide opportunities for the students to learn their mother-tongue. Mallikarjun (2018) notes that this is because of the changing sociolinguistic and economic scenario in the country and the use of more than one language for the education, career and commerce. Some states follow two-language formula and include classical languages like Sanskrit as the third option while many allow foreign languages like French, German as the third option. In many schools, English plays the role of a subject as well as the medium of instruction. In 2005, in an attempt to encourage single language schools to incorporate vernacular language learning in their curricula, the National Curriculum Framework defined mother-tongue as the language which the child acquires naturally from home and societal environment, and emphasized on its importance in language development of the child. The framework mentioned that languages provide children with symbols through which they construct knowledge, ideas, and their identity while growing

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up. The framework also mentioned, that since languages help the individual make connections between people, ideas, and events in the world, schools should follow the three-language formula and provide language options. The framework prescribed that in non-Hindi speaking areas, students can learn Hindi, English, and a vernacular language; and in Hindi-speaking areas, students can learn, Hindi, English and Sanskrit. However, the Supreme Court of India passed the order in 2014 that mother-tongue is "the language of the linguistic minor of the state and it is the parent or the guardian of the child who will decide what the mother-tongue of child is. Also, a child or on his/her behalf the parent/guardian has the right to freedom of choice with regard to the medium of instruction in which he would like to be educated at the primary stage in school." This enabled many parents to send their schools to single language English-medium schools by declaring the child's mother-tongue to be English, or bilingual schools teaching only English and Hindi. According to Kumari (2014), the various vernacular languages in every state of India and the choice of language in school curriculum creates a linguistic complexity in the education system and influences the English language education in the country. Extensive variation can be seen in the way English and the vernacular language of the state is used in the classrooms, Kumari (2014) noted. This is primarily due to the diverse types of schools in India. All schools in India practice bilingualism but the degree of first language and second language usage and proficiency varies with the type of school.

The most recent National Policy on Education, published in 2019, mentioned that some states may allow English and foreign languages instead of the three-language formula. However, all students must have the option of studying in their mother-tongue

as their medium of instruction and Hindi and/or English language studies must be introduced from the first grade. So, the first language would be the mother-tongue; the second language would be either English or Hindi (for non-Hindi speaking states) or any one of the twenty-one modern Indian languages (for Hindi speaking states); and the third language would be English or one of the twenty-one modern Indian languages that is not being studied as second language. In the southern states, where Hindi is not accepted, the first language would be the mother-tongue or the regional language; the second language would be the official language of the state; and the third language would be English. However, as noted by Mallikarjun (2018), most of the schools offer English as an additional or sole medium of instruction and English as a second language is taught is all the schools, either from the first grade or third grade or fifth grade. Meganathan (2011) describes the nationwide English language education experience as chaotic and highlights the disparity in the quality of English language education experienced by the students in India, as shown in Table 2.4.

The National Council for Educational Research and Training (NCERT) promotes a national curriculum that becomes translated into a prescribed syllabus and a set of corresponding textbooks for each grade level. Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) is the government's nationwide examination board. The other examination boards are Indian Certified School Examination (ICSE), State Board of Examinations (SBE) and the Matriculation Board of Examination (MBE). Of these, CBSE is used in all government schools (rural and urban) and both CBSE and ICSE are widely used in urban schools. Apart from CBSE, each state has the right to decide their own education policies and the curricula offered in its schools. So, although education is primarily in the

jurisdiction of the central government, the state governments play a major role in educational development (Gupta, 2007).

Table 2.4 Types of Schools in India (adapted from Meganathan, 2011)

Schools	Medium of Instruction	Board	Language Usage	Cost of Education	English Proficiency of Teachers	English Language Environment
Government schools	Bilingual	CBSE	Hindi Vernacular English	Affordable to all	Below average	Average to below average
Private schools	English	CBSE / ICSE/ State Board	English Hindi Vernacular	Expensive	Good to average	Good to average
Residential schools	English	CBSE / ICSE	English	Very Expensive	Excellent	Excellent
International schools	English	CBSE / IBO / CIB	English	Expensive	Excellent	Excellent
Madrasa	Urdu	DUD / DUNU	Urdu	Affordable	N/A	N/A
Home schooling	Legal but not popular					

There are also several, renowned International schools in India, who follow either the International Baccalaureate, Edexcel or the Cambridge International Examinations. In 2006, the National Focus Group on Teaching of English had broadly categorized three types of English education in India, which still stands true for most of the schools in India (Bedi, 2020):

1. English is introduced in Class I-III, IV, or V-VI: to develop speaking and writing basics, through books, instructions and usage in classroom.

2. Higher-order English language skills in secondary levels: knowledge of vocabulary, reading and literature.

3. Higher-secondary levels: Critical thinking, reference skills, grammar, and rhetoric. Assignments include debating, interviewing, and other public speaking opportunities in addition to writing essays.

The National Focus Group on Teaching of English advocates the learning of the standardized English and discredits the speaking and writing of Indian English as a pathway to attain English competency. The vernacular impressions in Indian English are to be seen as errors but accepts the teaching of English with the aid of other languages since it helps in the reconstruction of the meaning. It also advocates pre-service and in-service professional trainings for the teachers and reminds the teachers that language evaluation must not be limited to the completion of syllabus goals but must measure language development and proficiency.

Despite several modifications to the education and language policies in India, language teaching options and methods did not change much until advent of the twenty-first century and globalization. According to Canagarajah (1999) most of the schools had old, outdated teaching materials that does not enhance language skills. Very little changed in the language teaching methods during the eighties and the nineties in India (Agnihotri, 2001). Teachers used old, outdated materials, standard model for teaching classical languages like Greek and lecture style to teach English language and literature in school (Canagarajah, 1999; Meganathan, 2011). Taking advantage of the relaxations in the three-language formula, some schools in the 80s, began teaching all their subjects in English-medium and opted not to teach any other languages. According to Meganathan (2011), the students became dissociated from their linguistic and cultural roots since they

were not being taught their native language in school and had no opportunity to practice English speaking and writing skills outside their classroom.

With the advent of the information technology, came a post-modern world with computers, robots, virtual reality and artificial intelligence. Information exchange and communication happened readily through the internet, resulting in a massive global exchange of commerce, trade, education, travel, technology, media, entertainment and bureaucracy (Mallikarjun, 2018). The English language became the lingua franca and a global language for many with the spread of globalization (Baker, 2009; Jenkins, 2012; Crystal, 2015). With globalization, the very character of English language is changed. English language was no longer the language of the native-speaking countries, representing culture, class and race; it was now being used as a tool for international communication (Mesthrie, 2006). With globalization, the English language usage was not limited to writing essays for class or speaking with teachers; it became the language through which knowledge could be accessed through the internet. It is estimated that nearly 80% of all websites use English (Krishnaswami & Krishnaswami, 2017). English speaking and writing skills were now required to be effective communication skills, to get lucrative jobs, nationally and internationally. As highlighted by Coupland (2010), all multinational companies, corporations, and outsourcing centers now ask for competence in everyday communicative English skills. According to Krishnaswami and Krishnaswami (2017), skills like articulation during interviews, meetings, conferences, seminars; writing resumes, reports, business letters, memos; presenting one's ideas with clarify, conviction and logic, are now expected of a person who is educated in the English language. Today, no one opposes the idea of English being taught in schools as second or

even first language. On the contrary, parents are keen to have their children admitted to English-medium schools (Narang et al., 2016). In fact, as Susikaran (2012) mentions, English language teaching is a big business in India with random language training centers mushrooming everywhere, who claim to teach the best communicative skills in English.

Many schools have also made changes to their language curricula and the classes are a lot more interactive and learner centered. In the recent years, English classes have transformed into multi-modal learning and writing communities in the international schools and high-end private schools (Narang et al., 2016). On the other hand, there are government schools, situated in the remote rural areas on India, who still do not introduce English language as a subject until after middle school (Kumari, 2014). Clearly, there is a discrepancy between the qualitive of English language education in various school all over India. According to Ramadevi (2013), most of the rural government schools still conduct lecture style teaching where teacher knows everything, and learners are passive receivers of knowledge; evaluations are based on memorization of traditional grammatical forms; students develop below average speaking and writing skills and are often crammed in large classes with minimal resources. The urban private schools, international schools and expensive residential schools, teach English language through content-based and task-based language teaching methods (Omidvar & Sukumar, 2013), which helps students be aware of global issues, be more articulate in class participation, critically think and analyze problems. As Sindkhedkar (2012) highlights, the objective is not to have students with bookish knowledge, but to provide a learning atmosphere for the students so they grow interest in learning the English language, perceiving it as a tool

for academic and career success. According to Dhanavel (2012), expensive private schools in India hire trained teachers who use of technology to teach English speech and writing, increase motivation of learners by explaining the benefits of having fluency in English, provide ample opportunity to practice speaking and writing, provide constructive feedback to enhance learning, encourage class participation, share model papers written in standard English (American and/or British). Since the number of such schools are quite a few, the overall English competency of students nationwide, remains varied with respect to region, and quality of education. In a study of correlation between education and family income, Spolsky (2014) finds that students whose family income was more than five lacs per annum, went to private schools and had good speaking and writing proficiency in English; students whose family income was less than one lac per annum, went to government schools and had poor speaking and writing proficiency in English; students whose parents had a bachelor's degree or higher, had a positive attitude towards learning of English; and, students whose parents had a high school diploma or less, had a negative attitude towards learning of English. Sheorey (2006) conducted a survey of several government schools in urban and rural areas and found that usually teachers would read out of textbooks, and explain the grammatical norms on the chalkboard in simplified English or the native language. Neither the teachers nor the students seemed motivated to be in the classroom. Sheorey (2006) discusses, that such lack of motivation in students is due to the fact that the examples in the grammar books or the content of the literature books is often unrelated to the lives and experiences of the students studying them. The teachers are not motivated to teach because they have no contribution in the planning and composing of the curriculum, and selection of the course materials. As

Groff (2017) and Kalia (2017) have both highlighted in separate studies, most of the school students in India are insufficiently developed in English language speaking and writing skills and one of the main reasons is that the teachers are more focused on completing the syllabus than concentrating on the language learning process of the students. some of the other reasons for lack of quality education in English in India listed are: overcrowded classrooms, rural background, lack of confidence, lack of motivation, lack of participation, lack of reading habits, fear of English, underdeveloped learning objectives and goals, lack of constructive feedback, lack of trained and qualified teachers, over dependence on teachers, introverted learners, use of mother-tongue, fear of failure, faulty methods of teaching, lack of teaching resources, and faulty evaluation goals.

Apart from the differences between private and government schools, there is also a stark difference between vernacular schools and English schools in India, as seen in Table 2.5. There are a variety of vernacular schools in India. They could be private or government operated, could be situated in an urban or a rural setting, and could have well-paid, well-trained teachers or have untrained teachers with below-average English language skills. In his survey, Sheorey (2006) found out that while students from both English-medium schools and vernacular-medium schools exhibited a positive attitude towards the learning of the English language, the vernacular-medium school students were found to be less proficient in speaking and writing in the English language than the English-medium school students. The vernacular-medium school students were also found to be less confident about the English language usage (speaking and writing) than the English-medium school students.

Table 2.5 Differences between English-medium and vernacular-medium learning models (Ramanathan, 2007)

Vernacular Medium	English Medium
Average to below average English speaking and writing skill. Primary focus on teaching traditional grammatic structure	Advance to average English speaking and writing skills.
Knowledge base is limited to local context. Not much exposure to readings by international authors and knowledge of global concerns/issues	Cosmopolitan with more exposure to readings by American, British and Indian-English authors with a more global outlook
There is a general assumption that the teachers themselves are not fluent in English, so text carries explanation sections in vernacular as well as English directed towards both teachers and students	There are no such assumptions, text carried explanations focused on students only
Lack the environment of independent learning (no self-learning/composition section)	Focuses on independent learning and building self-confidence aided with self-learning exercises

According to Ramanathan (2007), class-related conventions like "schooling, child-rearing, literacy practices at home, clothing and public appearances, food, how money gets spent, body sizes, weight, health, nutrition and hairdos, and, most importantly, in the present case, opting for fluency in English" (p. 59) dictate a person's learning of English. For these very reasons, underprivileged poor students from government, vernacular schools in the rural or even at times rural areas, suffer in their learnings. As noted by Gupta (2007), many international (European or North American) non-government organizations travel to the rural, poverty-stricken areas in India to work towards making education available to all the underprivileged children. They are also responsible for several curriculum reforms in private schools in urban areas. However, the educational

philosophies and learning approaches brought by these organizations at times fail in implementation because the cultural and education philosophies of India are distinctly different from the European or North American philosophies. Bruthiaux (2010) rationalizes that in developing countries, lower-middle class or poor students have absolutely no English proficiency despite attending English classes in school because they use English very minimally outside the classroom, their classes are very large and overcrowded, teachers have minimal to no English proficiency, English is taught for 1-3 hours per week and evaluation favors memorization than knowledge. The students cannot afford or have no opportunity to travel outside their rural setting, limiting their exposure to English usage. Such English educational practices focus on grammar knowledge only, resulting in students having very low communicative skills in speaking and writing.

Many Indian students apply for undergraduate studies in the U.S. every year. Many of them have English-medium schooling backgrounds while some of them have vernacular-medium schooling backgrounds. Many have learnt English in school while growing up using another language at home, while some may have acquired English along with native languages. Many may be academically proficient in their native language or may not be proficient in it at all. Some may be confident in writing in English as a second language, while for some it could be challenging. Indian students not only have a diverse educational background, they also come from a multilinguistic, multicultural and multi-socioeconomic backgrounds. As a result, Indian students in the U.S. have varied degrees of English speaking and writing proficiencies. According to Canagarajah (2013), in a multilingual and multicultural setting, people switch between languages too often to decide which is their first, second or third language in terms of

priority, function and proficiency. This constant influence and interference of languages in a multilingual society like India, has created new language identities in the form of hybrid languages and a complex understanding of the second language. Studies have shown that international students with English as a second language background experience academic adjustment issues in their American college composition classes because of their varied language background, their overall writing experiences, the writing instructions they may or may not have received in the past, their writing abilities in English as a second language, their motivation and interest in writing, age, self-perceptions, socioeconomic background, and their understanding of traditional writing structure.

International Students in an American University

Students from all over the world travel to the United States to pursue higher studies. A degree from America opens greater professional opportunities for many as well as brings them prestige and acceptance in their community. According to the Open Doors 2019 annual report, compiled by the Institute for International Education with the U.S. State Department, 1,095,299 international students were enrolled out of a total of 19,828,000 students in institutions of higher education in the U.S. China is the largest source of international students in the US, followed by India, South Korea and Saudi Arabia. According to data from the U.S. Department of Commerce, international students contribute billions of dollars to the U.S. economy every year. 51.6 percent of international students in the United States pursued STEM (science, technology, engineering, mathematics) fields in the academic year 2018-19. Engineering remained the largest academic field for international students in 2018/19, with 21.1 percent of all

international students. American universities are welcoming of international students as they bring cultural and ethnic diversity to the social and academic culture of the campus. Universities provide various resources and scholarships to the international students, so they can have an enriching experience during their stay.

The research was conducted at a Higher Learning Commission (HCL) accredited, comprehensive, research, land-grant university situated in a mid-western state of the United States of America. As seen in Table 2.6, a total of 1471 international students attended the university in Fall 2019, and as seen in Table 2.7, out of the total, 123 students were from India.

Table 2.6 Fall 2019 International Enrollment at research site

	Undergraduates	**Graduates**	**Other**	**Total**
New international students	90	111	54	255
Continuing international students	535	645	36	1216
Total	**625**	**756**	**90**	**1471**

Table 2.7 Fall 2019 Indian students Enrollment at research site

Undergraduates	**Graduates**	**Other**	**Total**
27	94	2	123

All students were welcome to apply to graduate and undergraduate programs through an online application form. Students applying for undergraduate studies were required to have a minimum of 2.5 GPA from an accredited high school. International students were required to pass the English proficiency test (EPT) once they arrived on campus.

Intensive English Program

All full-time undergraduate students at this mid-western public university were required to enroll for at least 12 but not exceeding 21 credit hours, for the fall and spring terms. All undergraduate international students were also required to enroll for at least 12 credit hours for each term, however, enrollment for the summer term was not mandatory. After admission and upon arrival on campus, all international students were required to attest their English language proficiency. The students had the option to take the university administered English Proficiency Test (EPT) or provide scores for their Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL)/ International English Language Testing System (IELTS) or other international standardized test to measure English language proficiency of non-native speakers. The international students who met the university's English language proficiency requirements were ready to enroll for academic classes in their respective fields of study. The international students who did not meet the university's English proficiency requirements were then enrolled for a minimum of 18 credit hours in the university's intensive English program. Once these students achieved the minimum English language proficiency by completing all the levels of program, they were allowed to begin full-time study in their academic programs.

Due to the increasing number of international students from non-native English-speaking countries, in the universities all across the US, the University and College Intensive English Programs (UCIEP) was founded in 1967. UCIEP is a non-profit educational organization that promotes quality instruction in intensive English programs in U.S. universities and colleges. The goal of UCIEP is to ensure that all incoming international students receive sufficient English language training and assistance they

need to enroll for the university classes in their respective fields. According to the UCIEP guidelines (2017), the UCIEP members are dedicated to providing high quality academic English language instruction and cultural orientation to international students studying at higher education institutions in the United States. The guidelines propose that the intensive English programs of each university or college must offer at least 18 hours of instruction per week, and at least 28 weeks of instruction each academic year with a class size of 5 to 25 students. It also requires the programs to provide three levels of instruction in listening, reading, speaking and expository writing, as well as academic and cultural orientation to enable students to perform effectively at the college or university level.

The Conference on College Composition and Communication (CCCC) committee in 2014, requested the intensive English program administrators to provide quality writing instructions to the writers of English as second language (ESL) , as third language and as forth language [with English as Foreign Language (EFL) background]; so they can prepare for the college composition writing programs. The intensive English programs are meant to identify and address second language/third language writing issues, along with teaching speaking, reading and listening English language. Research suggests that although the intensive English language programs helped the international students with making new friends, coping with the new sociocultural and often, new linguistic atmosphere, learning the 'American' way of doing things, and coping with new learning methods (Gautam, Lowery, Mays, & Durrant, 2016); they did have some shortcomings: they put second-language writers along with third language and fourth language writers in the same class levels even though ESL writing issues are distinctly different from EFL writing issues (Weigle, 2016); students were not prepared for the college composition

classes since their second language writing (L2W) issues were not addressed (Matsuda, 2003); L2W proficiency needs time and practice which could not be possible in the short course time of the program (Ward, 1997); not addressing the complexities of teaching standard English writing to writers who speak a variety of Englishes (Horner, Lu, Royster, & Trimbur, 2011); differences in the ESL and EFL writing processes from first language writing process were not addressed (Matsuda, 1998); ESL and EFL writers were not taught textual reference process in academic writing (Leki & Carson, 1997); and having TOEFL scores as predictors of academic success of international students in the U.S. (Light, Xu, & Mossop, 1987; Ward, 1997). Undergraduate international ESL and EFL students who have poor writing abilities do not make significant progress in writing in the intensive writing programs.

The intensive English program at this mid-western public university, called the English Language Program (ELP), was accredited by the Commission of English Language Program Accreditation (CEA) and provides courses on listening and speaking, written communication and reading English. The international students who successfully completed these courses were able to identify details in basic English discourse, acquired sufficient basic vocabulary to participate in simple life-skills based conversations, demonstrated standard knowledge of grammar and punctuations, and were able to write simplified paragraphs that show a logical flow of ideas.

College Composition Classes

At the research site university, the undergraduate international students, enrolled full-time in their academic programs, were counseled by their academic advisers to enroll in the Expository Writing courses provided by the university's Department of English,

for the first year (Fall and Spring terms) of their four-year undergraduate study. The Expository Writing courses, English 100 and English 200, both 3 credit hour courses typically offered during the fall and spring terms, were amongst the few university mandatory courses for the first-year undergraduate students. The course objectives were in compliance with the university's undergraduate student learning outcomes. English 100 focused on informative writing about diversity issues like human difference, communities, and identities. Major writing assignments for English 100 amounted to approximately 5000 to 7000 words in total. By the end of the course, students were expected to demonstrate an awareness of their writing process, be able to conduct research, and exhibit competence in college level reading and writing in English language. English 200 focused on argument and persuasion, with written assignments of approximately 6000 to 8000 words in total. Students were expected to identify and apply the core concepts of an explicit argument considering the needs of the audience, and adopt effective process writing strategies, including invention, drafting, analyzing, peer-reviewing, revising and editing. Enrollment of the Expository Writing courses were on a first-come, first-served basis through computer generated lists and were not decided by the tutors or the students. Both international students and native-speaking students competed together in these courses, with no added academic privilege or tolerance to either of the groups. All other academic courses taken by the undergraduate students involved writing in English, whether for formal or informal assignments, tests, presentations or projects.

Many international students who have taken the intensive English program before their college composition class have experienced a difference in the teaching methods

and treatment of writing in the two programs (Atkinson & Ramanathan, 1995; Hyland & Milton, 1997; Zainuddin & Moore, 2003; Downs & Wardle, 2007; Jack, 2008). Second language (L2) writers who learn listening, speaking, reading and writing in the intensive English programs with other EFL writers, need to have proficiency in the writing to succeed in their college education. According to James (2008), many L2 writers do not see any benefit of the intensive English programs since their writing in the program is limited to short paragraphs, and not essays which they require to write in a college composition class. In the intensive English programs, writing is considered as one of the many skills required for academic success, so the second language writers do not receive any instruction emphasizing on writing more than any other skill. Higher level courses emphasized on academic essays, but lower level courses focused on short paragraph writing, note-taking, summarizing and paraphrasing (Zainuddin & Moore, 2003). As can be seen in table 2.8, intensive English programs and the college composition classes differ in their goals, types of courses provided, writing expectations and assignments. Most of the teachers in the intensive English programs have some ESL/EFL teaching experiences, and a few may also have some experiences in ESL/EFL curriculum development. Instructors in the college composition classes are not required to have any ESL/EFL experiences (Atkinson & Ramanathan, 1995; Downs & Wardle, 2007). While intensive English programs focus on learner-centered communicative language teaching, the college composition classes focus more on the academic writing aspects (Zainuddin & Moore, 2003). Unlike the college composition classes, the intensive English programs provide various courses based on proficiency levels (Downs & Wardle, 2007).

Table 2.8 Differences between Intensive English Programs and College Composition Classes (Atkinson & Ramanathan, 1995)

Programs:	Intensive English program	College composition classes
Curriculum:	Speaking, Reading, Writing.	Composition writing
Writing expectations:	Clear, straightforward communication of facts and ideas	grammatically accurate and rhetorically effective.
Assignments:	short paragraph writing, note-taking, summarizing and paraphrasing.	Various forms of essays: argumentative, self-reflective, deductive, etc.
Assumptions/Requirements:	Basic middle-school reading and writing background	Cultural knowledge of *American way of life* required to provide anecdotal examples. Basic understanding of culture-specific concepts like assertiveness, insightfulness, originality/creativity, logic/rationality, etc., and academic writing concepts like the six traits of writing: organization, voice, word choice, sentence fluency, and conventions

As recorded by Atkinson and Ramanathan (1995), the two main focus of the college composition classes nationwide are emphasizing on writing as a process and

teaching writing through workshops. Each student is encouraged to think critically, to develop the ideas with suitable examples and is given opportunities to write several drafts and receive constructive feedback from the instructors and her/his peers. Downs and Wardle (2007) note that an 'A' grade paper in the college composition class needs to have a thesis statement, present a solid argument, provide compelling evidence/examples to support the argument, maintain proper development of the ideas through a logical organization, and have no grammatical mistakes. Atkinson and Ramanathan (1995) also observe that although there are different course sections for the L2 writers and the native-speaking writers, the course objectives, approaches, assignments and grading rubrics remain the same. Also, some of the assignment assume basic understanding of culture-specific concepts like assertiveness, insightfulness, originality/creativity, logic/rationality, etc., and academic writing concepts like the six traits of writing like organization, voice, word choice, sentence fluency, and conventions, which are common knowledge for a native-speaking writer.

In 2018, the National Council of Teachers of English, USA outlined that second language and multilingual writers have different cultural concepts of discourse, audience and rhetorical appeals. The guidelines suggest that second language writers grow within their own cultural context and when they are in a native-speaking environment, they will need to expand their knowledge about the social contexts and audience. For that they need their teachers to provide English as first language (L1) textual models, writing strategies and constructive feedback. The guideline further states that L2 student writers need multiple opportunities to write so they get a clarity in L1 writing purpose, expectations and audience. Ramanathan and Atkinson (1999) had pointed out that the

four aspects of L1 composition, voice, critical thinking, textual ownership and peer review have cultural contexts that may be unfamiliar to the L2 student writers. However, Li (2009) suggests that instead of accepting the differences in L1 and L2 pedagogies and celebrating L2 writings, many L2 student writers consider L1 writing as the standard and attempt to duplicate it. According to Coolidge-Toker (2012) there is no denying that there is a linguistic hierarchy of native English speakers over non-native English speakers. There is always an attempt to speak or write like the natives. This is reflected in L2 writings as well. According to Li (2009), research in second language acquisition has shown that relatively few non-native speakers can develop native-like competence, and that it is an unnecessary and impractical linguistic goal. Li (2009) further states that not only do many L2 writers prefer L1 writings as models, many L1 writers misunderstand variance in L2 writings as errors that need to be corrected.

Researchers have established that there are differences in L1 and L2 writings that are just not L2 writing errors in comparison to L1 writings (Leki, 1995; Matsuda, 1998; Hinkel, 2003; Hyland, 2016; Silva, 2016). Neither is L1 writing an improved version of L2 (Matsuda, 2010; Krishnamurthi, 2011; Atkinson, Crusan, Matsuda, Ortmeier-Hooper, Ruecker, Simpson & Tardy, 2015). Hinkel (2003) listed the differences to be (a) discourse and rhetorical organization (b) ideas and content of writing (c) rhetorical modes (exposition, narration, argumentation) (d) reliance on external knowledge and information (e) references to sources of knowledge and information (f) assumptions about the reader's knowledge and expectations (g) the role of audience in discourse and text production (h) discourse and text cohesion (i) employment of linguistic and rhetorical features of formal written text. Some of the other differences are in the writing

process (Matsuda, 1998; Silva, 2016); length of L2 writings being shorter (Silva, 2016); and differences in writing structures (Kaplan, 1998; Matsuda, 2006; Silva, 2016). Researchers have also argued that collaborative writing workshops, originally developed for L1 writing context, are not helpful for L2 writers (Leki & Carson, 1997; Matsuda, 1998) and the culturally coded assumptions implicit in L1 composition textbooks, writing prompts, and the writing curricula, all work against L2 writings (Atkinson &Ramanathan, 1995; Leki & Carson, 1997; Kaplan, 1998; Matsuda, 2006; Silva, 2016). According to Hyland, Nicolas-Conesa, & Cerezo (2016), differences are not errors as often misunderstood by L2 student writers, but when there are errors in grammar or structure, students must not be demotivated. Instead they must incorporate the constructive feedback in their revision and retain the knowledge for future writing. According to Javadi-Safa (2018), many L2 writers see differences as errors that need to be corrected or writing failures because they misjudge their writing by the fluency of their speech. She further explains that since writing is different from speech in word choice, fluency, sentence length and complexity, many L2 students may not be fluent in speaking English but are quite proficient when it comes to writing. Her suggestions to L2 student writers are to take time in writing, and brainstorm in L1 to facilitate better writing in L2. She had that students have been writing more on social media than in academic papers and it is important for them to understand writing about their sociocultural experiences can be liberating experience and will be accepted in L1 writing settings. Hyland, Nicolas-Conesa and Cerezo (2016) argue that individual differences in writing can be seen due to factors like language background, previous writing instructions, writing experiences, writing ability and proficiency in L2, age, motivation and interest in writing, self-perceptions,

understanding of writing prompts, understanding of audience and feedback from instructors.

Second language writers come from various social, cultural, economic and linguistic backgrounds. According to Hyland (2013), L2 writers have diverse linguistic proficiencies, prior learning experiences, and writing expectations shaped from their socioeconomic contexts. L2 students are also motivated to write in English due to their individual purpose which is reflective of their identity, and cultural perceptions (Boiarsky, 2005; Tardy, 2016), although as noted by Hyland (2002), L2 student writers do not feel comfortable making authorial references using personal pronouns in their writing. L2 writers also experience difficulty in expressing doubt and certainty in their English writing (Hyland & Milton, 1997) and lack confidence in writing since they are not familiar with American writing conventions, idioms and social interpretations (Gautam, et al., 2016; Lillis & Curry, 2016). According to a study conducted by Leki (1995), L2/ESL writers have developed several strategies that would help them write better and succeed in American college composition classes. These are (a) clarifying strategies: talking to teacher to understand the assignments, talking to other students about the assignment, asking for specific feedback on papers/projects when at drafting stage, trying to interpret the teacher's purpose in an assignment; (b) focusing strategies: rereading the assignment several times, reading books and professional articles; (c) relying on past experiences; (d) taking advantage of first language/culture; (e) using current experiences or feedback to adjust strategies; (f) looking for models: book reviews, articles; (g) using current or past ESL writing training; (h) accommodating teachers' demands; (i) resisting teachers' demands; (j) managing competing demands; (k)

managing course loads; (l) managing workload; (m) regulating the amount of investment made in a specific assignment; (n) regulating cognitive load; (o) managing the demands of life. According to Matsuda & Cox (2004), teachers of ESL student writers need to focus on the meaning rather than the grammar. Differences are not always signs of deficiency but may reflect writer's advanced thinking process and variety of cultural and linguistic knowledge. Matsuda (2006) argues that instructional practices that were made in L1 context, must be re-developed to accommodate ESL writing needs. U.S. college composition classes are un-prepared for second language writers. The growing number of international students in American universities requires a reconstruction of the teaching of writing in composition classes.

In most cases, writing program administrators and writing instructors do not have an in-depth understanding of the international students' sociocultural backgrounds. This makes it difficult for them to design curricula that are responsive to the ESL writing needs. According to Schneider (2018), college composition teachers needs to make an attempt to know their international students' writing persona, to know that many international students do not have prior knowledge of academic genres and prior experiences of research writing. Hinkel (2009) suggests that college composition teachers need to take note of ESL teaching plans and incorporate then to accommodate L2 wrietrs in their classrooms. In ESL classes, Hinkel (2009) continues, most of the writing prompts/topics are generally designed so that L2 students from any sociocultural background can understand them. This allows them to use their personal experiences and socio-cultural background knowledge in their writing. Most of the ESL teachers,

however, are not familiar with L2 writing backgrounds and this is reflected in the evaluations.

In 2014, the CCCC Committee on L2W compiled some suggestions for teachers teaching L2 student writers. CCCC requests teachers and writing program administers to recognize and understand the linguistic and cultural needs of the second language writers in the writing classes, train teachers in L2W research and instruction, provide classes for second language writers to aid their writing, study L2W issues, include L2W perspectives in curriculum. Nero (2010) suggests that college composition instructors need to have training in language diversity to help them understand the complexities of bilingualism or multilingualism and be able to provide constructive feedback. He also suggests teachers to provide a variety of writing options to the L2 writers, so they have opportunities to practice writing on regular basis. CCCC (2014) also provides specific instructions regarding assignments – to avoid topics that require contextual knowledge or may be sensitive to students with different cultural backgrounds; and regarding assessment – to consider various aspects of writing (topic, development, organization, grammar, word choice, etc.), overall impact of the text, audience awareness, and purpose, as opposed to focusing on one or two problematic areas. As Puteh, Rahamat, & Karim (2010) highlight, ESL students need their teachers to understand their challenges as a writer in second language, identify the problems and provide solutions so they can strengthen their writing experiences. According to Steinman (2003), there is a strong relationship between writing and culture in terms of voice, organization, reader/writer responsibility, topic, and identity. College composition instructors need to be aware that the L1 notions of the above features do not imply for the L2 writers. As Santos, Atkinson, Erickson, Matsuda

and Silva (2000) point out, English composition classes need to write curricula that is inclusive of L2 writers and they must hire teachers who have some experience in ESL teaching. They further added that teachers must be accommodating of ESL/L2 writing and need not evaluate using L1 standards. Recognition and acceptance of linguistic differences in the classroom is important since students come from various cultural, linguistic, ethnic, racial, and literary backgrounds in the U.S. (Lovejoy, Fox, & Wills 2009). Dixon, Zhao, Shin, Wu, Su, Burgess-Brigham, Gezer and Snow (2012) point out that reflective teachers, metalinguistic awareness in teacher, writing practice, constructive feedback and interactive learning serve as positive influences in L2 writing. Crusan et al. (2015) highlights that if writing instructors were aware of their L2 students' linguistic diversity, it would help them aid better in their learning of writing in English language and their evaluations would be less of language structure and more of variety of language resources non-native speaking students bring to the writing classroom. Webb (2015) and Syahid (2019) in two separate research studies, stressed on the importance of student-teacher conferences as the most effective strategy to know about the sociocultural and linguistic background of the students, to know about the students' writing persona, their feelings, attitudes, motivation towards writing in a second language like English and to explain the errors and provide constructive feedback to students in person.

Researchers have also found out some of the areas which have been the most challenging for the L2 student writers, in order to help teachers and administrators aid L2 writers. Becket (2005) identifies the two major challenges of non-native speakers of English as the need for help with editing for correctness in areas of word choice, sentence construction, and fluency; and the need for help with development of ideas as they feel

hesitant in using personal experience to develop ideas, and arguments. Lee (1997) compiled a list of problems teachers may encounter in their classroom while teaching L1 and L2 writers together. He also provided solutions for each of these issues. According to Lee (1997), some of the problems of international students for whom English is the second language are (a) listening ability: for which teachers need to speak slowly and clearly, repeat key terms and write them on the board, write homework assignments on the board or use a handout, provide copies of notes and make clear which sections of the book are being covered each day and recommend that international students listen to news programs on television or the radio; (b) differences in cultural background: for which teachers need to provide background information while teaching, recommend magazines or books for library research, recognize that students are probably suffering from culture shock, spend time with the student to know their culture, make clear what constitutes good writing in your class, recognize that international students may ascribe a different connotation to a word than the one you intend, and have the student explain the assignment in her own words either orally or in writing; (c) oral communication skills: for which teachers need to provide review questions, provide an atmosphere conducive in questions, listen carefully and make an educated guess, ask the student to spell a word or rephrase a statement, have the students write on the board, have another student rephrase the question, and give students time to reflect; (d) vocabulary: for which teachers need to try to avoid idiomatic language and slang and write key terms and vocabulary on the board; (e) writing: for which the teachers need to provide models/samples of both good writing and bad writing so the students can identify the criteria for an acceptable paper, explain in simple but detailed terms what is expected since they may be aware of writing

expectations in their country but not of what is expected for an academic paper in the U.S.

There are several different composition theories that college composition teachers can choose from when teaching composition to first-year college students in the U.S. They are basic writing, collaborative writing, community-engaged writing, critical writing, culture-based writing, expressive writing, feminist writing, genre writing, literature writing, new media writing, online writing, process writing, research writing, argumentative writing, second-language writing, writing in the disciplines, writing center (Matsuda, 1998). Most of these pedagogies were written for native-speaking students, although all of them had undergone changes over the years to accommodate the pedagogical needs of ESL and EFL student writers. According to Matsuda (2003), studies in writing as a second language began to facilitate higher education pedagogical concerns focused on the difficulties of non-native speaking writers (mostly international ESL and EFL students) in U.S. higher education. Despite such efforts, many of the composition theories are still unable to fully integrate L2 writing issues into the composition studies (Leki & Silva, 2004; Reiff & Bawarshi, 2011; Hirvela, Hyland & Manchon, 2016). According to Webb (2015), the most affective learning strategy for the non-native speakers of English is the process approach. Zamel (1976) introduced the concept of writing as a process to the ESL studies. He argued that both advanced L2 writers and L1 writers can benefit from instructions emphasizing writing as a process. This will enable students to view writing beyond the syntax and structure, and focus on the process of brainstorming, conceptualizing, pre-writing, organizing drafting, and signification through invention strategies, multiple drafts, and teacher/peer feedback (Atkinson, 2018).

Other approaches that work with both L1 and L2 writers in a college composition class are communicative language teaching approach (more popular method of teaching language in an intensive English program) which is learning both speaking and writing in English for communicative purpose (Brown, 2009); controlled composition approach (again mostly used in intensive English programs) to teach standard grammatical structures (Leki & Silva, 2004); guided composition approach which is an extension of the controlled composition approach (Matsuda, 2003); genre approach of using prior knowledge in writing through discussion, procedure and narrative (Johns, 2003; Reiff & Bawarshi, 2011). In a recent study, Hirvela et al. (2016) suggested the teaching of writing to L2 student writing by incorporating theories that have worked the best so far, like the process approach, the genre approach, collaborative approach, and culture based approach focusing on the writer, the text and the reader. Using such approach, L2 writers learn various writing skills so they can use them in their college course work (Leki,1995; James, 2008; Cumming, 2016; Hirvela et al., 2016). It is essential for the L2 students to succeed in their college composition class because it is directly linked with their success in the higher education in the U.S. Writing is also a personal expression which defines their social identity in the U.S.

Theoretical Frameworks

This study is guided by Krashen's (1982) definition of second language acquisition and second language learning, Kachru's (1992) discussion of World Englishes through the Three Concentric Circles model and Lillis's (2013) sociolinguistic study of English writing where variation is articulated at the levels of use (functions, genres, practices), levels of user (age, social class, gender, ethnicity) and levels of linguistic phenomena (monolingualism, multilingualism, dialect, accent). These theories have shaped the research question, the design, interpretation of the data and the analysis of the findings.

Second Language Learning and Second Language Acquisition

The process of language learning and acquisition is determined by the language function and usage. Traditional linguistic theories have established that at least one language is 'acquired' while other languages are often learned to bring socioeconomic growth (Sassure, 1916; Labov, 1994; Coulmas, 2003). Chomsky (1972) is the most influential linguistic of the twentieth Century. He restructured the study of linguistics through his theory of Transformational Generative Grammar (TGG). He believed that language is a natural component of the human mind. According to Chomsky, a child is born with the linguistic faculty which makes it possible for her/him to learn any language while growing up. He calls the language learning capacity which a person acquires from birth, as Language Acquisition Device (LAD). In TGG, Chomsky (1972) uses algorithm to generate all the combinations of words possible to predict all grammatically correct sentences, and defines this capacity as unconscious knowledge of language called Universal Grammar (UG). Children know intuitively that some words are verb while

others are noun and that there are limited set of possibilities as to their ordering within the phrase. Children absorb sentences and phrases spoken by adults around them and observe the abstract grammar rules to create their own phrases, which they then keep adjusting till they match the adult speakers. According to Chomsky (1972), although grammars of different languages differ from one another, their basic forms and structures are universal. This is why children use their UG to acquire any specific language from the environment.

Chomsky (1972) adhered to the rationalist view that reason or rationality as a property of the mind is the primary source of knowledge and argued that experience is not the source of knowledge, as empiricists claim. He proposed that linguists must study language competence but need not focus on performance. According to him, competence is the knowledge of the structural properties of all the sentences of a language while performance is the transformation of competence into real-time use and everyday interaction and environmental interruptions and memory limitations distinguish performance from competence. Chomsky (1972) rejected any study of the language which is external to the mind. He claimed that TGG is a biological system, marked by an absence of any role for community and culture. This viewpoint of Chomsky invited several criticisms from sociolinguistics and also pitted him against descriptive linguistics of Leonard Bloomfield and structural linguistics of Ferdinand de Saussure. According to Hymes (1972), to learn a language and use it with proficiency, one must learn the grammar and vocabulary as well as the context in which the words are being used. Hymes (1972) was influenced by Chomsky's distinction of linguistic competence and performance. He proposed the study of linguistic knowledge that people have when they interact with others and called it communicative competence. Just as linguistic

competence is based on grammatical proficiency, communicative competence is based on appropriateness and acceptance of language within a community and a situation. Hymes (1972) also defines a clear distinction between linguistic competence and linguistic performance. While linguistic competence is defined by traditional linguists as intuition and internal linguistic knowledge of ideal speaker-hearer in a homogenous community, linguistic performance is real language use within a social community and is external to linguistic structure. He however criticized Chomsky's model of TGG as it excludes the heterogeneity of language use, the social stratification of language, the stylistic differentiation and various social connotations. He advocated that linguistic competence is formed as a result of the individual's interaction, needs, motives, social experiences with her/his social environment, attitudes, values, and motivations concerning language features and uses.

Krashen (1982) study of First Language Acquisition (FLA) and Second Language Learning (SLL) expands on Chomsky's (1972) theory of native language acquisition. Krashen (1982) formulated the theory of Second Language Acquisition (SLA) where he distinguished between language acquisition and language learning, an important conceptualization in the field of linguistics. The acquisition of one's native language or the first language (L1) involves learning of the language without a conscious effort, while the second language (L2) is 'learnt' in a formal setting through linguistic instructions. SLL is the learning of L2 in the formal context of school through the study of grammar rules and the learning of vocabulary of textbooks (See Figure 2.3), while SLA happens when L2 is learnt the way one acquires L1 by listening and speaking before reading and

writing. SLL and SLA cannot happen before FLA because the acquired competence of L1 enables learning/acquisition of L2.

Krashen's (1982) theory of SLA consists of five main hypotheses: acquisition - learning distinction, natural order hypothesis, monitor hypothesis, input hypothesis, and affective filter hypothesis. According to the acquisition - learning distinction hypothesis, second language is either learnt or acquired. When second language learning happens, it is a conscious process which involves knowing the rules of the grammar.
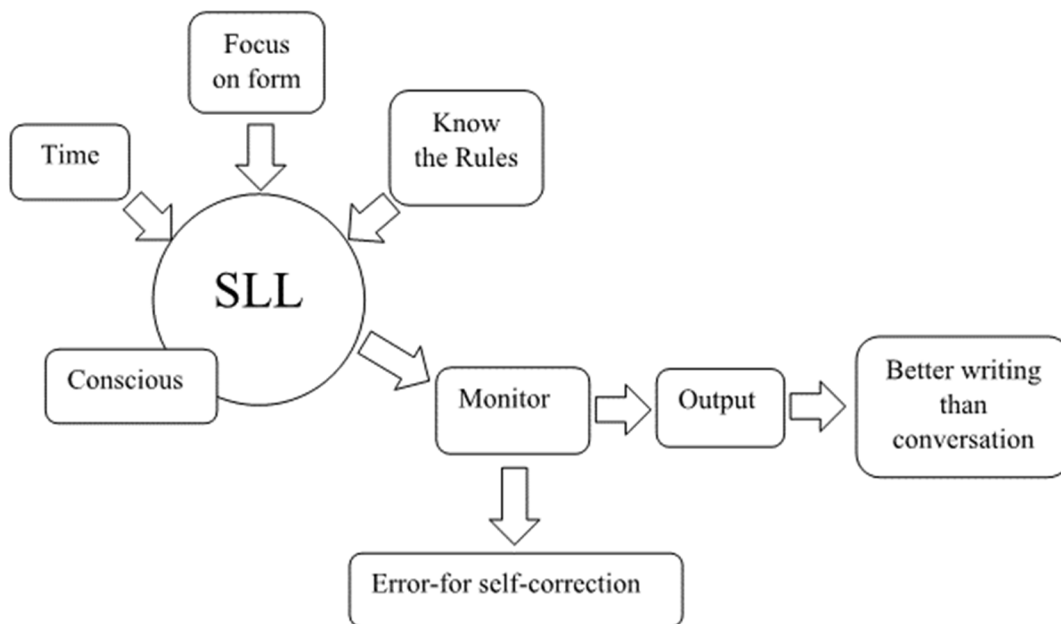
Figure 2.3 Second Language Learning (Adapted from Krashen, 1982)

On the other hand, second language acquisition is a subconscious process where one is not aware of the knowledge of the grammatical rules that they have acquired (See Figure 2.4). Another difference between second language learning and second language acquisition is that error correction happens more in learning than in acquiring the language. Both children and adults have LAD which enables them to acquire or learn a

language at any age but at any stage, learning or acquiring the language will not enable a person to achieve native-like competence. According to the natural order hypothesis, children tend to acquire some grammatical structures early and some later, but they always follow the natural order of grammar acquisition. The important aspect to note is that the order of acquisition of L1 is not the same as the order of acquisition of L2.
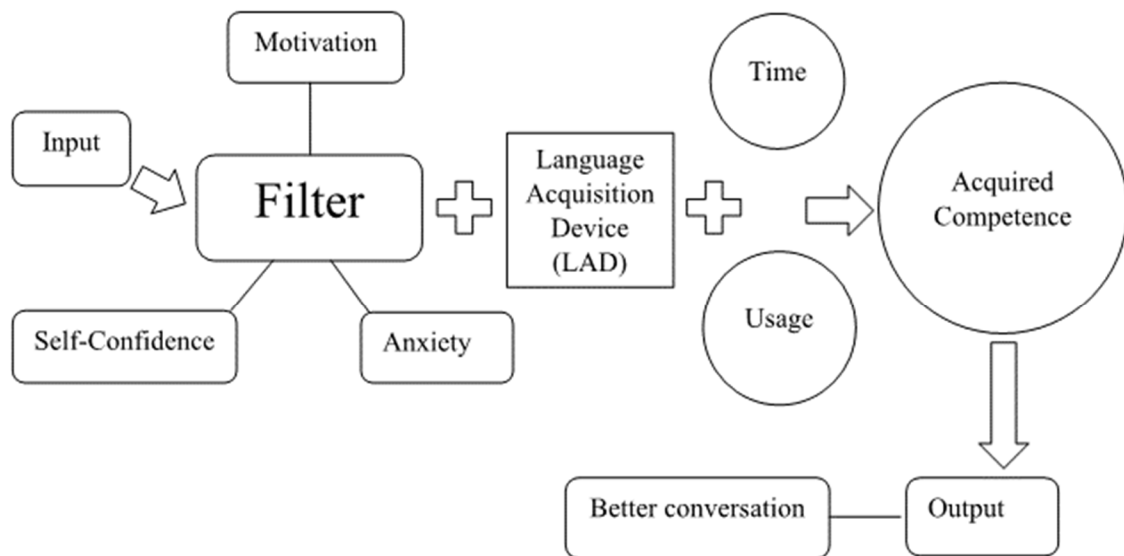
Figure 2.4 Second Language Acquisition (Adapted from Krashen, 1982)

According to the monitor hypothesis, language acquisition is responsible for the utterances, but language learning enables the editing of the utterances before or after self-correction, through a monitor. Another crucial part of this hypothesis is that the conscious learning requires (a) time, because conversation lacks the time required to think about and use the grammar rules; (b) focus on form, thinking about the correctness; and (c) knowing the rules, since one is only exposed to a small part of the total grammar. According to the input hypothesis, acquisition of language happens when the language is

beyond current level of competence, communication is successful when the input is understood, and accuracy of language acquisition develops over time and continuous increased usage. And finally, according to the affective filter hypothesis, the success of the second language acquisition depends on three important aspects: motivation to learn the language, self-confidence and anxiety of learning the language.

There have been several linguistic significances of the study of SLL and SLA. Researchers have found a direct relation between the mother-tongue of a person and the acquisition of a second language, in a multilingual setting. Although the processes of acquiring a mother-tongue and acquiring a second language are different due to several factors (Donoghue, 1968), according to Leather (2003) and Haznedar & Gavruseva (2013), if a child learns several languages at the same time of acquiring his/her mother-tongue, then the SLA may become part of his/her identity just as the mother-tongue. This process is however rare in case of SLL because the learning causes a shift in the identity with time (Norton & McKinney, 2011). As Krashen (1982) theorizes, while both L1 and L2 can be acquired at childhood through the natural communicative exposure from family, relatives, and a familiar linguistic environment, L2 learning happens in school, through grammatical and structural coaching. Elaborating on Krashen's theory of the role of consciousness in language learning, Schmidt (1990) suggests that when a learner notices a linguistic form, intake happens but is quickly forgotten unless they actually have knowledge of the grammatical forms and they pay attention. This process of going from subliminal perception to incidental learning to paying attention, he adds. Specific to a multilingual society, Schmidt (1990) says that once the learners have input, their mind is engaged in various conscious (analysis, processing data, deleting, reorganizing

grammatical rules) and subconscious (generalizations, assumptions about language) process. White (2015) posits that the unconscious knowledge of the language is always derived from UG and in a multilingual context, the knowledge of grammar of native languages in L2 speakers provides them with an unconscious representation of grammatical rules in languages, which influences the UG and the learning process of several other languages simultaneously. In such contest, learning of the second language can happen as a formal system parallel to and explained in terms of the first language or learning of the second language can also happen with little or no reference to the first language (Donoghue, 1968). According to Foley and Flynn (2013), when the second language system does not match with the system of the first language, then the L2 ability to draw upon L1 for understanding does not happen and the learning is delayed.

In a multilingual society, where many languages are being used based on different contexts and purposes, there are incidents of incomplete acquisition of the L1, reminds Montrul (2013). Due to the lack of usage opportunities, some languages, often the mother-tongue, is not acquired completely. Although all languages have similar functional and cognitive principles, each language has unique grammatical relations and the language which is practiced and used the most for a purpose is acquired, even though two languages may have similar grammatical relations (Dryer, 1997). SLA and SLL can happen with variation, depending on the learners and their learning environment (Regan, 2013; Chaudhary, 2013). According to Skehan (1991), the variation of learning or acquisition of a second language happens due to the individual talent for learning languages, which is independent of intelligence and is not the result of previous learning experiences. Roberts and Meyer (2012) states that many have knowledge of second

language but there is a variability in the proficiency of each individual due to the differences in time spent in learning and using the language. Learners may differ in the way they learn a language and how soon they become proficient in it, despite sharing the same learning environment.

Krashen (1982) posits that the term 'learning' for the second language is problematic sometimes since the process of acquisition with L1 stimulates the grasping of the formal structure of a new language, thus elevating the language learning process. According to Krashen (1982), second language learners do not always merely 'learn' the language but 'acquire' it with maturity, hence, the term second language acquisition. Once the L1 has been acquired, L2 learners use their understanding of linguistic concepts and their experience of language structuring in L1 for their 'learning' of L2. According to Bayley (2007), language acquisition of a second language happens more often in an urban area where there is abundant usage of the L2 and there is evidence of the maturity and familiarity in the process which enables SLA. He states that L2 speakers often use communicative resources to function effectively in a multilingual, multicultural society where there is a variance in the understanding and fluency of the L2. Ellis and Wulff (2015) posits that language learning is primarily based on the learner's usage of the L2. They further argue that their linguistic input depends on the environment they are in, the interactions they have in the language, the time spent in the usage and the purpose they accomplish with the usage. The 'acquiring' of L2 happens more often in urban multilingual settings where there is substantial exposure through formal schooling as well as social interferences and influences (Chaudhary, 2013). According to Gass and Mackey (2015), interaction is crucial in the process of acquisition since it provides the learners

with opportunities to receive continued input and feedback, so they can modify and refine their output. Interactions also initiate several behavior reinforcements like smile, nod, hand gestures, frowns, and expressions that are deep-rooted in social conditioning and helps with the SLA (Donoghue, 1968). Such a process of frequent interaction enhances the L2 acquisition and proficiency, especially in a multilinguistic country like India (Kudchedkar, 2013).

Lantolf (2011) uses the sociocultural theory framework by Vygotsky, to study the development of second language. According to the Vygotsky sociolinguistics theory, any linguistic development process is dependent on the participation of the learners in their various linguistic, cultural and social settings with family, in school, with friends, with peers, through social activities and in workplaces. Lantolf, Thorne, and Poehner (2015) observe that second language learning and acquisition in a multilingual, multicultural and multiliterate country is dependent on the extent of incidental and intentional exposure, and the outcome is variable in its context. One may be proficient in speaking L1 but more comfortable writing L2, or vice versa, or may have the speaking, reading, and writing proficiency for both L1 and L2 (Veronique, 2013; Chaudhary, 2013). SLA is dependent on several external factors like age, gender, social class, economic status, ethnic identity, educational opportunities, and natural setting (Narang et al., 2016). According to Wankhede (2012), unlike spoken discourse, written discourse does not happen in the form of an exchange. So, there is no opportunity to constantly change/revise as per the flow of a writer-reader exchange and this is where SLL plays an important role. Acquiring a language is a complex process but a simultaneous process of learning the language through education helps in the gaining of grammatical competence as well as

communicative competence in order to communicate ideas, emotions and thoughts (Kudchedkar, 2013).

The field of SLA explains language learning process and language acquisition process but does not discuss language use. Larsen-Freeman (2003) argues that the complexity of language use after the SLL and SLA can be studied through the field of World Englishes, especially for L2 writers from India. Bolton and De Costa (2018) also posits that the fields of Second Language Acquisition (SLA) and World Englishes (WE) overlap at several levels. SLA investigates individual experiences of English language learning and bilingualism while WE explores the varieties of English in multilingual societies. SLA primarily focuses on the cognitive and structural aspects of the language and WE is concerned about the sociocultural aspects of language acquisition. Yet, a substantial academic dialogue and research collaboration between the two fields is much awaited, more because of neglect than any conflict.

World Englishes

With the growing demand for the English language globally, several localized varieties of English as per usage have been identified, like British English, American English, Indian English, Japanese English, Nigerian English, etc. According to Halliday (2009), the standard forms of English now shares the stage with the global forms of the language. In the 1980s, with the growth of globalization came the spread of English worldwide and various linguistics scholarships like English studies, sociolinguistics, and applied linguistics, began to recognize and study the various forms of the English language found globally (Bolton, 2009). English became the preferred language for worldwide commerce, professional discourse, bureaucracy, and education (Horn, 2009).

Globalization has sped up the worldwide interconnectedness and has created complexities in the language, nature of language learners, and the language learning process (Stroud & Heugh, 2011). According to Schneider, (2011), English language is being imported daily through immigration, commerce, media, etc. resulting in complex form of language contact and sometimes, language shift.

Kachru (1985) coined the term 'World English' (WE) to recognize the localized varieties of English and explain the spread of English language worldwide. He later revised the theory in 1992 to also study the types of spread of English worldwide, the patterns of acquisition and the functional domains in which English is used internationally. He proposed the stratification of WE into a Three Concentric Circles model based on the spread and usage of the English language globally, in terms of three concentric circles: the inner circle, the outer (or extended) circle and the extending circle.

Inner Circle
(UK, USA, etc.) 320M-380M
Outer Circle
(India, Nigeria, Singapore, etc.)
300M-500M
Expanding Circle
(China, Egypt, Russia, etc.)
500M - 1,000M
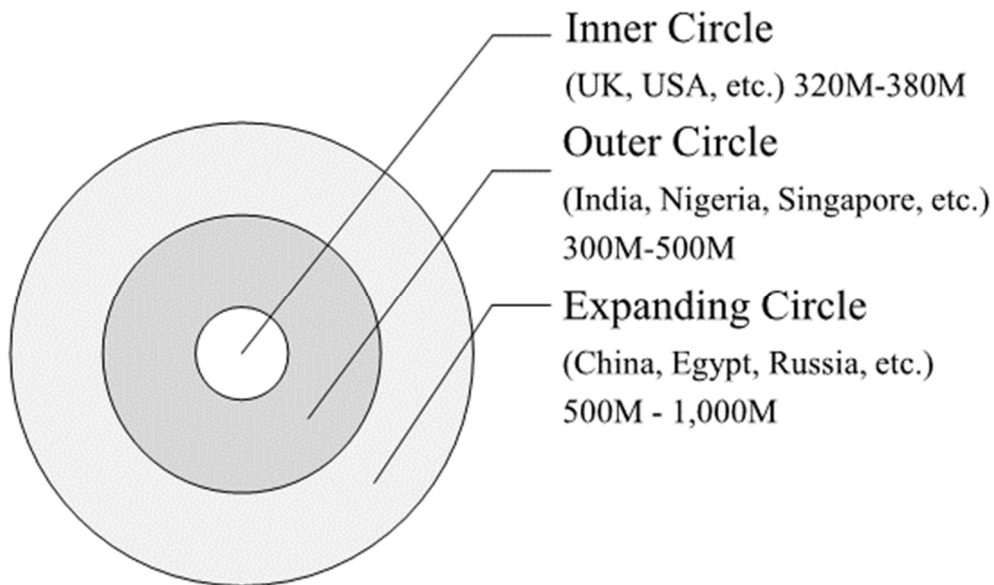
Figure 2.5 Three Concentric Circles Model (Kachru, 1992)

The Inner-Circle (IC) consists of the native English-speaking countries like the United Kingdom, Ireland, The United States, Canada, New Zealand and Australia. Most of the population in these countries are L1 speakers of the English language. Traditionally, English from these parts of the world are considered globally as the standard form of the language. The Outer-Circle (OC) comprises of countries that were once colonized by the British empire, like India, Nigeria, Kenya, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Singapore, Hong Kong, Philippines, and many other countries in Asia and Africa. The English language in these countries was spread through imperial expansion. Most of the population in these countries are L2 speakers of the English language. English is their official language, used in areas of the government, academics, literature, finance, commerce, entertainment and social communication, along with their vernacular languages. The Expanding-Circle (EC) encompasses countries like China, Russia, Egypt, Japan, etc. where the usage is only limited to international communication and has no social or institutional role. English is learned in these countries as a foreign language, primarily as a tool to sustain international bureaucracy, travels, and commerce.

With the growing use of English worldwide, linguists have proposed that the Three Concentric Circles model is dynamic due to the changing nature of English language usage, purpose and proficiencies. According to Bruthiaux (2003), the gap between those who know English and those who don't is large and unexplored, so geographical generalization is not adequate. Yano (2001) proposes a revised model suggesting that the boundaries have become more permeable and fluid due to the globalization of English language and few English speakers from OC and EC may have native speaker's competency and native speaker's intuition. Mesthrie (2006) also

suggests a more dynamic model since in this age of globalization, new standards of English are surfacing along with several varieties from the OC and the EC. Despite the modifications, Kachru's model remains a popular research tool to recognize and accept all varieties of the English language.

According to Kachru (1994), there is a need for study of varieties of English and understanding of language acquisition and language use in multilingual countries for the development in the field of ESL. In a later study, Kachru and Smith (2009) argued that the global demand for English in the fields of politics, economy, commerce, and education have not only changed language equations in multilingual societies but also defused vernacular language rivalry and language conflicts. The concepts of first language, second language and third language has changed due to the preference to learning and usage of English, especially in multilingual countries (Omidvar & Ravindranath, 2017). According to Bolton (2009), WE is an umbrella term for linguistics of English worldwide, the study of inclusivity of all the varieties as well as the functionality of English in each of the circles. He goes on to argue that IC is not just the home of norm-providing, native language users, but also the producer of most teachers and evaluators. Similarly, OC is the source norm-developing, second language users who are students, and EC is the source of norm-dependent, foreign language users who only learn the language to accomplish an educational or career feat (Bolton, 2009). English is increasingly used for communication, commerce, education, globally and as Graddol (1997) has shown, L2 speakers of English now outnumber L1 speaker by three to one ratio. As Kachru (1985) had suggested, all forms of the English language from the OC and EC need to be valued for their natural geographical progression and must not be

judged against the L1 English from the IC. Linguistic development and change as well as the sociocultural influence on the English language is now a popular area of research for linguists all over the world (Erling, 2005). In the last three decades, research on WE has examined the sociolinguistic dynamics of the spread of the English language worldwide and has established a positive attitude towards the international varieties of English.

Crystal (1995) proposed that with the advent of globalization, English is rather a global language. He adds that since L2 speakers from the Outer-Circle and Expanding-Circle travel into Inner-Circle for education, commerce and global job opportunities regularly, the Three Concentric Circles model has been shifting with a floating population. In the early 20th century, majority speakers of English were the native speakers but today, the maximum speakers of English are either speakers of English as a second language or as a foreign language (Narula, 2012). With the use of English in international relations, international travels, international safety, media: press, advertising, broadcasting, cinema, popular music; education; communications, Crystal (2015) proposes English to be the global language. Coupland (2010) disagrees with Crystal's idea of English being a global language since English is not evenly distributed around the world and only twenty percent population of the OC countries can speak English fluently. As per Crystal's definition, there is no universal standard in the global English but is used only as lingua franca. Crystal (1995) overlooks the fact that vast majority of speakers of English worldwide do not speak a standard variety. Typically, non-native speakers of English are treated as 'deviations' from the standard and have the burden to 'improve' to match the standard form (Coupland, 2010). According to Jenkins (2012), English language is used as a vernacular in the IC, whereas English is an official

language and an important lingua franca of the elite in the OC and EC countries only use English as a foreign lingua franca used for communication with outsiders. Coupland (2010) disagrees since OC and EC are multilingual, English is still far from being the lingua franca of the majority.

Since English is used as a contact language for many OC and EC non-native speakers, as they travel across the world for various professional, personal and pedagogical needs, linguists have proposed it to called English as lingua franca (ELF). According to Baker (2009), communication in ELF settings is a complex relationship between language and culture, evident not just in international communication but also within multilingual countries. Canagarajah (2006) has argued that ELF is not for academic purpose but for communicative purpose and the focus needs to be on the types of communication strategies used in multilingual communities, like proficiency in negotiating multiple dialects, registers, and discourses rather than grammatical rules. According to Mackenzie (2014), many traditional SLA concepts like 'interlanguage' and 'language errors' do not apply for ELF because errors are relevant divergent form of a language in the context of ELF. Similarly, code-switching is also not an error or evidence of insufficient knowledge of a language (Seidlhofer, 2011). She also adds that ELF is a verbal skill that requires a great deal of competence in both the languages that are being switched to make linguistic and cultural meaning. ELF speakers do not want or need to acquire native-like proficiency in the target language because it is only for the communicative needs (Seidlhofer, 2011). Jenkins, J. (2012) Writing in ELF is emotional and cultural rather than grammatically accurate. She further argues that ELF writers never claim to be competent in English, neither do they want to be competent and writing

in ELF uses emotional metaphors to connect to the readers and are deep-seated in sociocultural richness.

In a multilingual and multicultural country like India, English is a little more than just a lingua franca (Kachru, 2008). In India, the status and role of English is undergoing rapid change and English language usage is uneven in society, divided by age, gender, urban-rural divide, ethnicity, religion, and caste (Bolton, et al., 2011). Such English language usage reflects the refiguring of multilingualism and its societal organization (Schneider, 2011). According to Stroud and Heugh (2011), globalization has also challenged the traditional concept of multilingualism. It is no longer just the knowledge of a set of languages, but it is also a process in which each language performs an essential function of communication (Leather, 2003). Also, the knowledge of each language is partial, and only serves as a tool for a particular social interaction of the individual (Stroud and Heugh, 2011). They further add that notions of mother-tongue, first language, second language, etc., no longer have a set limit of proficiency. The social meanings and values associated with vernacular languages are changing as well (Krishnaswami & Krishnaswami, 2017).

Kachru (1965) proposed that the variety of English spoken and written in India must be acknowledged and called Indian English (IE). According to Lange (2012), the notion of IE has been contested by many linguistics but Kachru (1998) re-emphasized that IE must be considered as a variety due to the extent of its usage by the Indians, especially post-globalization. Recent use of varieties of English in media (Martin, 2009), education (Matsuda, 2006), and professional communications (Mallikarjun, 2019) have not only put IE in the global map but also proven its global effectiveness. In India, there

has been a gradual but slow shift from conforming to the standard English and discarding the local varieties of English to accepting the IE variety along with incorporating the standard language forms for academic writing (Kachru, 2009). As Krishnaswamy and Krishnaswamy (2017) record in their study, there has been a drastic change in the English language in India over time. From using English for bureaucratic expressions during the British rule, to being the global language of arts, academy and commerce today, IE has transformed immensely over the ages (Ramanathan & Atkinson, 1999; Agnihotri, 2001; Sindkhedkar, 2012). Although IE has its roots from British English, there are specific differences in spellings, word choice, sentence construction and use of idioms (Kudchedkar, 2013). IE is also linguistically variant from the American English in unique discourse features (Chaudhary, 1990; Mukherjee, 1992; D'Souza, 2001; Gargesh, 2018; Mallikarjun, 2018). The use of cultural idioms and connotations like, *you reap what you sow* (translated from Hindi proverb and used in IE writing), *feet in two boats* (translated from a Bengali proverb), *focus like Arjuna* (reference to Indian epic *Mahabharata*), *matrimonial sites* (reference to arranged marriage online portals), *living in Dharavi or chawls* (reference to the slums, suggesting poverty) are some common features of the IE. According to Krishnaswamy and Krishnaswamy (2017), IE during colonization was mostly in the form of formal fixed phrases, and passive constructions like – *beg to inform you, public is hereby informed, respect will be paid, I beg leave to assure you that*, etc. They further state that post-independence, with the increase in English scholarship amongst the elite, the English phrases became more relaxed, although formal in tone: *hereby informed, thanking you in anticipation, my most sincere congratulations*, etc. Again, before globalization, English had undergone several phases as a language in India.

The language was not just limited to the elite and was being taught in schools and colleges. Krishnaswamy and Krishnaswamy (2017) reported that students used English to write applications, essays in schools, number of mistakes, odd expressions increased as well as vernacular words which has cultural and social significance were used in phrases: 'the *dharma* of man is to practice honesty', '*Kali puja* festival was celebrated today', etc. According to Bhatia and Kathpalia (2019), IE uses several sociocultural references in writing like religious terms: *karma*; mythical figures from epics and fables: *Arjuna*, *Tenalirama*; borrowed words: *avatar, pundit*; cult movie references: turned into a *Ghajini*; cultural terms: *pranam*, *kumkum*, etc. Ramanathan (2007) states, in this age of globalization, students are more familiar with British and American English usage due to internet, television, radio, and even foreign travels and yet Indian English has witnessed continuous borrowings from vernacular languages, *karma*, *avatar*, *yogasana*, etc. He further adds that many vernacular languages have also included English word in their daily vocabulary, *table, college, office, train, bulb,* etc. According to Nair (2008), in India, the lexicon of the youth, between 15 to 25 years of age, reflects a command but not competence over several languages. He states that there is frequent code switching and playfulness with metaphorical meaning in the language of the youth, as seen in their interactions in social settings and in the social media. He adds that these linguistic interactions also include: a medley of languages: Hinglish, Banglish; "marked" status of English: *banda bada angrez hai*; economic and class rivalries: English medium *log saare*; reference to ads/movies: every time you can't be *Mai kaha hoon*; college slang usage: enthu, pile on *marna* (living at others' expenses); use of swear words; cultural meanings of words: impress (only when attracted to someone), night out; suffix:

nonsense*giri*, *maro*ed, *maro*ing; mix of two words: chillax; Religious references: *Ram Ram*, etc. As opposed to the daily use, when it came to usage in schools, nationwide Indian English is used frequently by many but it is varied in competence, with some Indians being able to speak and write with high proficiency while many make grammatical mistakes, and have vernacular accent in their speech, and writing and many not being able to either speak or write in English (Sindkhedkar, 2012).

According to Narang et al. (2016), the general attitudes of teachers and students towards learning of English language in India have changed in the recent years due to the information technology revolution worldwide and an overall interest towards English learning for better career opportunities. The access to information through internet has increased the interest of learners as well as their parents (Susikaran, 2012). Classroom interactions between the teacher and the students is also becoming more interactive, invoking interest in learning of the IE (Kalia, 2017). According to Saraf (2014), radical social reforms by the government and the non-profit organizations in the past few decades have resulted in lesser caste-related violence and more opportunities of learning for the lower caste students. Ramanathan (2007) conveys that due to the growing number of government and private schools in rural areas, underprivileged children now have an opportunity of English education. Better transportations and faster communications have opened access to English education even in the most remote areas of the country. With the access to internet and global television, students are exposed to international news and media, providing them with an understanding of the presence of English language worldwide. According to Bhatia and Kathpalia (2019), on a global scale, people across nations, region, gender, ethnicity and age, are exposed to traditional print media,

television, radio, and various social media platforms. English is the chosen language for most of media in this age of globalization. In India, media often uses a mix English with regional languages for maximum social and cultural effectiveness (Sharma, 2005). English language in India, or the Indian English is a mix of standard grammar and lexis, and the cultural context; and contains frequent borrowed lexical terms or code-mixing (Smith & Nelson, 2009; Gargesh, 2018). Switching between local languages, a frequent phenomenon in multilingual societies, is the use of L1 during L2 speaking and writing process, according to the train of thoughts, to help with the composing (Woodall, 2002). According to Scatton (2011), there are four main reasons of codeswitching, (a) lack of knowledge of one language or lack of facility in that language on a certain subject; (b) for conversation privacy so only the people who know the language will understand it; (c) as a stylistic device to change the tone of the conversation; (d) as an attempt to impress another with the knowledge of the prestige language. Sheorey (2006) explains that Indians switch between English and their native language of the region with ease. For example, a native of Maharashtra whose vernacular language is Marathi will generally codeswitch between Marathi and English, although the most common is codeswitching between Hindi and English, making it a Hinglish language (Saraf, 2014; Narang et al., 2016).

Similar to the differences in speech patterns between English as second language varieties like the Indian English and the standard varieties, linguists have also noted distinctive differences between L2 and L1 writings. According to Kachru (2009), the differences between L1 writers in the U.S. and L2 writers from Asian countries are many. He states that the L1 writer will commonly have a thesis statement, an argument,

examples/details to support argument and a conclusion while the L2 writers often do not have thesis, tend to present both sides of an argument and sometimes leave essays open-ended. Gargesh (2009) posits that L1 writings tend to have reasoning and an assertive tone with use of modal verbs like should, must, etc., to emphasize arguments while L2 writings are commonly emotional and passionate with use of polite techniques like maybe, perhaps, etc. L2 writers also see an indirect approach in writing as an added marker for politeness. Kachru (2009) highlights that while L1 writers prefer short sentences are easy to read, L2 writers go for the 'high language' and have long sentences with ornamental language. The main reason behind such writing style, she says, is because the L1 writers did not connect two different sentences with 'and' as they see the logic of having two sentences one after another while L2 writers see the connection between first and second sentence and to establish that connection they join the two with an 'and'. Working with international students, Pennycook (1996) had said that the American standards of academic reference and citation methods is not a common feature for the L2 student writers. They often do not understand the definition of plagiarism since textual borrowing and ethical/unethical practices in writing may differ with culture, he added.

There has been a growing number of L2 students travelling to the U.S. from OC and EC in the recent decades. According to Bolton (2009), the acceptance of non-native varieties like IE in the academic classes at the universities, is not a common practice, mostly because most teachers and administrators assess L2 student writing from an L1 pedagogic perspective. Another reason for the lack of understanding of the IE listed by Ferris (2016) is that L1 administrators often put the OC and EC students together in the

intensive English programs in American universities, even though there is a distinct difference between their learning of ESL (in OC countries) and EFL (in EC countries) respectively. According to Leki (1995), in OC countries, English is learnt as a second language and is an integral part of their oral, written and academic discourse whereas English is learnt as a third or fourth language in EC countries and is only for the purpose of their international discourse with the native speakers. Alatis (2005) observes that although there is a difference in the speaking and writing abilities of ESL and EFL students, they are regarded as the same population when it came to Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) scholarship in the U.S. TESOL encompasses teaching of both ESL and EFL in American universities. According to Alatis (2005), although the TESOL teachers are pedagogically trained and culturally sensitive to the ESL and EFL learners who are non-native speakers of English, with proficiency levels ranging from very low to relatively high speaking and writing skills; they still do not differentiate between OC students' view of the English language competency as the opportunity for social and economic advancements and the EC students' view of English as a language skill necessary to pursue their academic classes in the American university.

In the recent years, linguistics have come to an agreement writing pedagogy should be same for both L1 and L2 writers and L2 writers should not be treated as "other" but a revised curriculum is required to accommodate their diverse linguistic experiences and knowledge base (Matsuda & Cox, 2004; Matsuda, 2012; Silva, 2016; Ferris, 2016). According to Kachru (2008), the varieties of WE writing are linguistically situated in their own cultural context. The role, status, and structure of the L2 varies across different contexts of socialization, belief systems, conventions of language use and

usage, oral and literate traditions of language use, popular versus high literature (Matsuda, 2012; Silva, 2016). Kachru (2008) reminds that both L1 and L2 writings are influenced by sociocultural appropriateness and shared knowledge of the cultural context of all varieties of Englishes help in the interpretability of writing. Canagarajah (2006) highlights the hierarchy of IC Englishes over OC Englishes. He argues that while British and American texts are considered as the norm and the L2 student writers often use them as model for their writing, it also sets the tone of regarding OC writings as informal discourse for communication and the IC writings as formal, grammatically superior academic and international discourse. Ferris (2016) considers that the OC writings are as much part of the academic discourse as the IC writings. She states that L2/multilingual/ESL writers are a large and complex group and their various linguistic backgrounds and writing needs must be addressed individually to help create model models of better writing from OC countries. Some of the challenges highlighted by her, that the international students writing in L2 face are (a) L2 student writers may have a range of pedagogic experiences from early age regular learning to optional learnings, or having opportunities of independent academic writing to having additional writing tutors or having minimum to no academic writing experience; (b) L2 student writers may have a range of prior experiences of diverse writing instructions and various teaching philosophies and approaches. With regard to teaching and evaluating English writing to L2 students in American universities, Silva (2016) suggest that some pedagogical approaches that can be inclusive of WE varieties like the IE, are guided composition where writing was seen as a way to practice language learnt from listening and reading; paragraph-pattern method where writing is taught through paragraphs and essays with

structured elements like thesis, topic statements, etc.; process approach where focus is given on the individual writing process, like invention, revision, etc. and English for academic purposes approach where students are guided to understand the expectations of an academic audience and develop skills essential for academic writing, like using sources, etc. WE roots for the academic success of ESL and EFL writers and celebrates the fact that such writing is richly situated in their sociocultural contexts.

Sociolinguistics of Writing

Sociolinguistics is the study of interaction of language and how it relates to various social categories like social class, ethnicity, age, gender, network, etc., (Coulmas, 2003, p. 563). Linguists have established that both oral or written form of the language, are embedded in social contexts, belief systems and conventions, that affects both its form and its function (Scribner & Cole,1981; Scollon & Scollon, 1981; Tannen, 1982, 1984; Heath, 1983; Street, 1984; Farr, 1986). Ferdinand de Saussure (1857-1913), the pioneer of modern linguistics, was the first to recognize that language is a social behavior and is guided by social factors like class, profession, age, or gender, in a community (Coulmas 2003; Hickey, 2007). Formal linguistics, however, defines language as a self-contained, fixed structure on basis of phonology, syntax and the lexicon (Wardhaugh, 2006). It was only during mid twentieth century that sociolinguistics, the study of language and society, was established in the academy.

Sociolinguistics defines language change and variations as a reflection of social processes and relationships (Coulmas, 2003). This phenomenon was identified by Labov (1972) as sociolinguistic structure of English. Labov (1994) focused on not just language variation but also linguistic change, which is reflected in his three-volume *Principles of*

Linguistic Change (1994, 2001, 2010). Labov recognized three stages of language

change: Origin (a period in which alternative variants for established variants begin to

appear), Propagation (The stage at which the new variants establish themselves to the

detriment of the older ones which are sidelined), and Conclusion (The stages at which the

remaining variants are either replaced completely by new variants or remains as a residue

after the change has terminated) (Hickey, 2007). Labov (1994) criticized Noam

Chomsky's view that natural everyday speech is chaotic and ungrammatical, and that

constant adjustments are made in the mind to transform the disjointed and ungrammatical

into an output that adheres to the basic linguistic forms and structure. Labov (1994)

explained that such view comes from Chomsky's disregard for the social context.

According to Labov (2001), language can be orderly and structured but need not be

homogenous. The five important linguistic issues that he studied are: constraints on

change, transition stages, social and linguistic embedding, evaluation, and actuation of

change (Bell, Sharma & Britain, 2016). According to Labov's research, the effect of

social factors on language cannot be contained within grammatical rules and that socially

determined variations exist due to their relevance with certain group of people at a certain

time and place. In 1994, Labov proposed the S-Curve Model of Language Change,

through which he demonstrated three phases of language change: origin – a period in

which many variants exist for one and the same phenomenon, propagation – the period in

which one of the variants establishes itself, and the conclusion, when the remaining

variants are done away with. He further stated that various external factors like social

pressure, literacy, influence of a particular variant, etc., can accelerate the process of

language change (Bell, Sharma & Britain, 2016).

According to Coulmas (1998), The relationship between language and society is such that language contributes to making communities possible and communities shape their languages by using them. As Gupta (2007) explains, communities differ in their:

> "deeper underlying values, beliefs, notions of beauty and modesty; child-rearing practices; patterns of interactions with superiors, subordinates and peers; work habits; relationship and patterns of interaction with family and friends; attitudes towards interdependence and individualism; implications of specific gestures and body language; speech and conversational patterns in various contexts; definition of personal space; conception of self in relation to others; patterns of demonstrating and handling emotions; notions of leadership; definition of sin; understanding of time; status accorded by gender, age, occupation, educational level, class, caste, kinship; concept of childhood and the image of the child; styles of teaching and learning; styles of eating; meanings given to the idea; of guests and hospitality; and so forth." (pp.4-5).

The languages play an important role in reflecting the unique sociocultural identities in the communities, and sociolinguistic studies the frequencies of social and cultural changes that occur within languages (Meyerhoff, 2006). According to Gupta (2007), people from various sociocultural backgrounds exhibit differences in communicating styles in accordance with their vocabulary, verbal and non-verbal cues and interaction styles with respect to age, gender, social and economic status. Sociolinguistics helps record these behaviors as well as the social dialects and individual style, language attitudes, identity, ethnicity, measures of politeness, multilingualism and language choice,

real time and apparent time change in language, social networks, spoken and written languages (Coulmas, 2003; Meyerhoff, 2006).

The study of sociolinguistics defines and distinguishes speech and writing as connected but distinct pedagogies. Although both speech and writing are cultural and cognitive, writing is considered the advanced form of one's speech (Farr, 1986). While speech is considered as the informal vernacular dialect, writing is seen as the formal standard expression of language, taught is school, practiced in education and is considered prestigious and permanent (Coulmas, 2013). Study of the social speech systems reveal that pronunciations and vocabulary is correlated to social class, economic status, profession, and formal or informal settings. When individuals move in and out of social groups, their language patterns change according to the shared expectations (Blommaert, 2013). According to Coulmas (2003), speech is socially distinctive because of speakers' choice of words, pronunciation, and the manner of communication in the context of their socio-economic status, occupation, education, place of residence, age, gender, and ethnicity. Sociolinguistic study of writing reveals that writing is distinguished from speaking due to its social, cultural, graphic, infrastructural, linguistic, semantic, pragmatic and metapragmatic requirements (Blommaert, 2013). Hemphill (2011) states that written discourse is different from oral discourse since the writer has opportunities to plan, reflect, and revise while engaged in composing. He adds that sentence constructions like multi-constituent noun phrases, passives, etc., require complex planning and are less common in spoken discourse. He states that writers have the additional responsibility to build the text around the linguistic and cultural context of the readers as it cannot be revised once published.

Traditionally, the quality of writing in English had been dependent primarily on the use of universally standard grammatical features (Farr, 1986). The five major linguistic systems, according to Farr (1986) are (a) phonology: rules of pronunciation; (b) syntax: rules of grammar; (c) semantics: meanings associated with grammar, vocabulary, and patterns of discourse; (d) pragmatics: rules of use; and discourse: patterns of language beyond the sentence. Farr (1986) explains that when students are taught to produce texts using the traditional linguistic systems, there are expected to adhere to the mainstream standards of writing, which may or may not be similar to their own cultural and ethnic linguistic system. According to Rief (2006), the concept of good writing in the U.S. is based on theories by John Dewey, Donald Murray, Peter Elbow, Donald Graves, and Nancie Atwell, for whom writing is about sharing experiences, knowledge, opinions, and feelings. Rief (2006) further adds that writing in the U.S. requires purpose, knowledge about audience, critical thinking and voice, although the definitions of these aspects are culturally designed. As Hopper (1992) points out, it is important to write according to the changing grammatical standards and sociocultural assumptions and understandings of the language. He adds that what may be an error today, or culturally appropriate to write today, may not remain the same tomorrow. Blommaert (2013) suggests that texts must be constructed and evaluated keeping the sociolinguistics in mind since what has been labeled as errors in writing cannot be seen as permanent markers of poor education and a lack of intelligence. Lillis and McKinney (2013) propose that writing must be studied beyond the 'standard' and 'error' to include other sociocultural aspects. According to Lillis (2013), over the years the study of sociolinguistics has primary focused on the spoken language and not much has been said about the position of

writing apart from the 'standard' and 'error'. Writing is often approached as either being part of or striving to be part of the 'standard language', even though there has been a long debate about what is the standard (Mesthrie et al. 2009, Milroy 2001). According to Lillis (2013), sociolinguistic understanding of writing in the English language often addresses the inequalities in educational experience and outcomes. Since the primary goal of schooling is to ensure the use of the 'standard' language, writing is often seen as a yardstick to standard literacy. Lillis (2013) proposes three positions denouncing the rectification of writing but endorsing the understanding of the writing. They are (a) a theoretical position: writing cannot and should not be viewed as separate from context of use and users (b) an empirical position: texts, uses, and users need to be the subject of empirical research rather than being driven by a priori assumptions and value positions and (c) an ideological position: issues of power, identity, participation and access are central to writing practices and as such needs to be taken account of in exploring what writing is and does. According to Lillis (2013), the sociocultural contexts of writing is as important as its adherence to the standard grammatical systems.

According to Farr (1986) research has shown that the form and function of both speech and writing is embedded in social context, beliefs and conventions. Different cultural groups have various rules for using the language which may create confusion and conflicts about good and bad writing, when being evaluated in another academic or cultural setting (Wardhaugh, 1983). When writers from one culture and primary language write in another language and setting, the social, cultural and pedagogic demands change and since writing is not a single entity that can be placed in different contexts, the writer can achieve excellence only by incorporating their own cultural context in their writing

(Farr, 1986). Hence, it is important to shift the focus solely from the grammatical structures to understanding writing (Hickey, 2007). Writings cannot be judged for being "too direct, impolite, too informal, not to the point, aggressive" (Blommaert, 2013, p. 447) since the such tonal qualities are culturally situated within specific formats of the writing. According to Blommaert (2013) that the social and cultural conventions of writing are the actual norms of recognizability. He explains that whenever we read something, we recognize it to be written in English, vernacular or standard English, a friendly message or a formal one, an urgent message or a happy/scary message, etc. Writings can be recognized on the basis of indexical connections between specific formal features and contextual ones. The text has a voice if it depicts the exact emotion it is intended to depict. For example, if the author had meant to write a serious note, but it turned out to be funny, then the voice is lost in the writing (Blommaert, 2013). The failure and success of the writing is, therefore, dependent on how the writer has been able to incorporate the particular social and cultural resources in their writing (Blommaert, 2013). As Lillis and McKinney (2013) point out, perspectives on writing has changed in this age of multilingualism, multiculturalism, multiethnicity and global pedagogies.

A good writer can be differentiated from a regular writer in context to their social and geographical identity according to their social status, profession, economic status, gender, ethnicity, age, and education (Farr, 1986). Drawing of this philosophy, Lillis (2013) proposes that the everyday informal writings in English differ from formal standard writing in English due to the various level of use (functions, genres, practices), level of user (age, social class, gender, ethnicity), and level of linguistic phenomena (monolingualism, multilingualism, dialect, accent), as shown in Figure 2.6.
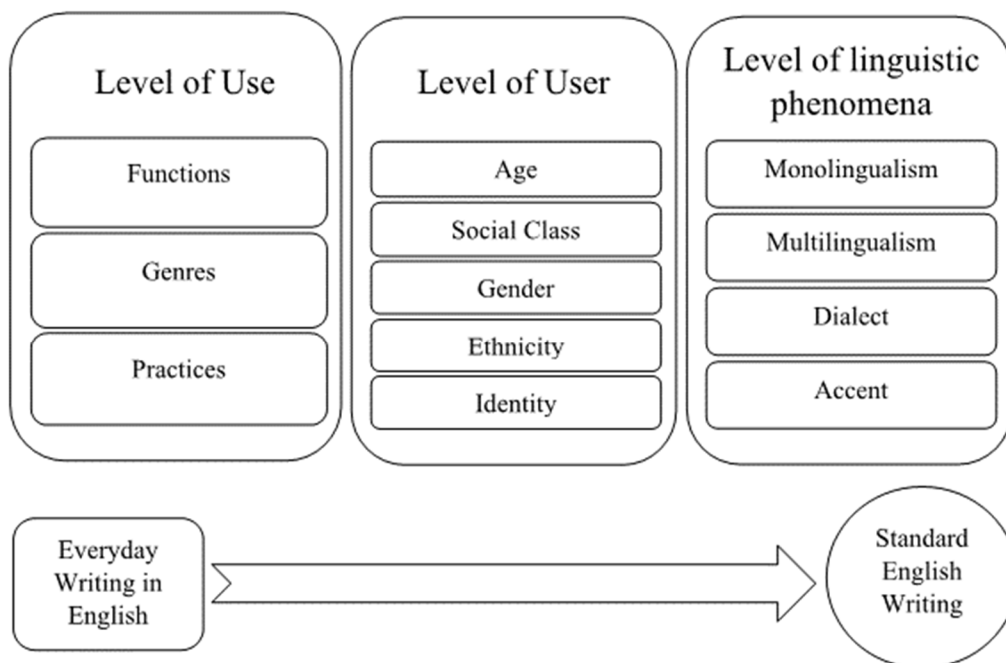
Figure 2.6 Sociolinguistic varieties of English writing (Adapted from Lillis, 2013)

Regular notes to family and friends, require cultural norms but not structural norms, whereas the presence of both the structural and cultural norms are seen in standard English writing, used in formal, academic settings (Lillis, 2013). The various levels of functions, genres, and practices, which necessitate the difference between regular and formal writing, as defined by Lillis (2013) is loosely based on Gunnarsson's (1997) proposal of four prototypes of communication communities: (a) Local-Private: family and friends, which includes written communication in the form of notes, lists, and short letters are part of this type of communication; (b) Local-Public: work place writing which includes written messages, memoranda, instructions, notices of meetings, minutes, lists, notes, and reports; (c) Distant-Public: Academic discourse; and (d) Distant-Private: Letter writing between distant friends and relatives. According to Lillis (2013) and as observed in Gunnarsson (1997) theory of community communication, academic discourse is

ultimate form of standardized, sociocultural piece of writing. The functions, genres and practices of writing depends on the motivation behind composing a text (Hickey, 2007) and also the writer's social network in the society. Revising Boissevain's 1987 study on the types social networks, Gunnarsson (1997) theorizes that the type of writing by the user varies with their purpose of writing the text, its function in their social network, the education and profession of the writer, and the position of the writer in their social network. According to Lillis (2013), it is the quality of the writing that either makes it an everyday writing or a standard writing and this quality is due to the factors like age, social class, gender, ethnicity and identity of the user. Just as an elderly, experienced writer is expected to write standard English writing, a younger student might not be as accurate in their grammar and contextual references in their writing (Lillis, 2013). Similarly, a writer who is of higher social class will have resources and privilege to write in standard English, adds Lillis (2013).

According to Lillis' (2013) model of sociolinguistic varieties of English writing, gender plays as important role in writing as well in terms of opportunities of education and writing, and language use. As Warshay (2011) points out, English language is sexist in the sense that the default case is always male: *the linguist must gather data and be careful that he organizes it properly.* Apart from the issue of generic usage, language may be sexist in the labels sometimes used for women. There have been many attempts to remove inherently sexist structures from the English language with usage of words like *humankind* instead of *mankind*, *police officer* instead of *policeman*, *Ms.* instead of *Mrs.* since it shows the marital status of the female (Warshay, 2011). Drawing from a study in 1970, by American linguist Robin Lakoff, Hickey (2007) highlights the necessity of

language rectifications and advocated gender-neutral language. Due to socialization, men and women use language differently. As Hickey (2007) notes, infants are treated as one gender or the other from the very beginning and this process begins with naming the child with gender specific names. He continues, that continuous reinforcements of gender allocation take place in subtle forms parental approvals or disapprovals, based on whether the children are complying to the role they are assigned. This gradually creates a difference in the mental makeup of the boys and girls, argues Hickey (2007). Girls are expected to be emotional while boys are supposed to be practical and reasonable. This phenomenon is reflected in the language as well. According to Hickey (2007), diminutive formations are commonly used for girls, which stresses their lack of physical and social power, and conversely their need for protection through words like 'girlie' and 'boyish' which reflect negative and positive characteristics and are too gender specific. Lillis (2013) suggests that types of writing produced by men and women and their importance often reflects the mindset that it is okay to be tomboyish for all genders but not good for the boys to be girlie; or that female shirts are called 'blouses' while the same clothing worn by men are called shirts and women may wear blouses or shirts, but men *do not* wear blouses. According to Warshay (2011), due to constant reinforcements of gendered language in some societies, male style of writing may appear active and aggressive, with emphasis on the individual and personal achievements; whereas the female style may appear emotional, passive, and with acknowledgement of others' achievements. Warshay (2011) further adds that using strong language like the curse and swear words is part of the 'rough and tough' male image while women often refrain from such usage as it is 'unladylike' and not 'genteel'. Lillis (2013) inserts that women are often expected to use

powerless, non-confrontational language like indirect statements: *it would save a lot of money if we bought a smaller car*; tag questions: *it's not that much to ask, is it?*; use of hedges, alternatives: *we could go for a drive or a walk this afternoon*; high rising intonation at the end of sentence: *we could go away for the weekend*; emotional 'genteel' language: *I'm delighted you're going to help. You're so kind* (p. 127). According to Lillis (2013), many years of research in linguistics have revealed that men and women write differently, which affects the quality of writing as well. She explains, women use more standard language than men (Warshay, 2011); they have less opportunities of receiving quality education than men (Lillis & McKinney, 2013); women's use of language and choice of words/voice/tone, all depends on the socioeconomic and familial pressures they experience. Lillis (2013) also argues that ethnicity and identity of the writer are important aspects of one's writing. As Kubota (2003) reflects, development and practice of writing skills is dependent on the writer's immediate social identity and ethnicity. Writing is a social product which is the reflection of the writer's ethnic identity, class identity, and education. As Hickey (2007) points out, writings are also a reflection of one's linguistic background, along with the social, economic and cultural backgrounds. All language use also as dialects which help identify speakers and writers from specific geographical and social space (Farr, 1986). When individuals move in and out of social groups, their language patterns change according to the shared expectations and intended audience. Vocabulary, word choice, sentence construction, use of imagery and examples in writing are all correlated to social class, economic status, profession, and formal or informal settings (Lillis, 2013).

Lillis (2013) posits that just as the linguistic continuum for the spoken language depicts the range of speaking proficiency influenced by various social, economic and linguistic factors, same can be considered for the written language. Lillis' (2013) reference can be compared to Kachru (2006)'s comparison of the growth and social competence of the Indian Standard English with Scottish Standard English through Aitken's English linguistic continuum model. Aitken (1979) proposed a five-column model of Scottish speech and written form. As shown in Figure 2.7, the continuum ranges from dense dialects to a standard version of the language and speakers/writers can move along the continuum in either direction, depending on their social class, age, birthplace, education, self-perception and situation (Douglas, 2009). According to Aitken, Scottish English is a blanket term for a variety of regional and social dialects of the English language along a linguistic continuum, ranging from local vocabulary/vernacular accent at one end to the standard version of the language at the other.
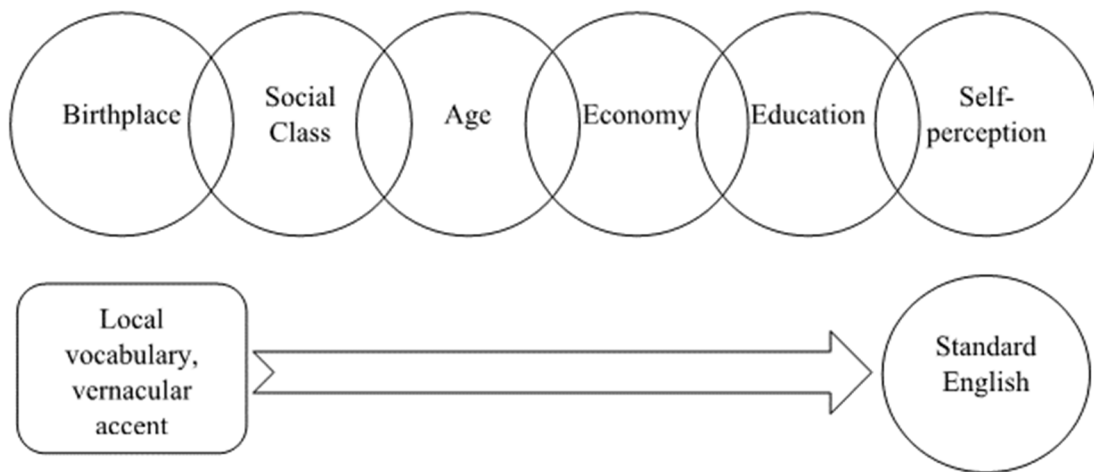
Figure 2.7 World Englishes Linguistic Continuum (Douglas, 2009)

Individuals, taking account of external factors such a context of situation, education, social class, etc., can move along the continuum in either direction, but some individuals

will inevitably have a stronger attraction to one pole than the other (Kachru, 2006). Using the same model, Lillis (2013) proposes that everyday writing differs from standard writing due to factors like social class, age, gender, birthplace, self-perception, situation, and education. According to Lillis and McKinney (2013), opportunities in education is extremely crucial for the development of writing skills and sociolinguistic understanding of the English language often addresses the inequalities in educational experience and outcomes. Since the primary goal of schooling is to ensure the use of the 'standard' language, writing is often seen as a yardstick to standard literacy (Lillis & McKinney, 2013). As Farr (1986) highlights, children are taught to write according to the standard norms in school even though they may be from different cultural, ethnic and linguistic backgrounds. Lillis (2013) reflects that quality of the writing instructions, either excellent or lacking, and enough writing practice in school result in few good writers and many average to bad writers in standard English. According to Coulmas (2013), quality of writing skills is directly related to social status, wealth and power and that access to education and acquiring good reading and writing skills is tied to privilege and social advantage.

Lillis (2013) also theorizes that a good example of standard writing is not only grammatically sound but also embedded in social context and has a meaningful purpose (See Figure 2.8). When a writer is displaced for their sociocultural and linguistic setting, writing skills and knowledge of standard grammatical rules can only play a partial role in developing a good piece of writing, she adds. Similarly, a skillful writer with a sound knowledge of the language, in their social context can never write a good piece unless they have focused on the purpose and the reader of their writing (Lillis, 2013).

Text ➕ **Standard Conventions** ➕ **Social Contexts** ➕ **Purpose** ➖ **Good Text**
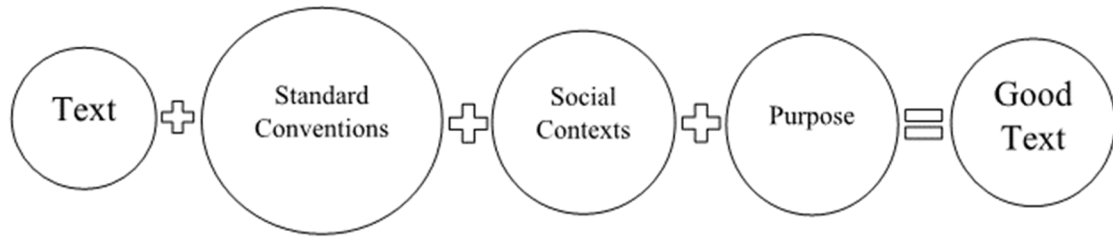
Figure 2.8 Sociolinguistic approach to writing (Adapted from Lillis, 2013)

A textual piece that is written in standard conventions, and is woven with cultural references, social meanings, and a purpose for the specific audience, should be considered as an example of good writing (Lillis & McKinney, 2013). As suggested by Gunnarsson (1997), for many years, the focus of sociolinguistics had been the presence or absence of textual patterns and grammatical conventions, while the sociocultural influences have only served as a contextual background. Lillis (2013) stresses that the writing and communication parameters have changed with the rapid change in international pedagogy. The social parameters that were just contextual details earlier and are now essential for good writing are, as Gunnarsson (1997) states, language experiences and hierarchy, expectations of the readers, the cultural positive and negative reinforcements, the social norms, general attitude towards the language and the identity of the writer. Teaching good writing in a cross-cultural classroom is complicated, states Farr (1986) because it not only requires the teaching of standard grammatical conventions and providing writing models, but also remembering that writing can be a personal experience for many and patterns of reasoning, presentation of argument, thought patterns and opinions differ across culture. According to Blommaert, (2013), a good student writer produces pieces that are grammatically and stylistically good, displays a wide range of vocabulary, is aware of the social and academic appropriateness, and

reveals their own ethnic and cultural experiences. In conclusion, the sociolinguistic perspective of good writing is a balance of sociocultural awareness of what is accepted and what is not, richness of individual experience, unique identity as a writer, focused thinking, clear voice, sense of audience, knowledge about topic, good flow in writing, overall logical organization, examples/details, introduction & conclusion, and grammar (Nauman, Stirling & Borthwick, 2011; Blommaert, 2013; Lillis, 2013).

Chapter Summary

India was introduced to the English language during its colonization by the British Empire for three hundred years. India continued with the education policies established during the British rule and despite several resistance, English gradually became an integral part of the education system. India is a multilingual country, with two national languages, twenty-two scheduled languages, over 190 vernacular language varieties and 1369 mother-tongues. English, along with Hindi and other vernacular languages, is taught in schools and is abundantly used in the fields of education, commerce, media and bureaucracy as it is considered the tool for social and economic success and power. The knowledge of the English language has opened new avenues for the Indian students, encouraging them to pursue higher studies in native English-speaking countries like UK and the U.S. Undergraduate Indian students in the U.S. experience writing academic papers in English through intensive English programs and college composition classes. The Indian students' learning and acquisition of ESL and their varied social, cultural and linguistic backgrounds results in a wide variety of English writing proficiencies amongst them. Three theoretical perspectives were used to frame this study: Krashen's (1982) distinction between SLL and SLL, Kachru's (1992) discussion of World Englishes through the Three Concentric Circles model and Lillis's (2013) sociolinguistic study of English writing. Krashen (1982) formulated the theory that the acquisition of one's native language or the first language involves learning of the language without a conscious effort, while the second language is 'learnt' in a formal setting through linguistic instructions for some, while for others the second language is learnt the way one acquires their first language by listening and speaking before reading and writing. Kachru (1985)

coined the term 'World English' (WE) as a recognition and acceptance of the global use of the English language varieties and proposed the stratification of WE into a Three Concentric Circles model based on the spread and usage of the English language globally. The Inner-Circle consists of the native English-speaking countries like the United Kingdom, The United States, etc. The Outer-Circle comprises of countries that were once colonized by the British empire, like India, and many other countries in Asia and Africa. The Expanding-Circle encompasses countries like China, Russia, etc. where the usage is only limited to international communication and has no social or institutional role. Indian students' role as an Outer-Circle writer is crucial as they travel to an Inner-Circle country like the US, and their college writing is evaluated by the native-speaking teachers. L2W is substantially different from first language writing. Being from a multilingual, and multicultural country like India, these students writing reflects their sociocultural understanding of good writing. According to Lillis (2013), writing is a reflection based on three primary levels: level of use (functions, genres, practices), level of user (age, social class, gender, ethnicity), and level of linguistic phenomena (monolingualism, multilingualism, dialect, accent). Lillis (2013) proposes that everyday writing differs from good writing due to factors like social class, age, gender, birthplace, self-perception, situation, and education. She also theorizes that a good example of standard writing would be a grammatically sound text that is embedded in social context and has a meaningful purpose.

Chapter 3 - Methodology

All aspects of the research methodology used in this study are reported in this chapter. This information is organized into the following sections: (1) research question, (2) research design, (3) research site, (4) participants, (5) data collection methods, (6) data analysis procedures, (7) trustworthiness, (8) ethical considerations, and (9) research positionality. This qualitative study was developed through a multiple case study design. The study was conducted using the qualitative research approach which Hatch (2002) defines as the study of the lived experiences of the participants within the context of their natural settings. Such an approach enabled detailed study of student experiences in naturalistic settings. One of the reasons for the selection of this approach was that people often use a set of reasoning strategy for test-like situations (found in quantitative approach) which is distinctly different from their reasoning strategies for everyday situations, as studied in qualitative studies (Lancy, 1993). This research topic needed to be examined in a natural setting, enabling the participants to express without bias, prior expectations or reservations. The design of this qualitative study was multiple case study. Within qualitative research, a multiple case study is particularly useful for studying a phenomenon that is being experienced by several individuals in certain shared context (Stake, 2006). This methodology facilitated an in-depth inquiry through direct quotations from the participant's personal perspectives and experiences (Bogdan and Biklen, 2016). Since writing can be personal for many students, a qualitative multiple study was useful to help the researcher explore the various aspects of the participants' past and present experiences and the relevance of those experiences in their understanding of good writing. The major data collection techniques for qualitative research are surveys,

interviews, observations, and review of documents (Hatch, 2002; Stake, 2006; Bogdan and Biklen, 2016). For this study, data was collected through personal interviews, a focus group discussion and triangulated through reflective memos by the researcher. These data collection methods helped the researcher explore multiple realities and perspectives based on the various experiences of the participants (Yin, 2003; Stake, 2006). This study relied on the participants' own description of their individual experiences in India and in the U.S. The participants' perspectives during their interview and the focus group discussion, were compared and contextualized to derive meaning crucial for the study. A detailed description of the sample, and the data analysis methodology is available in the next chapter.

Research Question

The primary research question used to structure this study was: In what ways have past and present experiences influenced undergraduate Indian students' understanding of good writing?

Research Design

The study was conducted using the qualitative research approach. Such an approach enabled detailed study of student experiences in naturalistic settings. One of the reasons for the selection of this approach was that people often use a set of reasoning strategy for test-like situations (found in quantitative approach) which is distinctly different from their reasoning strategies for everyday situations, as studied in qualitative studies (Lancy, 1993). This research topic needed to be examined in a natural setting, enabling the participants to express without bias, prior expectations or reservations. According to Stake (2006), it is important to note that not all of the reality that constitutes

education is in fact reducible to variables. Qualitative research methods provide means to examine contexts as a whole, without breaking them into isolated incidents (Hatch , 2002). This methodology facilitated an in-depth inquiry through direct quotations from the participant's personal perspectives and experiences (Bogdan and Biklen, 2016). Since writing can be personal for many students, a qualitative approach was useful to help the researcher explore the various aspects of the individual's academic and personal growth and their understanding of good writing.

Research Site

The study was conducted in a Higher Learning Commission (HCL) accredited, comprehensive, research, land-grant university situated in a mid-western state of the United States of America. The institution, founded in 1863, dedicates itself to providing academic and extra-curricular learning experiences to approximately 25,000 students each term. Sprawled over 668 acres, this public university offers 219 degree programs and 66 certificate programs. The choice of this research site was one of convenience. The researcher had been with this university for over a decade, in different roles: as a graduate student, as a graduate teaching assistant, as a student services staff and as an instructor. This mid-western public university became a natural choice due to its accessibility and familiarity to the researcher.

The university academic year was divided into three terms: Fall term (August to December), Spring term (January to May) and Summer (June to July). Each Fall term, approximately 1,600 to 1,800 international students enrolled, out of which about 750 to 1000 were undergraduate students. 21,719 students were enrolled in Fall 2019, including 17,210 at the undergraduate level and 4,509 at the graduate level. 625 undergraduate

international students were enrolled in Fall 2019, and 27 of them (from various fields of study) were from India. For the purpose of this study, the researcher sent out an email to all the 27 Indian undergraduate international students enrolled in Fall 2019. The email informed them about the study and invited them to participate in a personal interview and a focus group discussion. Contingent upon the convenience and agreeability of the participants, the researcher interviewed three male participants and one female participant, and seven students participated in the focus group discussion for this qualitative multiple case study research.

Participants

The desired population of this study were all Indian students who had travelled to the United States of America for their undergraduate college degree. According to the annual census of international students in the U.S. by the Institute of International Education (IIE), 106,881 new international students enrolled for undergraduate studies in universities across the country for the academic year 2018-2019. India is the second largest source of international students currently studying in the US. Given the scope of this research, the sample was selected keeping time, money, location, availability in mind (Creswell, 2007). The convenience sample were the undergraduate Indian students in a mid-western public university and had agreed to participate in an individual interview and a focus group discussion. Such a sample is 'typical' (Merriam, 1998) because it reflects an average participant from the desired population, experiencing the phenomenon that is being researched. An email was sent through the university's International Student Services office to all twenty-seven undergraduate Indian students enrolled for the semester, to inform them about the study and request their participation. Six students

responded with interest to participate in both the interview and the focus group

discussion, out of which two students dropped out of the interview due to their schedule

conflicts. One student dropped out of the focus group after his interview while one

student participated in the focus group after being referred by his friend who was a

participant. In total, four students participated in the personal interview and seven

students participated in the focus group discussion. All the participants were asked to sign

an informed consent form provided by the university's Institutional Review Board (IRB).

Protection of participants

The participants were informed in the invitation email about the purpose of study

and the extent of their participation. Researcher used "gaining access strategies" listed by

Bogdan & Biklen (2007) which included being truthful about the research procedures but

being careful as to not use too much research jargon or providing lengthy explanations.

Participants were told ahead of time about the following (Mack et al., 2005, pp. 12):

1. The purpose of the study,

2. What was expected of the participant, including time-frame of the participation,

3. How their confidentiality will be protected,

4. That there were no expected risks (psychological, physical or social),

5. The name and contact information of the researcher,

6. The name and contact information of the IRB of the university so they could

   contact with questions about their rights as a research participant.

The participants were informed that they would receive a $15 Amazon gift card as a

token of appreciation and were advised that any participation on their behalf was

voluntary and not bound to any contract. During the research process, the researcher

respected the wishes of those who did not want to or could not participate in the interview or the focus group discussion. They were also informed that they could choose to drop out in the middle of the interview or the focus group discussion or before the completion of the study. Researcher assured the participants that there were absolutely no repercussions for such decisions, and it would not disturb their academic and social life in any manner (Creswell, 2007). While conducting the interviews, researcher took special care to not cause any disruptions or interruptions. Researcher protected the participants' anonymity, ensured confidentiality to the participants, respected their privacy and did not share any students' viewpoint share during their interview with other participants.

Data Collection Methods

The primary forms of data collection were interviews, focus group discussion and memos by the researcher. The students were informed about the study by an email and were invited to participate in a personal interview and a focus group discussion. They were informed that the study did not involve any risks and that each voluntary participant would receive a $15 Amazon gift card as a token of appreciation. The email also contained information about approximately how long the interview and focus group discussion would take, and that the conversations would be audio taped and stored confidentially. The researcher followed Creswell's (2007) data collection circle, which began with locating research site, purposefully sampling, making rapport with participants, collecting, recording and storing data. The interviews and focus group discussion were transcribed as is, with the assumption that nothing was trivial and everything was a potential clue (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007). This process produced thick, descriptive data for the study. The focus group discussion and all the individual

interviews were conducted at the university's on-campus common activity center and meeting space for the students, which houses the university bookstore, printing office, bank, a convenience store, a cafeteria, a recreation center, various student service offices, small meeting rooms, conference rooms and two auditoriums. The researcher was responsible for booking the rooms and informing the participants well in advance about the date, time and venue. All the interviews and focus group discussion were audio taped. All the information collected were considered confidential and carefully secured, until the completion of the study, upon which the audio/transcriptions will all be destroyed. All the electronic copies will be deleted, and the hard copies will be shredded. The audio files, transcripts, and all other documents related to the research was encrypted through an encryption program, TrueCrypt. The password was unique computer generated, encrypted password using a mix of lowercase letters, uppercase letters, numbers and symbols. Only the researcher had access to all the drives.

Interview

Interviewing the undergraduate students from India was one of the primary mode of data collection. The interviews were essential since the participants' academic English writing experiences at present and in the past, was a behavior that could not be directly observed, nor could it be replicated (Merriam, 1998). Five students were interviewed individually, and each interview was for forty minutes to an hour. The descriptive, in-depth interview with the participants provided dense and rich data for the research. The interviews were devoid of idle chatter and were more focused on content relevant to the study (Kvale, 2015). The interview questions were geared towards the participant's personal socio-economic background, their education and English literacy in India, their

own journey of learning how to write in English, their experience in an American English classroom, and their strengths and weaknesses in the writing process. The interviews consisted of twenty-nine questions, focusing on five major areas (See Appendix). The first focus was on their social, economic and religious background, which was directly related to the sociolinguistic framework of the study. The second focus was on their education and English literacy in India, which highlighted the usage/practice of English as a second language, revealed their attitude towards learning writing in English, and recognizing Indian English as part of World Englishes. The third focus was on the English writing instructions they had received in India while growing up and their experiences and practices of various forms of writing. The purpose was to know how academic instructions shaped their understanding of good writing. The fourth focus was on the writing instructions they received in their English classes at the American university, which explored their experience as L2 writers in an L1 academic setting. The final focus was on their opinion of their strengths and weaknesses in writing in English, which tied their sociolinguistic experiences in India, their second language learning of English and their representation of Indian English as part of the World English, together to reveal their understanding of good writing.

The interviews were semi-structured, audio-recorded and in conversation style. Interview questions were open-ended, encouraging participants to share their unique perspectives on the issues at hand (Hatch, 2002). Quotes, anecdotes, and accounts of students which were related to their writing experiences were noted, to be used to explore and understand the different perspectives. The duration of each interview depended on the participant's personality and responses. Date, time and place of the interview were

decided by the individual participants. Each participant was provided with a consent form and were assured that their identity would be protected throughout the study. The consent forms were signed ahead of the interviews. Students were also informed that their answers would remain confidential. Their responses were not shared with their classmates or instructors and their participation did not affect their grade for any of their classes. The questions were open-ended and as Bogdan & Biklen (2007) suggests, the emphasis was on understanding participants' perspective and not just getting through the questions. Researcher also followed Berg's (2001) classification of interview questions into four types: essential, extra, throw-away and probing questions. Throw-away questions are those that are asked at the beginning of the interview and are related to demographics and context. Questions like, "Where were you born?" or "How was it like sharing a room with your sibling?", not only helped build a rapport with the participants but also helped lead the conversation towards the research relevant content. Essential questions were those that are concerned with the main focus of the research and extra questions would be those that add to the information essential for the research. Since the interview was semi-structured, participants at times raised particular issues that were not asked in the interview questions. When some of these issues seemed important for the research, researcher asked probing questions that then made the participant disclose more information about these issues. For example, one of the participants talked about status of women in their community while describing the academic qualifications and professions of his parents. The researcher found this as an opportunity to probe further to understand if the participant believed that given a chance, writing about such social issues so close to home would better his English composition writing. According to Kvale (2007),

interviews must appear to have the reciprocity of everyday conversations and yet be nothing like a conversation. The researcher critically followed up the answers, asked for specifics and often used counter questions to make sure feedbacks from the participant were consistent.

All the interviews were transcribed from the recordings and were saved for further analysis. During the interview, the researcher took extra caution to avoid any background noise, reminded the participants to speak loud and clear, and was careful not to interrupt the participant. Recording device was of high-quality and the audio files were kept unedited. Researcher had backup copies of digital files (Davidson, 1996) in multiple drives. A master list of all types of information gathered from the data was produced by the researcher (Creswell, 2007) which worked as a visual aid for locating and labeling information according to themes.

Focus Group Discussion

According to Krueger & Casey (2015), focus group is a small group of people who possess certain characteristics and provides qualitative data through a focused discussion to help understand the topic of interest. For this study, the participants were undergraduate Indian students, some of whom had previously participated in a personal interview for the study. The focus group discussion was held for about seventy minutes and seven students (four females and three males) participated in it. A PowerPoint presentation was set-up in the room ahead of the focus group discussion so that the participants could refer to the questions. After the participants had signed their consent forms and settled down, they were reminded that the discussion would be audio recorded to help researcher's data collection process. They were requested to say their name once

at the beginning of the discussion to help the researcher identify each voice during transcribing but were assured that anonymity will be maintained through pseudonyms. The students were informed ahead of the focus group discussion that their willingness or lack of it to participate in the study would not affect their grade point average (GPA) and reputation at the university in any which way as well as any response from them would be kept in full confidentiality. All the data was stored with extreme caution.

The focus group discussion was held after all the individual interviews were completed. According to Morgan (2019), the focus group discussion generates more detail about each person's perspective and creates an opportunity for interactive sharing and comparing between them. Focus groups are beneficial if the study aims to explore perceptions, feelings, ideas and thoughts about certain issues Krueger & Casey (2015). During the personal interviews, it was revealed that each participant had a different social, economic, cultural, educational and linguistic background. The purpose of the focus group discussion was to test Lillis's (2013) sociolinguistic theory on writing on L2 writers, especially when in a native English speaking and writing environment. The focus group discussion helped uncover various sociolinguistics factors that influenced the participants' English writing abilities. The focus group questions were centered towards the writing instructions they had received in India and the U.S., their views on different levels of English proficiency in India, their perception of the function of the English language in a multilingual country like India, their concept of English being a global language and the position of Indian students in the global context, their experiences of writing in Indian English in an American classroom and their understanding of good academic writing.

At the very beginning of the discussion, the researcher explained to the participants that the goal was not to come to consensus but to understand the different range of experiences of each participant Krueger & Casey (2015). First few questions were factual, and the participants mostly answered to the researcher but as the discussion proceeded, questions became open-ended and the discussion took a conversational tone. Initially, some participants were a bit reserved and were unsure about how much they should speak on the topic. The researcher asked probing questions to encourage the participants to speak more as well as provide a direction to the discussion. Very often in the discussion, the researcher used the "five-second pause and the probe" technique described by (Morgan, 2019), to draw additional information from the participants. According to (Morgan, 2019), a short pause coupled with eye contact from the moderator creates a discomfort with the silence. This prompts additional points of view as an extension to the previously mentioned position. Probing helps draw out more information and the researcher asked questions like "can you describe what you mean by that?" and "can you give us an example?" to help participants recall any other information that they have missed. At times, a couple of participants influenced the arguments at hand and persuaded their points of view on other participants. The researcher had to intervene in these situations, summarized each points of view and if need be, asked some probing questions to expand on the points being discussed. Most of the time, the researcher maintained eye contact with the participants and shifted gaze to suggest who is expected to speak next. The discussion continued till all the participants mutually agreed that there was no additional information that they could provide related to the discussion topics to the researcher. The researcher concluded the discussion when she became sure that a

theoretical saturation point in the discussion has been achieved. According to Krueger & Casey (2015), saturation describes the point where a wide range of ideas have been discussed and no new information is being shared.

Memo

Researcher used reflective memos to note her observations, actions, experiences, choices and presuppositions during the research process. Memos provide a trail of altering data, shaping into analysis (Ortlipp, 2008). Memos enhanced the qualitative experience, provided transparency in the research process and substantiated the credibility of the study. Memoing as a data triangulation and data analysis method is commonly used in grounded theory research but all qualitative research methods can benefit from this valuable tool (Birks et al., 2008). Researcher hand-wrote reflective and analytic memos to document the findings from the raw data, using mostly English language but at times, when need be, used Hindi words with English alphabets. At times, memos were also in the form of diagrams and tables. All the memos were dated, referenced and the emerging codes were sorted at every stage through a specific heading so as to avoid duplication during cross-reference. Large poster board with colored sticky notes were used to categorize and rearrange the memos. Each memo was always restricted to one theme or idea. Memos provided the researcher the opportunity to document the research process as well as reflect on the process critically. Researcher was aware that her personal and professional experiences could have produced additional themes and areas of interest during the data analysis (Glaser, 1992). Although the researcher added her personal reactions to the participants' interviews, she was careful to be reflective of the emerging themes from raw data and not influence or force perceptions

resulting in alteration of data. However, any bias and/or assumptions which the researcher had, were dissipated through the memoing process.

Memos mainly served four purposes – extracted and mapped themes, ideas and concepts emerging from the data, maintained momentum, explored the various relationships between the themes, and recorded connections of the findings with the theoretical framework of the study (Glaser, 1992). Memoing helped retention of ideas, made implicit thoughts explicit, expanded the data corpus and added credibility to the data, the findings and the analysis of the data (Ortlipp, 2008). Five types of memos were written for the study, textual, theoretical, methodological, conceptual, and integrative. Textual memos were written once the interviews and focus group discussion were transcribed. After repeatedly reading the transcriptions, researcher's initial thoughts, ideas, reflections were noted in textual memos through open coding. Theoretical memos were written based on the textual memos, deriving meaning from the data and elaborating them. The data was then analyzed through methodological memos as the researcher added critical comments, questions, speculations, instructions and reminders to herself. Finally, the data was again coded through conceptual memos where previous memos were clarified; the themes, ideas, categories were theorized and using axial codes, the integrative memos broke down the core themes to establish a relationship between them. As the analysis proceeded, several of the initial textual memos were discarded because either they were negated following methodological memos or they could not be evolved into interpretations and concepts. Conceptual memos were more detailed, complex and accurate than the textual memos and they extended and clarified them better. Memos helped shape the data according to the chosen theoretical framework of the study. Writing

memos for the study helped the researcher bring forward the whole process of critical thinking, decision-making, and value-adhering to data, which would otherwise have remained unseen. Memos enabled the researcher to engage the complexity of the data with depth, explore all possible themes, and maintain a continuity in dealing with the data, that would have otherwise been difficult to achieve.

Data Analysis Procedures

A qualitative approach was taken to analyze the data for this study. The focus of the study was to understand how the various past and present experiences of the undergraduate Indian students shaped their understanding of good writing. The data generated through interviews, and focus group discussion was further triangulated through reflective memos by the researcher. The data was analyzed using the following theoretical frameworks: Krashen's (1982) definition of second language acquisition and second language learning, Kachru's (1992) discussion of World Englishes through the Three Concentric Circles model and Lillis's (2013) sociolinguistic study of English writing. Researcher used Saldana's (2013) foundational forms of coding – descriptive (through words or short phrase), in vivo (participant's own words or phrases), emotion, and subcoding to analyze data. Descriptive memos were written at every stage of coding to tie together the emerging themes, discarding some and keeping the rest to elaborate further. Reflective memos helped organize the data into codes, documenting ever stage of emerging themes, patterns, concepts and assertions (Saldana, 2013). Data analysis was done primarily through five stages (See Appendix). First stage included the transcribing of the interviews and the focus group discussion and the repeated reading and re-reading of the transcriptions. Reflective first round memos through graphics, short narratives and

descriptive narratives (Saldana, 2013) were written by the researcher to document the initial reflections and thinking process about the data. The second stage included the first cycle of coding and subcoding of the transcripts and first round-memos using the holistic coding method (Saldana, 2013). Target words were highlighted using different colors for different topics. Descriptive second-round memos were written for each color signifying the different topics to link the interview and focus group transcripts. The third stage of analysis included coding and subcoding of second-round memos and writing of third-round memos. The fourth stage included second cycle coding of the third-round memos and the transcripts, using the causation coding method (Saldana, 2013). The fifth and final stage of analysis included color coding of the third-round memos and the transcripts and writing fourth-round memos on the emerging themes, using sticky notes. Qualitative data analysis is the process of systematically arranging and interpreting data, breaking them into manageable units, coding them, synthesizing them, and developing ideas about the findings (Bogdan & Biklen, 2016). This study was organized, transcribed, read and re-read, coded in multiple levels, analyzed and cross-analyzed. The goal was to discover a structured meaning to all the data and be able to communicate the analysis in a simplistic, relevant way. The data was organized and framed in such detail that the themes and patterns could be studied, relationships and overlaps were discovered, and new theories emerged to answer the research questions in this study.

Trustworthiness

According to Creswell (2007), trustworthiness of a research study is established when the research method investigates what it is intended to investigate. The researcher maintained the trustworthiness as a continuous process throughout all the stages of the

study, by following the seven stages of validation by Kvale and Brinkmann (2015): thematizing, designing, interviewing, transcribing, analyzing, validating and reporting. Once the research was designed through the theoretical frameworks, interview and focus group questions were framed so that findings from the data would modify/extend/corroborate the theoretical frameworks. The interviews and focus group discussion were audio taped and then transcribed using the transcription conventions to accurately document the audios. Researcher provided a rich, thick description (Creswell, 2007) of the participants and the setting through memos and transcripts of interview and focus group discussion, to develop the context for the study. The thick description was also necessary to present the emotional and the social relationship the participants experienced in their academic setting. The descriptions provide a vivid scene to the readers (Nelson, 1990), especially when the local dialects, code-switching and cultural behaviors are detailed. Memos were used for the purpose of triangulation of the data. Memos were written for every transcription and several layers of memos were written to record the various stages of coding. Process of triangulation helps the researcher corroborate evidence from different sources/methods/participants/theories to explore a theme or perspective (Creswell, 2007). According to Stake (1995), some of the basic requirements of assuring trustworthiness are providing easy to read research report which must follow a conceptual structure, and developing issues from the data while giving adequate attention to various contexts. Findings of the study were organized through the participant descriptions, emerging themes and the connection of the themes with the theoretical frameworks.

Ethical Considerations

All the participants of the study were treated in accordance to the ethical guidelines of the American Psychological Association (APA) and the Institutional Review Board (IRB) at the university (research site). Although there were no identifiable risks for participating in this study, few considerations were kept in mind. All the participants remained anonymous, even when the researcher shared documents/research data with colleagues or supervisor (Zeni, 2001). The participants were assured that the researcher would not change/misconstrue/misrepresent any information shared by the participants. To avoid any risk of jeopardizing the believability of the findings (Hatch, 2002), the researcher did not conduct any "backyard study" meaning none of the participants were either taught or supervised by the researcher. When sharing the findings to a larger audience, researcher took special care not to reveal any information that could potentially lead to the revealing of the participants' identity. If quotes from the interviews were used, any information that would compromise the identity of the participant, were not included (Kvale, 2007). The recorded audio files would be deleted upon the conclusion of the degree and only the researcher had access to the data. Participants were respected and not stereotyped, and the APA guidelines for nondiscriminatory language were followed (Creswell, 2007). All the information collected were confidential and carefully secured, until the completion of the study, upon which the audio/video/transcriptions would be destroyed. All the electronic copies would be deleted, and the hard copies would be shredded. Only the researcher had access to both the drives. All the audio files, transcripts, and memos related to the research were encrypted through an encryption program, TrueCrypt. The password was a unique

computer generated, encrypted password using a mix of lowercase letters, uppercase letters, numbers and symbols.

Research Positionality

Researcher did her undergraduate studies in India and travelled to the U.S. for higher studies. Researcher's multilinguistic, sociocultural and educational experiences in India impacted her English language education. During her undergraduate studies in India and her graduate studies in the U.S., her experiences with writing in the English language had been a mix of challenges and successes. The researcher's experience of an English class in India had been quite different from her experiences in the English classes at the university in the U.S. Although the researcher was familiar with the writing experiences in a graduate English language class, this research was driven by her curiosity to understand how undergraduate Indian students in the U.S. would describe their English language learning and interpret good writing with their varied sociolinguistic backgrounds.

Chapter Summary

This qualitative multiple case study was conducted in an HCL accredited mid-western state university. The primary goal of this study was to find how the past and present experiences of undergraduate Indian students influenced their understanding of good writing. An email was sent through the university's International Student Services office to all the twenty-seven undergraduate Indian students enrolled for the semester, to inform them about the study and request their participation. The primary forms of data collection were interviews, focus group discussion and memos by the researcher. In total, four students participated in the personal interview and seven students participated in the focus group discussion. The interview questions were geared towards the participant's linguistic and socio-economic background, their education and English literacy in India, their experience in an American English composition classroom, and their strengths and weaknesses in the writing process. The focus group questions were centered towards the writing experiences of the participants in India and the U.S., their views on various English proficiency levels in India, their perception of the function of the English language in a multilingual India, their experiences of writing in Indian English in an American classroom and their understanding of good writing. Researcher used reflective memos to note her observations, actions, experiences, choices and presuppositions during the research process; and later used them for triangulation of the data. During the analysis process, data was organized, transcribed, read and re-read, coded in multiple levels, analyzed and cross-analyzed. Researcher maintained the trustworthiness as a continuous process throughout all the stages of the study and treated in accordance to the ethical guidelines of the APA and the IRB at the research site.

Chapter 4 - Findings

This chapter illustrates the findings from this multiple case study, where the primary research goal was to find how the past and present experiences of undergraduate Indian students influence their understanding and perception of good writing at an American university. This chapter consists of the description of participants, and the analysis of the findings from the data. Data was collected through individual interviews and a focus group discussion, and the data was triangulated through reflective memos written by the researcher. The emerging themes from the data described in this chapter are the past experiences of SLL, SLA, social class, economy, education, languages, place, gender, self-perception, attitude and usage; the present experiences of ELP, Expository writing class, awareness of IE, OC writing in IC classroom, popular culture references; and their definition of good writing culminating from all their above experiences and perceptions.

Participant Descriptions

Amongst the twenty-seven undergraduate students from India who received an invitation email to participate in the study, six students confirmed with an interest. However, two backed out of the interview because of scheduling conflicts but they ended up participating in the focus group discussion. One student who appeared for the interview decided not to join for the focus group and two students who participated in the interview brought in their two friends for the focus group discussion. In total, there were four participants (Pari, Mohit, Shlok, Ravi) for the interview and seven participants (Pari, Mohit, Shlok, Kavya, Fatima, Sayeeda, Mahmood) for the focus group, three of whom had already participated in the interview.

Table 4.1 Data Demographics

Name	Gender	Place	Degree Pursuing	School	Languages	ELP
Sayeeda	Female	Surat, Gujarat	Computer Science	Government; English - Medium	Gujrati, Hindi, English	2 Terms
Kavya	Female	Kochi, Kerala	Biomedical Engineering	Private; English - Medium	Malayalam, English	1 Term
Fatima	Female	Surat, Gujarat	Business Administration	Government; English - Medium	Gujrati, Urdu, Hindi, English	No
Mahmood	Male	Murshidabad, West Bengal	Engineering	Private; English - Medium	Bengali, English	No
Ravi	Male	Doha, Qatar	Engineering	Private; English - Medium	Gujrati, English	No
Shlok	Male	Nasik, Maharashtra	Journalism	Private; English - Medium	Marathi, French, Hindi, English	No
Mohit	Male	Delhi	Engineering	Private; English - Medium	Punjabi, Hindi, English	1 Term
Pari	Female	Rajkot, Gujarat	Journalism	Private; Gujrati - Medium	Gujrati, Hindi, English	2 Terms

Fatima, Business Major from Surat.

> *It is refreshing to know that your teachers want to hear your voice and know*
>
> *about your experiences*

Fatima was a nineteen years old, female Muslim student from Surat, a port city in Gujrat, with a population of almost five million. She was working towards her business management undergraduate degree and hoped to pursue a Master's degree from an Ivy league university, once she graduated. She came from a middle-class family, where her

father was a government employee and her mother was a homemaker. Her paternal grandmother stayed with her parents and her three siblings in a three-bedroom duplex flat. Fatima was one of the first participants to show up for the focus group discussion, along with her best friend, Sayeeda. She had not participated in a personal interview. She seemed like a confident, articulate, and friendly young woman. She wore her university T-Shirt, blue jeans and grey sneakers. She was fluent in Gujrati, English and Hindi. Her parents and grandmother spoke Urdu/Hindi mix at home but she and her siblings always conversed in Hindi. All her friends spoke either Gujrati or Hindi. She identified her first language to be Hindi, because she was most comfortable speaking and writing in Hindi. She studied in a government school where her first language in academics was English, second language was Hindi, and third language was Sanskrit. They had an option of choosing their second language as either Gujrati or Hindi in school and her father selected Hindi when she got admission. She explained that if her family could afford private schooling, she would have studied at a better school and may have acquired better speaking and writing skills in English. Her elder brother studied in a private school and he was far more fluent in English than her. Since they were three sisters and a brother, her parents chose to educate her brother in a better school as they could afford an expensive education for only one child. Government schools in India charge a very nominal fee for female students. Fatima expressed that sadly, even today, girls were undervalued than boys in their society. She had to struggle a lot to convince her parents to allow her for higher education abroad. She convinced her grandmother to sell the jewelry they had purchased for her wedding to finance for her undergraduate studies abroad. She said, *in my community, girls are expected to go to Arts college and then get*

married right after BA. It was a huge struggle for her to convince her parents that she wanted to study and not get married. Having her friend, Sayeeda travel with her helped make her case better.

In India, Fatima never liked her English classes because she thought they were too "confining" and did not give her the freedom to express herself. Fatima wrote personal journals as she was growing up. She loved writing but not in school. Her school had English grammar classes and literature classes. In grammar, they learnt about the antonyms, synonyms, sentence construction, phrase, clause, verb, adverb, noun, pronoun, adjective, articles, tense, active and passive voice, gerund, conjunction and interjection. For composition, they were taught paragraph writing, letter writing, precis writing, essay writing, autobiography writing, paraphrasing, poetry analysis and short story synopsis. In literature classes they read various short stories, poems and plays. The assignments would mostly be in question-answer format where they were asked about the plot in the literature piece and were asked to analyze the poems. Teachers would dictate the answers in class and the students were expected to memorize them and write the same in the exams. Fatima did not like this process. She did not like the fact that she could not write what she felt about a particular poem or the author's intensions, or her analysis of a certain character. While preparing for TOEFL, she really enjoyed the practice tests. TOEFL tests four skills in English – reading, listening, speaking and writing. Fatima enjoyed the writing part but struggled a bit with the listening section because of the various accents. She confessed that her own spoken English had a Hindi/Gujrati accent, but she hoped that her writing was better than her speaking abilities. She had taken English 100 and 200 composition classes at the university and those were the classes she

enjoyed the most. At first, she was really surprised to see that the teacher taught in an informal setting, through discussions and workshops. She had never experienced this in India because her English classes back home were based on lectures and dictations from the teacher. She was also surprised to see that each of the compositions in English 100 and 200 had a specific rubric, which told her exactly what a good writing should have. She felt refreshing to be able to express her opinions, ideas and reflections through her writings. However, she felt she couldn't use her cultural references and anecdotes in her writings, as she feared her American teacher wouldn't understand them and it might bring down her grade. Nonetheless, she enjoyed writing in the U.S. more than she would in India. She was grateful that learning Indian English from an early age helped her have a sound background in grammar and was appreciative of her writing opportunities at her American University. She felt she was enjoying the best of both worlds through her English writing experiences.

Kavya, Biology Major from Kochi.

Writing is good if your teacher tells you its good

Kavya came to the U.S. to study biology. She belonged to a devout Christian family from Kochi, a port city on the south-west coast of India. Her parents owned several acres of agricultural land and Kavya's brother helped them in their agricultural business. They had always supported Kavya's dream of becoming a biomedical engineer. Kavya confessed that she attended the focus group discussion because she wanted to meet fellow Indian students. She wore bright red glasses, gold earrings and had short cropped hair. She seemed like a confident young woman, cheerful and intelligent. She spoke six languages – Malayalam, English, Tamil, Kannada, French and Moplah, which

was a dialect of Malayalam. She said her first language was Malayalam, which was the official language of her state, and her second language was English. She regretted not knowing Hindi as most of her Indian friends at the university were from the northern part of India and they spoke Hindi. She thought she could manage to learn bit of the language before she graduated as it would be beneficial for her to know Hindi if she were to work in New Delhi in future. She planned to get her doctorate at the U.S. and work as a researcher in New Delhi, India. She admitted that since her parents were from a humble background and could not sponsor her education abroad, all her dreams were contingent upon getting a bank loan or scholarships.

At the university, Kavya had to take one term of ELP classes. She spoke English with a heavy Malayalam accent which posed as a hindrance to her English proficiency speak test. However, her writing in English had always been good. In her school, back home in Kochi, she had written composition essays, book reports, book reviews, film reviews, and proposals. The basic criteria for the papers were correct grammatical constructions, sentence structure, vocabulary, spelling, organization and overall coherence. All the papers were less than 500 words and hand-written. So, when Kavya had to type papers for her assignments at the university in the U.S., she struggled with the speed for many weeks. Also, the topics were not like the ones she was used to writing about. She had mostly written about social issues in India or about Kerala, her home state. For her English 100, she had to write autoethnographies, gender analysis, invitational writing, and informative report. While researching for the papers, she was able to understand socio-cultural issues in the U.S. and learnt about the distinct requirements for each paper. Her instructor said that the papers were meant to celebrate

diversity and Kavya wanted to write about Kerala but she opted to write about her experiences as an international student. When speaking of her hometown, her eyes gleamed with pride. Kavya said, Kerala was a unique state with its 100% literacy rate, with its lowest rate of population growth in the nation, and in being one of the first states to rally for LGBTQ Rights. She said, she wanted to write about her experiences of striving for gender equality in spite of living in a matriarchal society, where women enjoyed more power and prestige and perhaps the only state where the sex ratio was such that women outnumbered men. She also wanted to write about how she was not just any international student but a true *Malayali* at heart, with love for Malayalam literature and poetry, for festivals of Pooram and Onam, and how much she missed native cuisines like *achappam*, *appam*, *sadhya*, *biryani*, and Malabar prawns. She was not sure if anyone would relate to her native stories. Nonetheless, she did get good grades in her composition class and believed that they were good papers because her instructor liked them.

Mahmood, Engineering Major from Murshidabad.

Even if I don't know the grammar labels, I can figure out correct sentences

Mahmood came from the small town of Murshidabad which had a population of less than fifty thousand people. He was studying engineering at the university but was contemplating changing his major to business administration. He had taken a bank loan from his hometown to fund his undergraduate studies in the U.S. and was not sure if his loan would be valid if he changed his major. His father was a textile trader from Bangladesh who moved to India about thirty years back. His father spoke Bangla which was the native language of Bangladesh. Bangla was very similar to Bengali which was

spoken in the Eastern part of India. His mother was a homemaker and she spoke Bengali. Mahmood's middle-class family lived in a small two-bedroom house. His two elder sisters were married and settled in other parts of West Bengal. He studied in an English-medium school while growing up and still felt guilty that his father had to spend a large sum of money on his education. Moreover, his sisters went to a government madrasa for girls which was a common practice amongst many Muslim families like theirs and it did not cost much. They were married off once they finished their undergraduate studies.

Mahmood said his first language was Bengali since it was his mother-tongue and that he was very fluent in it, in terms of speaking, reading and writing. His second language was English, and he admitted that he was better at the language than his cousins and friends from his community. He said that just like him, most of his Bengali friends spoke English with a heavy Bengali accent but he was better at reading and writing in English. He said, he might not remember the grammatical conventions all the time but could definitely tell when a sentence construction was grammatically wrong. Mahmood believed that there was no direct relation between speaking and writing fluency. Many of his friends from school were not able to speak in English as they felt shy and did not have the competence, but they could write better since they learnt grammar in school. For Mahmood, English was a subject that was taught in school but other than that, there was not much usage in his community. The government offices accepted both English and Bengali documents, so they often preferred to use Bengali over English. They had Bengali newspaper at home, watched Bengali programs on television and spoke in Bengali to all their family, friends and neighbors. Mahmood said that if he spoke English in his community, people might laugh at him and label him as a "foreigner". He

acknowledged that many of his friends and relatives could not even dream of traveling to the U.S. for advanced studies due to lack of financial support. He was grateful that he had this opportunity although he missed home miserably. He also missed home-cooked food, paddy fields and football – *the don't play football here and call football soccer*. Back in Murshidabad, in school, his English teachers did not provide a lot of writing instructions. They mostly did loud readings of literature, answered content questions from the back of the book and wrote essays, short paragraphs or formal/informal letters in their English classes. They were taught the basic grammar and it was assumed that that knowledge would be enough to write an essay. It was only when Mahmood came to U.S. that he understood that there was more to writing an essay than just grammar. He thought a good writing happened when the writer was knowledgeable about standard grammar, the topic, and the audience.

Mohit, Engineering Major from New Delhi.

It is shameful for me to be doing extra classes for English, so I never told my friends about this

Mohit was one of the first students who was interviewed. He had a serious demeaner and hardly smiled once or twice during the whole interview. He was, however, a lot relaxed during the focus group discussion. He responded through the email that he was interested to participate in both the interview and the focus group discussion. He wore a black and white checkered shirt, jeans and black sneakers to the interview. He was studying mechanical engineering at the university. He was from a wealthy suburb in New Delhi, the capital city of India, where his parents and his younger brother resided in a double-story bungalow. His father was a businessman and his mother was a homemaker.

His brother was in ninth grade and studied in a private school in Delhi. He showed a family picture which he had on his phone at the time. His mother looked very young and when complimented by the researcher, he said that she got married when she was sixteen (which is illegal in India). Mohit added that at times he wondered if his mother chose to be a homemaker or did she have no choice since she couldn't finish her education after marriage. He said instances like this were very common in his community. Caste was another important aspect in his community, so much so that it was forbidden to marry outside his caste and when young couples did so, they were blamed to bring shame on the family. Mohit expressed that in spite such shortcomings like caste and dowry system which he was concerned about, he was very proud of his community because members were known for their loyalty, brotherhood, patriotism and generosity. Nonetheless, Mohit said that he could discuss/write about none of these in his ELP classes or his composition classes in the U.S. He felt that there was a cultural disconnect between him and his American or other international, non-Indian classmates and his American instructors. When asked about the writing instructions in India, he felt that although he studied in a private English medium school, English as a subject was taught with a casual approach. The instructions were very basic, like the essay should have an introduction, body and conclusion, or that they must be grammatically correct and have correct spellings. Later during the focus group discussion, he confessed that he did not pay much attention to learning English as a subject in school.

Mohit's parents and most of his family members spoke Punjabi at home while his cousins and friends spoke Hindi and English, with lots of code-switching, which they would call as Hinglish. In school, he took French as his third language for a few years,

although he admitted that he did not remember much of it anymore. According to him, parents, teachers and even students paid more attention to STEM subjects rather than language or social sciences. When he expressed his desire to study abroad for his engineering, his parents were very supportive emotionally and financially. Once he arrived at the university, he was required to take an English proficiency test. He said he was quite confident about it but was later informed that his scores were below satisfactory. He had to take one term of ELP listening, reading and writing classes before he could attend his university classes. He was disappointed because he believed he was better at English than his Chinese friends from orientation who passed the test. Later during the focus group discussion, he confessed that it was an embarrassing experience for him which he did not share with his friends back home since failure was shameful in India. He also did not understand why he was not doing as well as he expected in his composition classes because *if you have a good vocab, you can write well,* and he was always good at speaking English.

Pari, First-Year Open Option from Rajkot.

I am in US, I am totally in English environment, this helps with my speaking

Pari was a twenty-year-old, practicing Hindu who participated in both the interview and the focus group discussion. She was cheerful and yet a bit reserved during focus group discussion, but she really opened up during the personal interview. She wore a yellow ethnic top with sequin work, black jeggings and tan leather *juttis*. She expressed that she chose to "look" Indian for the interview because she missed wearing Indian clothes as there were not many opportunities. As the interview began, she asked, *will everyone read this? All my professors?* She was quickly reminded by the researcher

about her identity being anonymous throughout the study. She asked if she could choose a pseudonym for herself and chose to be called "Pari". Pari travelled from the metropolitan city of Rajkot with a population of almost two million. Her mother-tongue was Gujrati. She could read and write in Gujrati, Hindi and English but she admitted that she was most proficient in Gujrati. In school, her first language was also Gujrati. She studied Hindi and English from grade five till ten. Pari expressed that since she had always had good exposure of Hindi and English through television, social media and films, she learnt both the languages more through daily usage than in the classroom. She also believed that writing was all together a different game and no matter how much exposure she had received socially, she still needed proper schooling to be able to write well. When she told her parents that she wanted to study in the US, her parents were not very surprised since many of her close relatives were already staying in America. Ever since she and her sister were kids, there have been talks about them eventually moving to U.S. after getting married to an Indian living in America, through an arranged marriage. Pari did not want that for herself and had to convince her parents a lot before she could apply at an American University. Her parents were also anxious about how she would manage with her average English speaking and writing skills. Her father expressed that since she has had difficulty with the language in India, it would be a greater challenge for her to understand the American accent and succeed in an all English environment. She was not required to take the TOEFL but she went ahead and joined a private English communication class. Pari said that that was where she first came across writing instructions. In the class she learned sentence structure and proper use of nouns, verbs,

adjectives, etc. She knew these from school but learned to apply the grammatical rules appropriately in her communication class.

Pari's father was an affluent businessman so financing her studies at the U.S. was not an issue. Unfortunately, upon arrival at the university in the U.S., she could not pass the English language proficiency test and was advised two terms of ELP speaking, reading, and writing classes. Pari confessed that while there were not many opportunities for writing or learning writing techniques in the ELP, the classes did help her understand American accent better. She said, the English language environment at the university also helped her sharpen her English-speaking skills but in the English composition class, she realized that she could not write the way she spoke. Apart from grammar, there were some other essential requirements for English writing, which she believed she did not have clear understanding of. She said, she would be able to write good papers once she got to know the detailed process of writing.

Ravi, Engineering Major from Doha.

I don't think one needs to learn how to write in English separately

Ravi was originally from India, but his parents moved to Doha, Qatar, when he was an infant. He did not actually belong to the ideal population for this research but his name was in the university's list of undergraduate international students from India. He responded to the researcher's email with an interest to participate in a personal interview. On the day of the interview, Ravi wore a grey branded jacket, black shirt, blue jeans and black branded shoes. Ravi revealed that his father was an affluent real estate developer. He studied in a British international school in Doha, which followed the UK educational system, adhering to the British National Curriculum. Most of his classmates in school

were from European countries and only a few were of Indian descent. Ravi explained that since it was an expensive school, not many Indians living in Doha could afford it. He had grown up in an English-speaking environment and identified his first language as English. In school, his first languages were Arabic and English. He could speak and write Arabic proficiently. He also learned French in school but was not very fluent in the language. His parents spoke Gujrati and were not very proficient in English. He said his second and third language could be Gujrati and Hindi, although he was not sure which one was which. He spoke in Gujrati with his family, English with his friends and Hindi with acquaintances from India. Ravi confessed that he and his classmates never focused on any of the language classes while growing up. Parents and teachers were always keen on STEM subjects and he believed that languages were learnt more outside the classroom than inside. When asked if he experienced any differences between English language studies in Doha and in the US, he said he still did not pay much attention in the language classes so he would not be able to tell any differences. Writing instructions in Doha were on basic grammar, sentence structure, purpose and audience, informed Ravi. He believed that if anyone knew the language and used it on daily basis, then writing should be an automatic response to that knowledge.

Sayeeda, Computer Science Major from Surat.

At times, I forget the words

Sayeeda was a second year computer science major. She was a little short of 5 feet, with slender form and very long, black hair. She came for the focus group discussion along with Fatima, who was also a participant in the discussion. As Sayeeda walked into the meeting room, she seemed a bit hesitant to introduce herself. Fatima introduced both

herself and Sayeeda and mentioned that they were interested to participate in the study but had to skip the personal interviews due to scheduling conflicts. Sayeeda seemed like a reserved young woman with very heavily kohled, expressive eyes. She wore a small gold nose pin and matching ear tops. She was wearing a blue *kurta*, light blue skinny jeans and black leather ballerina shoes. As she took a chair beside Fatima, she quickly glanced and acknowledged with a nod and a shy smile. They were the first ones to show up for the focus group discussion and while waiting for the others, Sayeeda mentioned that like Fatima, she was also from Surat. She was a practicing Muslim, prayed five times a day and fasted during the month of Ramadan. Her father was a neurosurgeon and her mother died when she was a toddler. She had no siblings but considered her friend Fatima as her sister. She grew up in the ancestral home of her mother, where she and her father lived before she moved to the U.S. Sayeeda came from a very affluent background. Her mother was the only daughter of a very wealthy textile merchant and after her grandparents' and her mother's demise, she was the heir to her maternal grandparents' property, which included a bungalow in the city center of Surat, two apartments in Ahmedabad, the capital of Gujrat, and a bungalow with attached four acres of land in the suburbs of Surat. Being a doctor in a private hospital, her father earned quite a lot as well. Sayeeda went to a private kindergarten school and once she was six years of age, she attended one of the largest chains of private schools in India. She met Fatima when they were in second grade. When Fatima had to change schools, she followed her and began attending a government school in Surat, from where she graduated high school. Government schools in India are bilingual, and Sayeeda chose to study all her subjects in English language. When Fatima expressed interest in studying abroad, Sayeeda followed suit. Since

Sayeeda liked computer studies in school, she chose to apply for computer sciences at the university. Her father was a very busy man and was often relieved that Fatima had always guided her as an elder sister. Sayeeda had some distant relatives living in the U.S. but she said she was too shy to contact them as she did not know them much and may have only met a few of them when she was an infant. Sayeeda never went on vacations while growing up, mostly because of her father's busy schedule. After her high school graduation, she would always hang out with Fatima and explored in and around Surat, while preparing for the TOEFL.

As the others joined and the focus group discussion began, Sayeeda became quieter and mostly spoke when asked. Sayeeda's mother-tongue was Gujrati and both her parents spoke Gujrati. Sayeeda was fluent in speaking and writing in Gujrati and Hindi. She could also speak and write in English, although not as fluently as Gujrati or Hindi. She could also write in Urdu, but when it came to speaking in Urdu, she often switched to Hindi. In school, her first language was English, second language was Gujrati and third language was Sanskrit. She confessed that she hardly knew Sanskrit, despite studying it for four years. Since her TOEFL scores were low, she had to take two terms of ELP speaking, reading, and writing classes before she could formally begin her course at the university. When asked how she felt about English language studies in India, Sayeeda said that she had always been surprised by the fact that no one took English seriously in school whereas English language was so commonly used everywhere in Surat along with Gujrati. She said her classmates from the private school spoke better English than her classmates from the government school. Her teachers and classmates were from all over India and many of them spoke English in heavy vernacular accents. For example, her

Chemistry teacher was Oriya (from Odisha, Oriya being his mother-tongue possibly) and he pronounced Benzene (Ben-zeen) as Bon-jeen (heavy Oriya accent). In school, they had grammar and literature classes and sometimes had to write essays. The teacher would tell them that learning proper grammar and sentence construction was enough for them to be able to write fluently. She remembered her essays in final exams would mostly be memorized versions of what she had read in an essay book. She said she had no time to think and generate new ideas for the essay during her examinations. It was easy for her that ways, she confessed, because whenever she would sit down to write something, she often forgot the English words. In the U.S., she felt her English-speaking ability and her confidence were boosted by the ELP classes, but she was still struggling with her writing.

Shlok, Journalism Major from Nashik.

Brinjal – eggplant – aubergine! For us football is football

Shlok was the first student who responded with willingness to participate in both the interview and the focus group discussion. He was a bright, cheerful, and friendly twenty-year-old who was studying journalism at the university. For the interview, he wore an Indian grey colored *kurta*, an ethnic purple *Nehru-jacket*, blue jeans and brown leather sandals. Shlok belonged to a middle-class Hindu joint family from the city of Nashik, with a population of almost two million and about 90% literacy rate. Shlok revealed that he was excited to be in the U.S. since this was the first time he was living away from home. Shlok was involved with several international and undergraduate groups on campus and said that he enjoyed interacting with students from all over the world. He identified his first language as his mother-tongue, Marathi. In his school, his first language was English, second language was Marathi, third language was Hindi and

fourth language was French. He said, he rarely spoke in English with his classmates, friends, or family members. He said he studied English from kindergarten and felt he was quite proficient in speaking and writing English. Talking about Indian English, Shlok conveyed that there were more similarities with British English than with American English. He studied in a prominent private English medium school where they had English language, literature, and reading/writing classes. For grammatical conventions, he mostly followed the school grammar textbook and the OWL website. They had to hand-write write two/three pages essays, formal letters, literature analysis, research papers, opinion papers, social issues papers, etc., for their school assignments. This boosted his English writing proficiency and it proved helpful during his college application process and when he had to write an analytical essay for his SAT exam. As a journalism major, he wrote essays, and reports on daily basis. He even wrote opinion columns for the university newspaper. Writing in English was not a new experience for Shlok, but he admitted that American English writing expectations were a little different than Indian English writing expectations, in terms of word choice, tone, and voice. *You really have to think hard about which words to use, you can't offend anybody*, said Shlok. He said he did not have to think much about word choice while writing essays in India. Also, he noticed that many words were different in the American text. For example he added, brinjal in India was eggplant/aubergine in America, football in India was soccer in America, temperature was in Celsius scale in India but was in Fahrenheit in America, distance was measured in kilometers in India and in miles in America. He also said, use of some of the grammatical conventions like oxford comma and definite article, were new to him. Many words spelled differently in the U.S., said Shlok. Color, program,

recognize, etc. in America were spelled colour, programme, recognise, respectively in India, he said. He was used to writing in passive voice but realized that active voice was preferred in English composition classes in the U.S. Shlok also recalled that in India, he grew up reading mostly British literature in school so when it came to references to American classics, it was a struggle for him. Similarly, writing papers on issues of poverty and racism in America had been challenging for him since these and other cultural concepts were a bit different in India. Also, not many Indian teachers approved students' writing on taboo topics like sexuality, drug addiction, divorce, mental illness, etc., but in the U.S., students were encouraged to express their opinions through writing. When asked about his idea of "good writing" Shlok expressed that having rubrics in his composition class helped him understand the specific requirements of each paper. He said he had learnt in an American composition classroom that just knowledge of grammar and sentence construction (which he learned in India) was inadequate and must also accompany development of topic, organization, clarity and evidence to support the points. Shlok was quick to add that he was sure that there was more to add to this list, but he was yet to learn about how to write the perfect essay.

Emerging Themes

The themes that emerged from the data have been categorized into three parts: the past experiences, the present experiences, and the understanding of good writing.
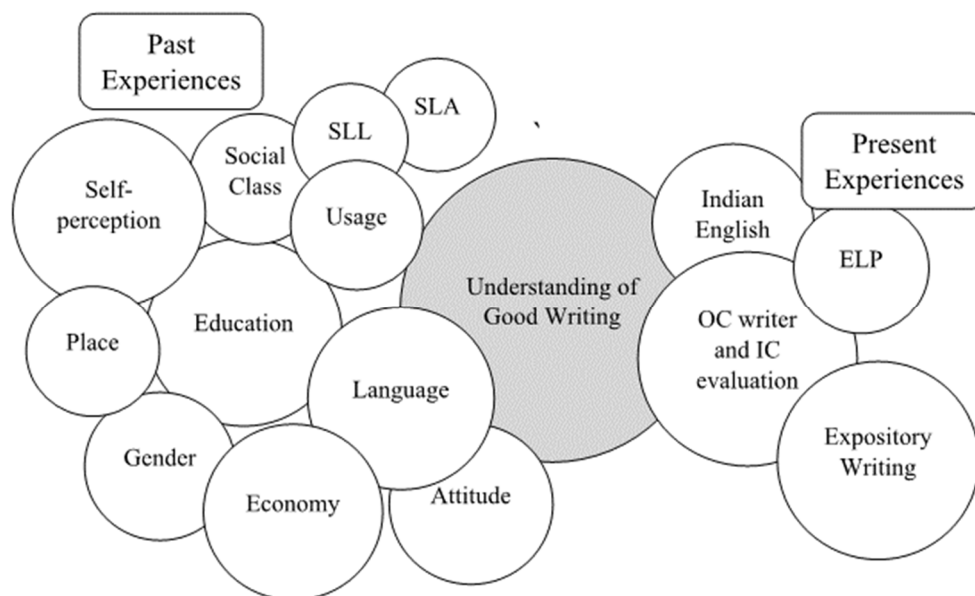
Figure 4.1 Emerging themes: past and present experiences

Past Experiences

Participants revealed various aspects of their past experiences like learning or acquiring English language; socioeconomic and linguistic backgrounds; type of schooling; English speaking and writing practice at home, in community and in school; town or city where the students were brought up; gender and self-perception of the students; and their attitude towards learning speaking and writing in English; all contributed to their idea of good writing (See Figure 4.1).

Second language learning and second language acquisition of English

Participants had various experiences of learning English language. When asked if they would call English their second language, some participants were unsure on how to define their English language learning experience. Ravi had been the most confused about his first and second language. He was of Indian origin but grew up in the Middle East and studied in a reputed British international school. His mother-tongue was Gujrati

and he spoke in Gujrati with his parents. His friends and classmates were from European countries, and he grew up mostly speaking English in an English-Arabic bilingual environment:

> I have always spoken in English, you know, with friends…all the time.
> That is how I am most comfortable. I would say, you know, on that basis,
> that English is my first language.

Ravi's daily usage of the English language made him think his first language was English since he was fluent in speaking and writing in English. He could also speak and write Arabic fluently since he studied Arabic in school as his first language along with English. He insisted that he used English more often than any other language and also since he was Indian, he did not think of Arabic as his first language. When asked if he would call Gujrati his first language since it was his mother-tongue, he quickly replied that his understanding of a first language cannot be a language he could not read or write and did not use as much. Mohit was the only participant, besides Ravi, who said his first language was English because that was how it was for him in school,

> English was my first language in school. Otherwise, with friends I am
> speaking in Hindi mostly, also English, some mix always happens.

Mohit agreed that it was tough for him to speak in any language consistently, except for Punjabi, his mother-tongue. However, when it came to writing, he said he was most fluent in English. In school, the medium of instruction was English, and he spoke with his friends, classmates and teachers in English, Hindi, and sometimes English mixed with Hindi. Kavya could speak and write fluently in many languages. Even though her mother-tongue was Moplah, which was a dialect of Malayalam, she identified Malayalam

as her first language, mostly because she used Malayalam more often than Moplah. Her second language was English, and she was excellent in the speaking, reading, and writing the language, despite the Malayalam accent. About her English learning experience, she said,

> My school was English-medium and we weren't allowed to speak in any other language at school. Also, I have been speaking English from my childhood because most of my friends speak different languages. Even my Malayali friends speak in English only.

When asked how she could identify which was her first language and which was her second or third when she was fluent in all of them, she replied that Malayalam was spoken at home and it was also her state official language so it was her first language. She also mentioned that English was also important for her as she used it everywhere except for home. Shlok had learned both Marathi and English in school while growing up and he was fluent in both the languages. During the interview, it was easy to notice that Shlok had excellent verbal proficiency in English. He said he was most expressive when speaking in Marathi and he spoke in Marathi with his family and friends. He also said,

> English has always been important…for school, for everything outside home. After Marathi, I can write best in English.

Fatima believed her second language was English because she was comfortable and well-versed in it, but not as well-versed as she was in Hindi, her first language. Her medium of instruction in school was English and she learned to read, write and speak in English in school from kindergarten. Fatima believed that she was good in English grammar and writing since she scored well in her English exams:

I got good marks in English and I really felt comfortable, like actually, I used to write journals in school…my personal journals, I always used to write in English. It gave a sense of freedom and I felt I could express better. Well, I am comfortable with Hindi also somehow, for the journals, I always wrote in English. Actually, I scored really well in my English class, grammar and all, I did very well but I never enjoyed writing in class.

For Sayeeda, her first language was Gujrati,

My mother-tongue is Gujrati. In my school also, it is Gujrati-medium. I can read write Gujrati better and also Hindi but not English.

Her proficiency in Hindi and Gujrati was the same, and she agreed that she would probably use Hindi more than Gujrati when outside her native place, Surat. Nonetheless, she felt that since her mother-tongue was Gujrati and she could speak and write Gujrati proficiently, it would be her first language. English was her third language as she had more proficiency in Gujrati and Hindi than English. Pari studied in a Gujrati-medium school and learned English grammar and literature from fifth grade. She accepted that English was the third language for her and that she would consider Hindi as her second language. She also added that even if she had studied in an English-medium school, and had the same proficiency in English as she had in Gujrati, she still wouldn't consider English as her first language: *English is a foreign language for me*, she said. Mahmood was from the state of West Bengal and spoke Bengali and his second language was English - *I am Bengali so Bengali language would be my first language*. His father was from Bangladesh and he spoke Bangla, which was a dialect of Bengali. When asked if he knew Bangla, Mahmood said he did not speak Bangla but could understand when his

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father spoke, since it was so similar to Bengali. His father admitted him to an English-medium school, where his language of medium was English, and Bengali was the second language. He studied both Bengali and English from kindergarten, but never used English much outside his school. This was the reason why he spoke English with a heavy Bengali accent, he said, but also added that he was a better writer than speaker in English.

Social class

Participants came from different social class backgrounds. They explained that their class values effected the way they and their families perceived education. Fatima was from a middle-class family. Her grandmother, who lived with them, always said that education was important for the boys but for girls it should be their wedding,

> My grandmother, even my parents, have always said that they want me and my sisters settled in good families. "Settled" for girls is marriage but for my brother it is a good job. So he goes to an English-medium.

Kavya and Shlok were also from middle-class families but their situations at home were a little different than Fatima's. Both Kavya and Shlok mentioned that it was very important for their families that they did well in school and joined a good university for higher studies. As Kavya stated,

> Education is very important in our family. It is the only hope for middle-class families like us, it seems. My parents wanted my brother to go to college first and then join them in the field….my brother studied agriculture. For me too, they always wanted me to do my best in studies.

Shlok, too, said that although his parents and grandparents encouraged him and his sister to go for higher studies, they never pressurized them to study STEM subjects:

If I liked maths, I liked maths, if I didn't I didn't. There was no pressure

that you have to be a doctor or an engineer only. But jobs are important.

So thinking about where to settle, and all, before applying for college…

Shlok mentioned that, however, securing a good job which paid well was important, no

matter what he studied. When applying for universities in the U.S. he also thought about

applying at universities in Canada, since he was not sure if he would get a job in the U.S.

after graduation due to the recent changes in the U.S. immigration policies.

Mahmood came from a lower middle-class family and studying engineering was

important for him to secure a bank loan, at first and then a well-paid job later. When

asked about his plans after graduation, he said,

Oho I don't know about that. If I get a job it will be the best, you see. But

right now I am concentrating on my classes. I know that there is that loan

that I have to pay so a job here will help me a lot.

Mahmood also mentioned that he was sent to an English-medium school as a child

because his father believed that a good education was important for him. When he

decided to come to the U.S. for higher studies, his father helped him secure the bank loan,

and encouraged him as he was the first in their family to travel abroad for higher

education. *This is big for my family*, he said. *I have to take care of my family when I

return*, he added.

Mohit, Pari, Ravi, and Sayeeda belonged to upper-class families in India and they

all appeared less stressed about financial and professional security than the others.

Ravi's parents wanted him to pursue any of the STEM subjects but other than that, it was

his choice of country and the university where he wanted to pursue his graduation. Ravi

said he was passionate about car racing and would love to design race cars using his engineering degree later:

> My father has real estate in different countries which he would eventually want me to take care of, but I love racing so that is what I am going to do. Right now, I am just taking one day at a time, getting to know the college life…but soon I will transfer to a big city, better university so I can start working on designing race cars. I will also find out where I can race here. I did lot of racing back home.

It was also important for Mohit's parents that he studied STEM subjects, although he was sure that he could have studied anything and his father wouldn't mind. *My father's business is my backup plan…if I don't do anything else I will join him*, he said. Pari's father was also willing to pay for her education wherever she chose to study:

> My father is very supportive that ways. He will agree to whatever I study but he wants me to marry. My mother also…they want me and my sister to marry here in the U.S.…they keep looking for matches…even when I told them I need some time to focus on my studies but they don't think like that.

Sayeeda's father had also been supportive of her. She remembered when she first told him that he wanted to study in the U.S. because Fatima was planning to go to the U.S. for higher studies, his only concern was that she should apply in the same university as Fatima. She said, *he just told me, don't worry about fees and everything...but you should not live all by yourself.* When asked if her father had any goals/wishes for her studies in the U.S., she said she was free to study whatever she wanted, and she chose computer

science because she was good at it in school. *Of course, he misses me a lot…and wants me go to back and stay with him, but he doesn't tell me what should I do after graduation…should I get a job or not…or ask me what plans I have for the future*, she added.

Economy

The economic backgrounds of the participants played an important role in their educational pursuits. Fatima's parents could afford private schooling for one child and the others studied in a government school. She shared,

> Private English-mediums cost more but they also had better teachers. But it was too much for my father…we are three sisters and one brother…that cost would be more than my father's one-month salary.

Mahmood had similar financial conditions at home,

> My father spent a lot of money on my fees and other school expenses. We don't have so much money that we can spend on English-medium private school you see, but my father wanted me to study in a good school. My mother did a lot of budgeting when we were kids. You know it is not just the fees…there is school dress, new books, shoes…extra-curricular craft items, annual events cost…so many expenses…almost every moth there was something or the other…I am so grateful to my parents

Private schooling was out of reach for Mahmood's parents, but they wanted him to have better education, so they opted to send him to one, despite the hardships. He took a bank loan to pursue his undergraduate studies in the U.S.,

In the bank, my father put in our house papers…and also used his savings

to buy the tickets, clothes and things like that. I have an on-campus job but

it does not pay much. Once I get an actual job, I will be able to pay for the

loan and also send money to my father.

Kavya added that it would have helped her and other students like Mahmood, if

American universities had scholarship opportunities for the international students:

Education here in the U.S. costs more since there is a huge gap between

the currency rates. Also, if I were to study in India, I could stay at home

and go to college, or even stay with a relative to save some money on the

lodging. There are also cheap hostels everywhere. Here, you basically

have to start fresh, with no family, friends and very limited money.

Universities here do not have scholarships for us and my campus job only

pays for the food. Books are expensive here. In India, you can have

secondhand books and the government colleges are not that expensive

also. But it is worth it here.

Both Mahmood and Kavya had on-campus jobs which helped them pay for their

groceries and daily personal expenses, but they agreed that a scholarship on merit basis

could help them financially. Kavya also added that taking the ELP class before beginning

the university classes, added her education expenses,

I am not sure if it was worth it that much. Only because of my accent they

put me there, which obviously did not change much. It just put some extra

pressure on my parents. Every penny counts! International students'

services provide limited scholarships and I plan to apply but those are so

competitive. I also plan to go for post-grad here but then again, only if I

get scholarship. I can't ask my parents for more money. I know they don't

have it.

Having means to pay for the education opened opportunities for many participants. Ravi,

Pari, and Mohit, who belonged to affluent families, had the option of studying anywhere

in the world. Mohit said,

I applied to many universities in the U.S., in Australia, in New Zealand

and Germany. I did not get admission in all of them but my final choices

were either U.S. or Australia. I could have tried for Canada also but at that

time I did not think of it. Now my friends are saying they may try for

Canada next year because of the job situation.

A good economic background provided participants with options, so they could make

choice about their education with flexibility. Pari attended extra classes to prepare for her

TOEFL, which was not affordable for some participants. Mahmood reflected,

Private coaching is everywhere, in every corner. They will teach public

speaking mostly but also writing letters, applications, etc. But they take so

much fees. I am also not sure how good they are. Some renowned ones are

good but they are very costly. All these added cost can only be covered if

you have money… for people like us, we only depend on what our school

will teach us.

While the private communication classes helped Pari with her grammar and writing, she

also agreed that they are expensive, not affordable for many and some of these classes

may not be as effective and helpful as the others.

Education

One of the participants studied in an international school, some of them studied in private schools while a few studied in government schools. Ravi studied in a reputed international school in Doha. It followed the UK educational system, adhered to the British National Curriculum and offered the International Baccalaureate Diploma. Ravi mentioned that his school was one of the most expensive school in the Middle East, had competitive academic resources, high-end sports facilities, the best libraries, auditoriums and a variety of cultural studios. Sayeeda and Fatima studied in a government school affiliated with the CBSE board, and their medium of instruction was English. The school charged nominal fees to Fatima but no fees to Sayeeda because government school waived the fees of girls who were a single child of their parents. The teachers were trained by the central government but both Sayeeda and Fatima shared that the teachers rarely used interactive, interesting methods of teaching. The usual method of teaching would be reading aloud from the text, teacher explaining few important paragraphs and discussing textbook questions from the end of the chapter, said Fatima. Mahmood agreed that even though he studied in a private English-medium school, his teachers taught in the same manner as described by Fatima. Mahmood said that his school was better than the other government schools in his area, but it was not as good as the private English-medium schools in the cities. Kavya studied in a reputed private school. Describing her school, Kavya said,

> It is one of the most reputed convent school in Kochi. Each year many
> students rank statewide and even nationally in ISCE and ISC. Sisters are
> very strict…you have to maintain discipline…no Malayalam during

school hours, no ruckus in between class periods, regular parent-teacher meetings….u need to have spick and span uniform, no long nails, hair tied in braids…and of course, you can't forget to wear your school badge, absolute essential! Well, we also had some fun…like the annual sports days, prize days after the final results, the Christmas fare.

Fatima said that hearing about Kavya's school reminded her of her cousin who studied in a boarding school. She recalls,

My cousin would always say that his school was so strict about everything that he sometimes feels that he is in a military school. But, you know, their teachers are really good, they explain everything so well through activities and they also have all these annual functions, like Kavya mentioned in her school.

Fatima mentioned that boarding schools or the residential schools are English-medium and have strict rules regarding their curriculum and regulations. As a result, they provide a higher quality of academic instructions, as prescribed by the national and state boards of education. Convent schools, or the English-medium schools, privately-owned by the Church, are also regulated by the state board of education and follow strict curriculums. Usually, students from the boarding schools and the convent schools are very well-versed in the English language, agreed Fatima and the others.

Pari studied in a private Gujrati-medium school, which was also a reputed school in Rajkot. Her school followed the statewide curriculum prescribed by the Gujrat Board of education. Since it was an expensive, private school, they had modern amenities, best of educational resources, and excellent sports and extra-curricular facilities. Pari thought

that it would have been great if her school was bilingual and if it would provide English-medium as well because despite all the amenities, Pari felt that it lacked in quality English education. Like Pari, Shlok also studied in a private school which followed the statewide curriculum, but he said his school was bilingual in English and Marathi:

> I studied English-medium, but my school offered both English and Marathi-mediums. Exams were conducted by the Maharashtra Board. My school ranked every year. Students got into good colleges and got very well-paid jobs. We didn't have like the best facilities and the most updated computers, or ac classrooms, but our students ranked in the board exams. We also had friendly teachers…our English classes were not as interactive as it is here, but we enacted plays, did group quizzes, teachers were always open to questions and doubts.

Mohit studied in a private English-medium school which followed the national CBSE curriculum. Mohit stated that his school was different from the government schools, which also followed the CBSE curriculum, since private schools had more resources and the teachers were more trained. Mohit explained that schools in India could follow the same or different boards but it all depended on how much money they had. The private schools could be expensive in some areas, have best teachers and the most modern amenities while some may have average resources like the government schools, he added.

Languages

India being a multilingual and multicultural country, it was expected that the participants will have a wide range of linguistic backgrounds. Unlike other participants, Ravi was brought up in Middle East. He could speak and write both English and Arabic

fluently. He was fairly fluent in Gujrati and a little better in Hindi although he couldn't write in any of the two languages. He mostly spoke in Gujrati and Hindi with his parents and his family in India but he always used English to speak with his sister, his friends, his classmates and his teachers. He also studied French in school as a third language. All other participants grew up in India, using and studying several languages at the same time. Fatima explained,

> You know I think it is natural to know languages in India. It is only after I came here I realized people get impressed with you if you know more than one or two languages.

All the participants agreed with Fatima about being brought up in a multilingual atmosphere. Mohit added, *in India there is nobody I am sure who knows only one language. It is very common.* Being from a multilingual country, Fatima learnt to read and write several languages either from school or from her immediate environment, like home and community, while she was growing up. She did not think much of her language skills until she experienced monolingualism in the U.S. Fatima's parents spoke Urdu/Hindi mix at home and since she too, couldn't speak Urdu without mixing it with Hindi, she did not feel comfortable calling Urdu her first language. Instead, she calls Hindi as her first language because she was most comfortable speaking and writing in Hindi,

> At home my parents speak Urdu mostly, which is very similar to Hindi. Actually you can call it a mix…a mix of Hindi and Urdu. So, I don't know, you can say Hindi and Urdu both are my mother-tongue. I know Hindi fluently, speaking, writing, I am good in Hindi. Well, Gujrati also. It

was our first language in school. If I had to pick one, it would be Hindi, because I speak Hindi at home, with all my friends. Actually, that is also a mix. We use so many English words, phrases. Always mixing Hindi and English.

Apart from the usage, Fatima also believed Hindi to be her first language because she cacouldn speak and write in Hindi really well. Although she admitted that there was always a mix of either Urdu and Hindi or English and Hindi while speaking, she believed that writing competency was the deciding factor.

For Pari, Gujrati was her mother-tongue and first language in school. *Gujrati is also my first language. I can also, like, I know Hindi and English but Gujrati I am most comfortable*, she said. Pari could speak and write fluently in Hindi and Gujrati. However, she was not confident about either her speaking or writing skills in English. Her parents were Gujrati, i.e., they belonged to the State of Gujrat and spoke Gujrati. Pari revealed that she believed that Gujrati was her first language because of her excellent speaking, reading, and writing skills in the language. It was because of her competency in the language, that she was most comfortable in its usage. During the focus group discussion, Pari expressed that if she had studied Hindi in school from kindergarten, she might have had the proficiency of the first language. Pari studied in a Gujrati medium school, where all her subjects, except for the languages, were taught in Gujrati. She studied Hindi and English from grade five till ten. Shlok's mother-tongue was Marathi and he was most comfortable speaking in that language. So he calls Marathi as his first language, and English as his second language, although his usage of English was more at the time. Marathi brought back memories of his family,

> Marathi is my mother-tongue, my first language. It's like Marathi at home,
> my parents and my *Dadi*, my *Nana Nani* I mean, grandparents, cousins,
> friends, relatives, everyone. We are, like, watching Marathi movies, TV,
> everything, always Marathi.

In school, his first language was English, second language was Marathi, third and fourth languages were Hindi and French respectively. He accepted that he had average fluency in French but had good competency in rest of the languages. Mohit studied English as his first language in school, Hindi was his second language and Punjabi was his mother-tongue. His third language was French, which he didn't remember much of anymore. He said he spoke in Hinglish with his friends, which was a mix of Hindi and English. Bengali was the only important language to Mahmood. He was very comfortable and fluent in speaking and writing in Bengali. English was his first language in school and he said he had a good fluency in speaking and writing in English, although he spoke English with a heavy Bengali accent. About Hindi, he said,

> I can understand little bit of Hindi because of the films, and also because it
> is very similar to Bengali, but I cannot speak Hindi. It would be better if I
> did because as an Indian you really need to know Hindi.

Kavya agreed with Mahmood that her not knowing Hindi was a social impediment for her, despite the fact that she knew many languages and she had speaking, reading and writing proficiency in almost all of them. Kavya said her first language was Malayalam since she identified it as her mother-tongue,

> I am most fluent in Malayalam, that's my mother-tongue. I can say I can
> speak and write Malayalam pretty well. I am also fluent in English, Tamil

and Kannada but any day Malayalam for me. Actually, my grandparents speak Moplah, which is also like, a dialect of Malayalam. My mother-tongue actually is Moplah but I am more fluent in Malayalam. At home, we speak Malayalam.

Describing her language experiences while growing up, Kavya said,

It didn't feel like I was learning so many languages. It was natural. My family spoke so many languages. Also, my friends. You know it's easy to learn many languages all at the same time because you learn them in school and also get to use them with friends and everyone around you so it's easy.

Place

Most of the participants were from big cities where they had access to a variety of schools. Ravi was from Doha, which was the capital city of Qatar. There were several private and international schools in Doha, with excellent modern facilities. All the international schools in Doha were bilingual with Arabic and English. Mohit was from New Delhi, which was the capital city of India. According to the 2011 census, there were about 5,800 government, private and international schools in Delhi, that followed various central, state and international curriculums. Most of the schools in Delhi had English as their medium of instruction and some were bilingual with English and Hindi. Pari was from the city of Rajkot, where there were hundreds of private and government schools. Most of the schools (both government and private) in Rajkot followed the state board curriculum and were Gujrati-medium. Few schools were English-medium with Gujrati as their second language. Kavya was from the port city of Kochi, where there were 34

government schools, 67 private schools and 31 international and convent schools, according to the 2011 census. All the schools in Kochi were either English-medium or bilingual in Malayalam and English. Sayeeda and Fatima were from Surat, which was similar to Kochi, in terms of the variety of schools available. The schools in Surat were mostly bilingual in Gujrati and English, and some were English-medium. Shlok was from Nashik, which had some of the best schools in the state of Maharashtra. The official languages of the state were Marathi and English. Unlike others, Mahmood was from the small town of Murshidabad, with a total of about 37 schools, mostly private ones, and only four government sponsored ones. Most of the schools in Murshidabad were Bengali-medium, a few were English-medium and even fewer had both English and Bengali as their medium of instruction.

Gender

Several of the participants also talked about how their gender identity in society affected their English language learning. Fatima revealed that different choices were made regarding education and schooling, for her brother and for her and her sisters,

> In my community, actually in several places in India, girls are expected to go to Arts college and then get married right after BA. I had to *manao* [convince] my parents so much to come here. Actually, my Badi Ammi sold my *jahez* jewelry to send me here. My parents were furious. See, we are 3 sisters, so my parents have been collecting gold and everything for our wedding. Ever since we were children, we have seen this.

Fatima revealed that marriage played an important role in the life of a female child, especially from the point of view of her parents. Her family saved money not for her

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education but for her wedding. Her experience was that often women were expected to study till college and get marred right after that. She had said, *it is not feminine to be ambitious*. Fatima's sisters never spoke in defiance and were quite subservient about this process. However, Fatima wanted to study abroad and convincing her parents was a huge task, she revealed. Other participants agreed with her that women in several parts of the country did not have equal education opportunities like the men.

She further explained,

> My parents could only afford one private school, so my brother was chosen. Anyways he is the eldest so. And Government schools do not charge much to girl students.

Fatima and her sisters went to the government school where fees were nominal and the English language instructions were average to poor. Her brother received preferential treatment and now had better language skills than them. She also highlighted that since his brother was the eldest, her family had stronger expectations for him,

> He needs to get a good job and take care of my parents. We all, my sisters and me, are going to get married and will be moving away from home eventually!

Mahmood revealed that matters at his home were also quite similar to Fatima's,

> Yes. I agree. Parents have different expectations with their son and daughters. My sisters studied in madrasa before they got married so they did not study mainstream. They had Islamic studies and it is considered prestigious, not prestigious but respectful in our community.

> I am the only son so I have a responsibility. I have to get a good job so I
> can support my parents.

Mahmood's sisters studied in a madrasa, an Islamic educational institution, where apart from the regular topics like Mathematics, Science, Social Sciences and Languages, Quran was also taught. The curriculum was regulated by the state mosques and was inexpensive. If students aspired to appear for national joint entrance examinations for admission to engineering and medical colleges, they would have to attend additional private training, independent of the madrasa. Earlier, Mahmood had said that his father admitted him in an English-medium school as he was keen about his English education. Mahmood confessed that it was not mere coincidence that his sisters and he had different educational paths but rather involved a lot of bias in the community regarding both the gender. While the sisters in both the families did not have much educational freedom, the brothers, too, had the burden to study mainstream (mostly STEM) and secure a well-paid job. Mohit talked about his own family's share of expectations,

> Even my parents have clearly told me that they have two things I have to
> listen to. I must after graduation I should join my father's business and I
> can't marry outside my caste. Actually that is an issue in my community.
> Both boys and girls have to maintain strict rules about this. If you marry
> outside caste, you will bring shame to the family, all relatives, everyone
> will cut relation after that.

Mohit revealed even males have to experience restrictions related to marriage and career. His family, like Mahmood's family, expected him to study either STEM subjects

(Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics) or Business Management. Marriage was also a big social factor in his community, which came with its own rules,

> I think women have less say in society than men. My mother got married when she was 16, which is not legal now. So, you know, she couldn't finish her studies. She is homemaker and she is happy I know that but I sometimes wonder if it is her own choice or because she couldn't go to college. She wants my brother and me to study really well.

Mohit's mother, like many other women in India, had minimum educational opportunities, let alone English language education opportunities. Kavya belonged to that section of the society where both girls and boys had equal opportunities, be it education, marriage or other life choices. Kavya's parents were very proud of her educational achievements so far and were very encouraging of her future career plans.

Pari talked about how her parents were initially against her travelling to the U.S. all by herself. She said, many of her friends' parents wouldn't allow them to study in college at a different city, let alone a different country,

> Actually, even my parents want me to married first before I come here. They planned to marry us, me and my sister, before we came to US. Arranged marriage. But I had to convince them a lot. They don't feel confident sending their daughter to U.S. all alone. Even we have so many relatives, in California, Texas, but you know, they are busy and I wanted to study.

Sayeeda said her father felt confident because Fatima was travelling with her,

My father allowed me to come because Fatima was coming. Otherwise he won't allow, means, it is difficult to convince him that ways.

Kavya brought to light that the parents' reservation to send their daughters abroad or out of town was basically an extension of their reservation of having their daughter away from home for too long. *Be it going out with friends, or attending an event, you have to come back home by 8*, she said. Kavya also said that restricting the movement of the females in the society not only gave them less freedom to do what they wanted but also prevented them to experience life to the fullest. The participants agreed that such restrictions at home resulted in lesser opportunities, and lesser quality of education.

Self-perception

All the participants were very articulate about their ideas, thoughts and perceptions. They had clear understanding of their experiences in the past and in the present. Sayeeda was reserved at first. She accepted that she was emotionally dependent on her friend Fatima, who helped her with her self-confidence. Having lost her mother at a young age and father being busy due to his profession, Sayeeda always struggled with making her own decisions. She confessed that she looked up to Fatima regarding all her life decisions. Talking about her experiences with writing, she said, *I am not good at writing, I know. It is hard for me to write something on my own*. Unlike Sayeeda, Fatima was confident and outspoken. She mentioned unapologetically about the hardships of being born as a girl in a middle-class family, about how she detested some of the backward customs of her culture and how she was never afraid to call a spade a spade. She loved writing her personal journals and confessed that journaling was her way of letting off steam. Kavya was also a confident and intelligent young woman. She was very

clear about her priorities in life, what she wanted to do after her graduation, how she should plan about accomplishing them. She was also aware of her family background, her culture and socioeconomic conditions back home. For her, English speaking and writing proficiency were essential for educational and professional success. Mohit was from a wealthy family and he was very conscious of his socioeconomic status. He believed in good investments in life, *I studied engineering because you will always get a good job after that…also if you are studying medical or engineering, people think highly of you in India.* He said, honor and prestige were big in his community. While he was proud of the ethics of his culture, he was also forthright about criticizing some of the regressive customs that have impacted him personally in his life. He believed he was quite proficient in speaking and writing English and did not think he had to pay much attention to the 'learning' of the English language. Ravi was also from a wealthy family. He grew up in an Arabic-English bilingual society so like Mohit, he too, did not feel the need to 'learn' English in a classroom, since it came to him naturally. He did not think of life in terms of success and failure. He said, *I like to take it easy…today I am here doing my thing…tomorrow I might do something else… don't know.* Since racing was his passion, he wanted to pursue it for a while. Both Mohit and Ravi were aware their family business were their respective fallback plans. Pari was also from an affluent family and was aware of her privileges. She did have her own struggles which were similar to Fatima's. She had to convince her parents to let her study before they married her off. Having studied English only from secondary level, she was aware that her shortcomings in speaking and especially writing in English, could be a challenge for her. Shlok was a friendly and intelligent person who explained in great detail what writing experiences he has had in

India and in the U.S. He loved writing, understood the requirements of a good paper and how his knowledge and practice of IE could be different from the standard version of American English. Of all the participants, Mahmood was also had a cheerful, friendly and talkative personality. His struggles as an international student in the U.S. were deeply rooted to his socioeconomic conditions back home. He was aware that his parents sponsored his education despite financial crisis, since he was the male child and had the responsibility to look after his parents after retirement. Although he did not believe in gender discrimination but did experience it in his home where his parents were more biased towards him than his sisters. He was also aware that he needed to work on his English grammar and his English speaking, *I need to get rid of this Bengali accent….I have no idea how though*.

Attitude

Ravi and Mohit were the only two participants who experienced casual approach to English language learning while growing up. Mohit shared that English language as a subject never received much respect in school. It was one of those easy subjects that could be studied casually before the exam, he said,

> English as a subject was taught with a casual approach in my school. It's a private school, English medium, but then also, you know, the instructions were very basic, like the essay should have an introduction, body and conclusion, or that they must be grammatically correct and have correct spellings…..Actually, I did not pay much attention to English in school.

Ravi, who was from Doha and studied in an International school, also said that language classes were never deemed as important, *never focused on any of the language classes in*

school. Only STEM subjects, he said. Mohit and Ravi both studied in esteemed schools which were renowned internationally for their higher educational standards, excellent scores in yearly standardized tests and extracurricular activities. Both the participants had shared that they spoke English with their friends and used the English language extensively in their daily lives. Yet, when it came to studying English in school, both revealed that they believed they did not have to put an effort in learning English as they already had sound knowledge of the language. Mohit mentioned earlier that as male, it was quite expected of them to study one of the STEM subjects for his graduation and so he concentrated on those as opposed to English, which seemed to have not much academic value to him, *I don't know what I can study with bachelors in English. Engineering is always in demand, or Medical…that is also prestigious.* Mohit also shared that he did not like being in an English class and did not enjoy writing compositions.

Shlok, on the other hand, enjoyed his English classes while growing up. He shared that he's always had good English teachers and he enjoyed writing so much that he decided to study journalism. Fatima added that she, however, did not enjoy her English classes in school but nonetheless, enjoyed the process of reading and writing in English. Kavya shared that she had always had the love for reading English novels: *I used to buy only classics with my pocket money.* She said she did not really enjoy writing in English as much as Fatima or Shlok, but her love for reading made her quite competent in writing in English. She added,

> It is also an important language skill to have…if you want to study
>
> further…or in the future if you want to work abroad, or even in big cities

[in India]…you need to know English…that itself is very motivating for

me. I always knew English is like Maths, you can't get away from it.

Mahmood agreed with Kavya. He said, no one in his community, even in his school, used

English much but everyone knew that English speaking and writing skills will always

help a person make a better living. Despite the financial hardships at home, his father

chose for him to study in an English-medium school, and not the local Bengali-medium

school, where most of his friends and cousins went to,

My father wanted me to study in an English medium school even though

my sisters went to madrasa. He wanted me to know English. It was more

beneficial for higher studies, it also brings more prestige. My baba used to

say, "*amar chele English medium e porche*," (my son is studying in

English medium) with a sense of pride.

Pari agreed that it was important for her to learn English because she felt that English

speaking skills added prestige to one's social persona. *People think highly of you if you*

know English, said Fatima. They agreed that English speaking and writing skills were not

just essential but also elevated one's social standing.

Usage

Discussing about their various speaking and writing experiences in English,

participants revealed that while they all studies English in school, many of them did not

use much of the language outside school. Taking about her English speaking experiences

in India, Fatima said,

I have always felt a bit of a comfort in writing in English…not so much

speaking. Well, you don't get much opportunity to practice English

speaking if you're in a government school…also in my locality,

nobody…none of my friends really spoke in English.

Fatima studied in a government school where the English language usage was not as much as it would be in a private school, although it was English-medium. Also, the English language instructions in her school were bookish and Fatima could not relate much to the practical use of the language. Kavya spoke in English with her cousins, and many of her friends while growing up,

Malayalam is obviously more popular than Moplah and only my grandparents speak Moplah. All my family are Christian, and my grandparents are Muslim so its kind of being loyal if I speak Malayalam, you know. My uncles, aunties, all speak Malayalam. With cousins, its English mostly.

She revealed that although Malayalam was more popular at home, many of her relatives switched to English often. She also spoke in English in school and always regarding English as one of her own languages. Mahmood spoke Bengali at home, with friends, relatives, in school and even in some government offices,

My father is from Bangladesh descent. So he still speaks in Bangla most of the times. My mother is Bengali but you see, Bangla and Bengali are so similar…they used to be the same country. My sisters, me, we all speak Bengali. In Murshidabad, from where I am, Bengali is also used in offices. You can write applications both in English and Bengali. Not always though, my bank loan application and all that paperwork is in English.

Mahmood shared that in Murshidabad, official documents were bilingual since a lot of locals were not familiar with speaking and writing in English. He spoke Bengali with parents, his sisters, his relatives, his friends and neighbors,

> But the funny part is, when I go home, I cannot say English much because then all my relatives, friends will make fun of me – *shaheb hoe geli je tui* (you've become a foreigner). So, I always speak in Bengali with my friends. Many are outside Murshidabad, in college. But whenever I call, or they call, we only speak in Bengali. Of course, there are many words that we will speak in English, like table, chair, syllabus, application, etc., because we don't use Bengali words for these.

The English language usage was a mark of prestige for Mahmood's father and many people in his community and yet, if he would speak with them in English, it would appear as boasting. Mahmood accepted that there were many English words that were used by Bengalis on daily basis in their speech, so much so that he couldn't even remember the Bengali words for those. Mahmood said, the fact that he could speak, read and write in English, was greatly accepted by his family and friends, and it gave him a sense of false pride. He spoke English with a heavy accent, which was often a problem with his non-Bengali friends, his friends and teachers at the university. Due to this reason, Mahmood did not feel confident about his English speaking and writing skills. Shlok said he could relate to what Mahmood said about talking in English with friends,

> I want to add that I also rarely speak in English with my friends, or family, or even classmates. We only speak in Marathi. In school, we have to speak in English, but that is only when the teacher is in class. Otherwise, we

chill in Marathi. I think even my friends will look at me strange if I speak

in English with them. Ya, I agree with Mahmood. They may think I am

showing off. Some of my friends are from Marathi medium, you see.

Clearly, for Mahmood and Shlok, both of whom belonged to different parts of India, their

vernacular language was the language of comfort, language hey would *chill* in, and

English appears to be invasive in such an intimate space with friends and family. Yet,

they both studied in English-medium schools, learnt to read and write the language well

so they could pursue greater heights academically and professionally. Shlok studied in a

prominent, private English-medium school from kindergarten, where English language

instructions were excellent. As a result, he was quite proficient in speaking and writing in

English.

For Fatima, her language of comfort was different from that of her parents. Her

parents and grandmother spoke Urdu mixed with Hindi but she and her siblings always

spoke in Hindi. Like Bangla and Bengali, Urdu and Hindi are also very similar in syntax.

Fatima was also fluent in Gujrati,

Me and my sister and brother speak in Hindi. I also speak in Hindi with all

my friends. And also Gujrati. At home, my Ammi Abba speak in Urdu.

Actually it is mix, Hindi and Urdu mix. My Badi Ammi speaks in Urdu.

Mohit added that while it was easy for him to learn English speaking skills because of

school, when it came to using the language, he would always mix it with Hindi,

Knowing one language with perfection is impossible. Me and my friends

are always speaking in Hindi and mixing English. We call it Hinglish.

Elders in my family, my parents, Naniji, Tayaji Taiji, all my relatives,

speak in Punjabi but again, you know, youngsters like me, my cousins we

speak in Hinglish.

Mohit came from a wealthy family and accepts that he and his brother were privileged to study in a private English-medium school in the capital city of India. Nonetheless, he was most comfortable in speaking in Hindi with his friends and family. Due to the frequent switching between the two languages, Mohit called it *Hinglish*. He felt Punjabi was the language of his elders and that he learnt the English language through usage in school.

I wish I could speak in Hindi, or even Hinglish. Here all my friends, Indian friends speak Hindi. I can figure out what they are saying but you can't really bond well if you don't speak the language. I am a proper Malayali. I know 6 languages but not Hindi. If I get in job in Delhi, or North India, I will have to know Hindi, it seems.

Kavya was born and brought up in Kerala, a southern coastal state of India. Like the other four southern states – Karnataka, Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh, Kerala, too, was hostile against the learning and practice of the Hindi language. For many years, the southern states of India claimed that the imposition of Hindi was a socio-political strategy of the northern states to monopolize the linguistic map of India. The four languages, spoken in the southern states, Malayalam, Kannada, Tamil and Telegu, are one of the oldest languages of India and are less used in other parts of the country. On the other hand, most of the languages spoken in the other parts of India have few similarities with Hindi, and did not oppose to the idea of Hindi being the *Rashtra Bhasha* (language of the

nation). As Kavya pointed out, knowledge of the Hindi language benefits students socially and culturally. It was interesting to note that Kavya finds her lack of Hindi language skills as an inability even though she was highly proficient in speaking and writing in English. Mahmood could not believe that Kavya could think that her language skills were inadequate because she didn't know Hindi - *Arre, knowing 6 languages is a lot but you are saying as if it is wastage. I mean not wastage but useless*, he said in disbelief. Kavya explained,

> That's partially true because in India if you don't know Hindi then you are kind of cut off from the opportunities all over. Like for me, I want to do PhD and work at IIMS but I will have to learn Hindi before that, at least to fit in socially. I know that medium of instruction is always English but if you don't know Hindi how will you talk to colleagues, friends?

Fatima reminded that the same linguistic attitude was absent in the southern states,

> This is unfair. My cousin lives in Chennai. He works there but he doesn't have the need to learn Tamil. His English is good. He studied in a very good boarding school.

Most of the participants had some regional accent while speaking in English, irrespective of their private school or government school background, English-medium or vernacular-medium of instruction. Pari talked about her own English speaking with the Gujrati accent,

> Even I have a Gujrati accent. We have so much good exposure in Hindi and English in society. There is TV, social media, movies but still my English is weak, speaking part.

Since English was the official language of India, and Hindi was the national language, both the languages are commonly used on daily basis in the print, broadcast and social media, television, entertainment industry, commerce and education. Pari's doubt was also resonated by Mohit, as to how was it possible to have so much exposure with a language and yet not be able to speak or write with proficiency. During the focus group discussion, all the participants agreed that generally, daily exposure to a language may help in understanding and speaking it but did not equal to writing in the language with competency.

Very early in the conversation, Shlok revealed that being a journalism major, he had to write papers/reports almost every day and he loved writing every single one of them. He also expressed that ever since he had travelled to the US, he hardly got any opportunity to speak in a different language than English. Talking about his English writing experiences in India, Shlok said,

> In my school, we had proper English language, literature and reading/writing classes. For grammatical conventions, I mostly used class instructions, school grammar textbook and the OWL website. We had to hand-write 2-3 pages essays, formal letters, research papers. They would also ask us to research on social issue and write our opinion on it, sometimes just on the issues and for our literature classes, we read short stories, poems, we also had novels. We did literature analysis, character analysis, mostly.

Shlok studied in a private school where his first language was English. He was very fluent in English and had good practice writing essays, reports and research papers. Talking about her English classes and English writing experiences in India, Fatima said,

> We had English grammar and literature. In grammar, we had antonyms, synonyms, sentence construction, phrase, clause, verb, adverb, noun, pronoun, adjective, articles, tense, active and passive voice, gerund, conjunction and interjection. For composition, we had paragraph writing, letter writing, precis writing, essay writing, autobiography writing, paraphrasing, poetry analysis and short story synopsis. In literature classes we read various short stories, poems and plays. The assignments would mostly be in question-answer format where we were asked about the plot in the literature piece and were asked to analyze the poems. Teachers would dictate the answers in class and the students were expected to memorize them and write the same in the exams.

Kavya had similar experiences,

> We wrote composition essays, book reports, book reviews, film reviews, and proposals. The basic criteria for the papers were correct grammatical constructions, sentence structure, vocabulary, spelling, organization and overall coherence. Like about 500 words. We also mostly hand-wrote them. So, when I had to type papers here, it was tough getting that speed. Topics were also different. New types of papers. In India, we mostly wrote about social issues.

Most of the English academic experiences of Shlok, Fatima and Kavya, were of grammar and short essays. They did have experience writing various kind of essays, each with different focus. For the rest of the participants, either they themselves, or their parents, and teachers did not take language instruction seriously. As Mahmood explained,

> For us, there was no extra time for teaching writing. Just grammar and literature, you see. We had to write essays, short paragraphs or formal/informal letters in class. Mostly questions from the back of the book for literature. Teachers taught the basic grammar and it was assumed that that knowledge would be enough to write an essay. It is only here that I understood that there is more to writing an essay than just grammar.

Pari studied in a Gujrati-medium school and her English classes very basic. She realized she needed extra classes to prepare for her TOEFL,

> I joined a private coaching to prepare for my studies here. That is where I first saw so many points in writing. In school, they only teach us basic grammar, you know, nouns, verbs, sentences. Only in coaching, they told us how to write a full essay. I only wrote paragraphs in school.

Since she came from an affluent family, she could afford as many of these private classes but for students like Mahmood and Fatima, these couldn't be an option. For Sayeeda, vocabulary was a big hindrance,

> In school, there was grammar and literature classes and sometimes we had to write essays. The teacher told us that learning proper grammar and sentence construction was good. For final exam, we all memorized essays from essay book. Exam time is so less, there is no time to think new ideas.

That way it is easy for me. Whenever I sit to write in English, I always

forget the words.

Sayeeda revealed that she found it useful to memorize rather than write because she

didn't know how to write on her own. She added that writing instructions in India were

very limited to the basics and when she attended the college composition classes in the

U.S., she realized that there was a systematic process to writing which when learned,

helped in generating personal writing.

Experiences		F	K	Ma	M	P	R	Sa	S
Past	SLL	★		★		★		★	
	SLA		★		★		★		★
Past	Education	★	★	★	★	★	★	★	★
	Social Class	★	★	★	★	★	★		★
	Languages	★	★	★	★	★	★	★	
	Economy	★	★	★	★		★		★
	Gender	★		★	★	★		★	
	Place			★			★		
	Usage	★	★	★	★		★		★
	Attitude — serious	★	★	★		★			★
	Attitude — casual				★		★		
	Self-Perception	★	★	★		★		★	
Present	Awareness of IE	★		★	★				★
	ELP		★		★	★		★	
	Composition Class	★	★				★		★

Figure 4.2 Past and present experiences of the participants

Present Experiences

Awareness of Indian English, attending the university intensive English program and writing experiences in the college composition class were the students' present experiences that played a role in their perception of good writing.

ELP

Kavya's English vocabulary was excellent, and she spoke correct grammar. However, her English had heavy south Indian accent which, according to her, did not put forward a good impression,

> I can write English papers and I also get good grades but my accent is
> Malayali, it seems. When I came to this university, I did not pass the speak
> test because of my accent. Now they put me in the ELP for Fall that year.
> But I passed the grammar tests with flying colors.

Kavya could not pass the test and had to attend ELP to improve her accent. The classes were meant for all international students who did not pass the university English proficiency test. As a result, Kavya said that her classmates were from Egypt, China, Saudi Arabia and South Korea. She knew that her grammar and writing skills were good, and this made her do really well in class, unlike her classmates. She even spoke better than them. She realized that these students were from countries where English was not taught as a second language. The classes were designed in such a manner that they did not benefit Kavya. She knew she was there for her speech and her interactions with her instructors her aware of how some words were meant to pronounce in certain ways to make her speech sound better. Mahmood had a slightly different experience. He had a heavy Bengali accent but he passed the university language proficiency test,

See, I have same problem. My accent, I mean English is sounding like

Bengali. Most of my Bengali friends here also speak like me, but I don't

know if anyone gave, I mean, failed the test. I did not attend ELP. For me

also, writing is better. You give me pen, I will write long essays, no

problem. Here, you have to type. See, many school friends in

Murshidabad feels shy to speak but they can write good essays. Our

school got State prize for 2 years in essay competition.

Mahmood also added that, *non-standard speaking may not equal to non-standard writing*. He said, after hearing him speak, people might form the opinion that his writing proficiency was weak, which was not true. He believed that the opposite may also happen. He said, living in India, *speaking may come naturally because there is TV, Facebook*, which makes the Indian student population amongst the international population, *stand out in a university event but there is no surety that the Indian students who speak well, will also write well.* It seemed like Mohit had experienced what Mahmood was saying. Mohit was disturbed that he did not pass the proficiency test and had to take ELP classes,

My English is not that bad that I had to take ELP classes. They said, the

university, that I need one semester of ELP classes. It is shameful for me

to be doing extra classes for English, so I never told my friends about this.

ELP has listening, reading, writing classes, but it is mostly grammar and

speaking, which is not helping me. This is for the students of Saudi Arabia

and China. My Chinese friends from orientation passed this test but they

are telling me that I failed. I don't know what is the system. I couldn't tell

anybody, my friends, no one otherwise they will think my English is bad.

Since Mohit could speak better English than his classmates from Saudi Arabia and China,

he believed that his overall grasp on the language was better than them. Not only that, he

also believed that he did not belong in the ELP class as the classes were not teaching him

anything that he did not already know.

Sayeeda found the ELP classes helpful: *here ELP class helped with my speaking,*

I am more confident but I am still struggling with my writing. ELP classes have helped

both Sayeeda and Pari to be more confident with their English speaking. Pari realized that

she still had a lot to learn about writing,

> I had ELP classes for first year here. There was not much writing or
>
> learning writing process in ELP. It is only speaking, grammar, reading. It
>
> helped me speak better but not writing. I am in US, I am totally in English
>
> environment, this helps with my speaking. But writing I don't know. I am
>
> still learning.

Depending on their English language proficiency level, few students found ELP classes

beneficial while others did not.

Expository writing

Contrary to the opinions about ELP classes, most of the participants found the

Expository writing classes helpful. Pari believed that the composition classes have been

beneficial to her. Although the ELP classes helped her with the speaking, she knew she

needed serious help with her writing. Pari believed that one could not write the way they

spoke and so despite living in an English environment in the U.S. or even in India where

English communication happens quite frequently, her speaking and writing was not improving:

> When I am in that environment where there is good exposure of English. There are English movies, social media also, so many books you get, news, TV channels have English programs from America but I will still need proper coaching for writing in English. I can understand the American style of speaking, I also write some English sentences on daily basis but writing an essay in the ENGL 100 classroom, for that, I will have to seriously sit and learn writing. I can't write how I speak, no.

Shlok shared that he felt quite confident writing essays for his composition class at the university in the U.S. because he knew that although some of the rules for writing were different, his grammar and basic knowledge of writing essays was good enough information for the first assignment. He knew he had to learn a lot to write *good essays in American standard*. Shlok highlighted his experience as a student writer in the university newspaper,

> Well, writing is not a new experience for me but I have to think hard for this one. American English writing expectations are a little different than Indian English writing expectations.
>
> Here at the university, as a journalism major, I have written analytical essays, I also wrote an analytical essay for my SAT. So, for my journalism class, I write reports on daily basis. I actually write as much as I speak, I think! I also write the opinion column for the university newspaper as an international student.

Just like Shlok, Fatima too, loved her experiences in the English composition classroom,

> I really love the informal setting here. All the discussions and workshops,
> I have never had that in school. We never did writing community with
> classmates kind of thing.

Since, in India, the class formats were mostly lecture-driven and very limited interactions amongst the students during the lessons, workshops were very new concepts for Fatima and the other participants. They collectively agreed that they had not heard of the 'writing community' in the classroom before they came to the U.S. Kavya's experience at the college composition class had been varied and informative,

> For English 100, we had to write autoethnographies, gender analysis,
> invitational writing, and informative report. While researching for the
> papers, I was able to understand socio-cultural issues in the US. Also, each
> paper was different. They were meant to celebrate diversity so I wanted to
> write about Kerala but then I thought that will not work so I just wrote
> about my experiences as an international student.

Both Shlok and Kavya expressed that she had opportunities to write about themselves, their cultural backgrounds and other details about their native place which makes them the person that they are today, but they chose to write about their experiences as an international student on campus. Like Fatima, they were grateful that they have had opportunities to write and express themselves.

Awareness of IE

All the participants, either during their interview or the focus group discussion, conveyed that Indian English was similar to British English and before traveling to the

US, they had limited idea about American English, especially in the academic setting. While Ravi noticed that *books don't read the same*, Shlok specified,

> Indian English has more similarities with British English than American English. Basic structure, sentence construction, word choice, all very similar to British English. Oxford comma, definite article, these are all new to me.

Some of the participants did not know the specifics and said that they couldn't pinpoint at the differences but have realized while reading their textbooks that sentences are framed differently, and a lot of words are different. Kavya stated,

> We mostly read British classics in school. American books are a bit different. They read different. References to American classics is a bit struggle for me. I am learning.

Colour is color. Program, recognize, they all spell differently, said Mohit. He observed that American English seems very different from IE due to the accent differences, but he had learnt during his first year of undergraduate studies that there isn't a lot of grammatical differences. Mahmood expressed how he was unfamiliar with American English phrases like *ace the test*, *the event was lit*, *driving up the wall*, *put up a front*, etc. Kavya and others reflected that several words in IE could be used differently in the American English, like *five days back* in American English will be *five days ago* in IE, *costume party* is *fancy dress party* in IE, *soccer game* is *football match* in IE, *pharmacy* is a *chemist's shop* in IE, *besides* is *apart from* in IE. Sayeeda shared how she was always careful with the spellings. *Color, jewelry, program, meter, spell colour, jewellery, programme, metre, respectively here*, she said. Fatima added that she felt, at

times the words and the overall tone of a piece of writing would make it look less formal. Shlok talked about being careful with the word choice, especially since he was a regular writer of a column for the university newspaper,

> The words are different, tone, voice, you know. You really have to think hard about which words to use, you can't offend anybody. I didn't have to think like that in India. I used to write in passive voice but realized active voice is preferred here.

Pari and Sayeeda agreed that they have been told by their instructors to use active voice and be assertive in their writing. Sayeeda remembers, the first time she had tried revising her paper using active voice, *it sounded so rude!* Pari added that she is not used to saying things directly in real life since she had been taught that that would not be polite. Fatima and Kavya explained that in India, culturally they have been brought up with the understanding that direct speech is rude. *Using 'I' in a sentence every time almost seems like I am bragging about something*, said Kavya. Shlok also reminded that things have different names in the US: *Brinjal is eggplant here. Aubergine. Football is soccer here.* Mohit added, *ladies'* finger is okra here, *letterbox is mailbox*, *holiday is vacation*. Mahmood also shared an anecdote about when he casually said the temperature was 6 degrees. His American friends gave him a shocking look until he explained that he was speaking in Celsius. *They use Fahrenheit, miles, you have to be very careful of the switch*, said Mahmood.

OC writer in IC classroom

Although the participants reflected that they are still learning about the American academic English, they all agreed that they had been successful with writing research papers at the university. Mahmood was from engineering background:

> In my field, I don't have to have a lot of English writing skill. As long as the subject matter is good, the paper is good. For composition class, yes, there were different types of expectations, different types of papers but in my field, the focus is mainly on the content.

Mahmood also said that he had being getting good grades in his papers, and he believed that was mostly because he had been writing research papers where he needed to focus on data rather than exhibit his English writing skills. Mohit, who was a friend of Mahmood, was also from Engineering. Hearing Mahmood, he was reminded of his school back home,

> Actually, in my school in Delhi, teachers also graded on content. I mean, grammar was a given requirement, but I think they only saw how many points I have written on the topic. Not like here. Here you have to think about how you will organize your paper, who is the audience and so many things.

The researcher was reminded that Mohit had confessed earlier than he had not taken his English classes in India seriously and did not remember specific writing instructions that were given in class. However, Mohit said that English grades were important for the overall success and students did pay attention to what would affect the grades in the English exam.

Participants also talked about the variety of topics they were able to write about at the university in the US. Shlok reflected,

> You can write about anything – drug addiction, abortion, sexuality, divorce, mental illness, it's not a taboo here. But in India, teachers like it if we stick to safer subjects.

Culturally, there were several topics that Indian parents did not like to talk about openly, mentioned Kavya, *especially not with high school students*. Hence, teachers refrained from essay topic as mentioned by Shlok. Ravi recalled that even in his school no controversial topics were allowed, and they only wrote short essays on life goals, favorite literature, travel destinations, etc. *Topics like pollution, poverty, or anything that would criticize the society, were all off-limits*, he said. But Ravi did not study in an Indian school.

For Fatima writing in the composition class in the U.S. was a liberating experience,

> This is so true. I never liked English writing classes in India because they are confining. Teachers don't give you the freedom to express. Here, it is refreshing to know that your teachers want to hear your voice and know about your experiences.

Fatima mentioned that it was not too often that women were asked about their opinions or decisions at their hometown, more so when one they were in high school. *Women who speak their mind are difficult to handle*, she said. College composition classes helped participants write about their opinions and experiences.

Popular culture references

Fatima mentioned that what she loved about the composition classes at the university in the U.S. was that she had the freedom to write how she feels, *although it is liberating to be able to express through writing… I still can't use cultural references and anecdotes from India*. Few participants shared that they have had a hard time understanding some of the American pop culture references while others revealed that they weren't sure if they could use Indian references in their writing. Shlok was a journalism major, and through his studies he has had multiple opportunities to write about social issues and cultural topics. He stated,

> For my journalism classes, I have to write papers on issues of homelessness and racism in America. See that's something I have researched, but I don't really have a deeper understanding. I have to feel it, to write it. In India it is poverty and caste system. It's definitely not the same.

Poverty in India and homelessness in the U.S. were very similar issues and yet they were quite distinct in their socioeconomic context. Homeless people in the U.S. lived in the streets because due to unfortunate circumstance they could not afford a residence, they did not have family or other social ties, many suffered from mental illness and chronic substance abuse, and many had disabilities. In India, homeless people were those who cannot afford a residence and lived in open spaces like the pavements, railway platforms, outside religious compounds, etc. Many suffered from chronic disease or had a disability. But there were also those who worked during the day, even if it was for a meagre earning. Many had family and children living with them. Unfortunately, slums are a

common sight in India where mostly the rural population resided who had migrated to the urban space in search of work. An Indian students' understanding of the poverty and homelessness in India was unique since it had become part of the society and many remained poor and homeless for generations.

Sayeeda appeared to be shy and reserved when she came for the focus group discussion. She accepted that she had never been very upfront about her feelings and opinions. She said, it got more difficult for her to write about herself when she had to decide which details she could write about and which ones she could not. For Kavya, there were several things that she did not get the opportunity to share in her ethnography,

> In can't write much about my native place. Am not sure anyone would get it. Kerala is a unique state. We have 100% literacy rate, it is also the state with India's lowest rate of population growth. One of the first states to rally for LGBTQ Rights. For my ethnography, I wanted to write about my experiences in a matriarchal society where you still have to fight for gender equality. It is complicated because in my state, women enjoy more power and prestige. It is perhaps the only state where the sex ratio is such that women outnumber men. I really wanted to write about being a true *Malayali* at heart, with love for Malayalam literature and poetry, festivals of Pooram and Onam. I am such a foodie. I miss all the cuisines like *achappam*, *appam*, *sadhya*, *biryani*, and Malabar prawns. I am not sure if anyone would relate to my native stories.

Kavya's love for her culture and ethnicity showed in her passionate description of her home state. She agreed that each hometown had its unique feature and not just Americans

but also Indians who are non-Keralite will not understand the depth of her native place that she was talking about. She said, if she would write about what she was passionate about, that will give her the real happiness and satisfaction in writing. Mohit agreed,

> I have that issue also. Actually, ELP does not give you the opportunity to write much. And in English 100, you need to write specific things they ask for. I can feel a cultural disconnect, with my Chinese classmates and American classmates also. If I am calling someone brother, it is much more than just, hey bro. In my community, you are brother for life. Loyalty, brotherhood, patriotism, generosity, all these things are big in my community. Yes, there is caste system and dowry in India which is also kind of going away gradually. Not everyone is like that. But the main thing is if I write about these issues, I am not sure if it will be good paper. I mean, the topics they discuss for the papers is different.

It was intriguing to hear Mohit's words – *cultural disconnect*. The experiences of writing seemed to be incomplete for many of these participants because they refrained from writing what their life and culture as an Indian was all about. Their feeling of being disconnected culturally from their American and international friends, their fear of not being understood by their American instructors, or at times, being misunderstood by their international friends, dictated how they represented themselves in the American classroom. Shlok had said that he was most comfortable expressing his views as an international student on campus for his university newspaper opinion column. For Kavya and Mohit, not being able to share the distinctiveness of their cultural values, left a large part of their being, out of their writing.

From his observations of his friends, Mahmood shared that international students like him found it hard to understand some of the cultural references and phrases used by their American classmates and teachers: *I can't be doing this on a Super Bowl night!* Or *The event was lit.* Mahmood was still learning about Super Bowl and the commercials, he said. Mohit added that initially he did not understand his American friends' references of baseball and football games, both of which were not played in India. Kavya said she was a self-proclaimed foodie and was ecstatic to learn about southern food, taste gumbo with creole seasoning. Shlok said that Indians had access to American movies through new releases and online portals. He revealed he was a big fan of Harry Porter series and Avengers series. *Yet, there are so many pop culture references that I don't know!* expresses Shlok. He believed his columns would connect more with his audience if he would use pop cultural references in his writing.

Most of the participants did not have a television in their dorm room. They socialized with their American and other international friends (few Indians as well) but rarely had an opportunity to be a part of an "all-American" party. Pari had said that she was invited to her friend's grandparents' house for Thanksgiving later that month and she was excited to have that opportunity to experience American culture. The participants agreed that it would take them some time to learn and understand the cultural references and imbibe them in their writing.

Good writing

The participants were asked individually during their interview and in the group discussion about what they thought would be good writing. All of them believed that a good essay should, first and foremost, be grammatically correct and there must be no

spelling mistakes. While some did not know the exact requirement for a good essay, they agreed that they could rely on the rubric provided by the teacher. Participants agreed that each essay was distinct according to their purpose, content and audience. Listed below are the responses of each of the participants:

Kavya: *Writing is good if your teacher tells you its good.*

Mohit: *Actually, if you have a good vocab, you can write well.*

Ravi: *If anyone knew the language and used it on daily basis, then writing should be an automatic response to that knowledge.*

Shlok: *Rubrics in the composition class helps me understand the specific requirements of each paper.*

Fatima: *Exactly! Rubrics are so helpful. Every rubric is different so the criteria for "good writing" changes with the type of paper.*

Pari: *I know that there are many details that we need to take care while writing but I am still learning. I know that proper grammar, no spelling mistake, tenses should be okay, but once I learn the detailed process no, I will be able to write good papers.*

Shlok: *Just the knowledge of grammar and sentence is not adequate, topic, organization, clarity, evidence, all these are equally important. I am yet to learn how to write the perfect essay.*

Mahmood: *I think, good writing happens when the writer is knowledgeable about standard grammar, the topic, and the audience.*

Most of the participants had a basic understanding of what are the most important aspects of writing a composition, but they are still learning about what defines good writing.

Fatima and Shlok shared that rubrics from their English 100 and 200 college composition classes helped them understand the detailed requirements of each paper, something that they did not have access to in India. Fatima had said that the rubrics actually told them what a good writing should be. Grammar, content, and organization seemed to be the top requirements of a good paper according to the participants. They also discussed the importance of vocabulary and cultural references in their writing.

Chapter Summary

Nine undergraduate Indian students participated in the study. Participants came from varied sociolinguistic, economic, educational and cultural backgrounds. In accordance with the research question, data was primarily categorized into three major parts: the past experiences, the present experiences and the understanding of good writing. Findings revealed that the past experiences of the participants that influenced their understanding of good writing were their second language learning and acquisition of the English language; their social class; economic conditions at home; the type of schools they went to while growing up and consequently, the quality of English education they received there; the various languages they spoke and wrote at home, in school and in their community; the places they grew up in; their gender and the societal expectations; their perceptions of self and others around them; their attitude towards learning of the English language; and the various opportunities they have had in India for speaking and writing in English. Findings also revealed that the present experiences of the participants in the ELP classes and in their Expository writing classes made them aware of their use of the Indian version of the English language; their need for learning the cultural references of American society and incorporating their own cultural references in their writing; and their presence as a second-language writer in a native-speaking classroom. The participants' past and present sociolinguistic experiences helped them understand that good writing was all about sharing their content with their cultural references and using standard writing conventions to serve a purpose.

Chapter 5 - Discussion

This chapter reviews the research question, the findings of the study and situates the findings in context of existing literature and the theoretical frameworks used for this study. The implications of the study, the limitations and recommendations for future research are also discussed in this chapter. This multiple case study explored how the past and present experiences of the Indian undergraduate students influenced their understanding of good writing. Data was collected through personal interviews, and focus group discussion and triangulated through reflective memos by the researcher.

This study focused on the undergraduate Indian students' understanding of good writing and how it depended on their experiences of Second Language Learning (SLL) and Second Language Acquisition (SLA) of English in India, the sociolinguistic influences on their learning of English writing in India and their experiences of writing in an L1 (English as the first language) classroom setting in the U.S. The study was framed by Krashen's (1982) definition of second language acquisition and second language learning, Kachru's (1992) discussion of World Englishes through the Three Concentric Circles model and Lillis's (2013) sociolinguistic study of English writing where variation is articulated at the levels of use (functions, genres, practices), levels of user (age, social class, gender, ethnicity) and levels of linguistic phenomena (monolingualism, multilingualism, dialect, accent). The first part of the discussion is reorganized into three parts: (a) the past experiences which include their SLL and SLA of English, and the sociolinguistic backgrounds; (b) the present experiences of learning writing in the university's ELP and Expository Writing classes; and (c) the participants' understanding

of good writing. The second part of the discussion consists of the implications of the

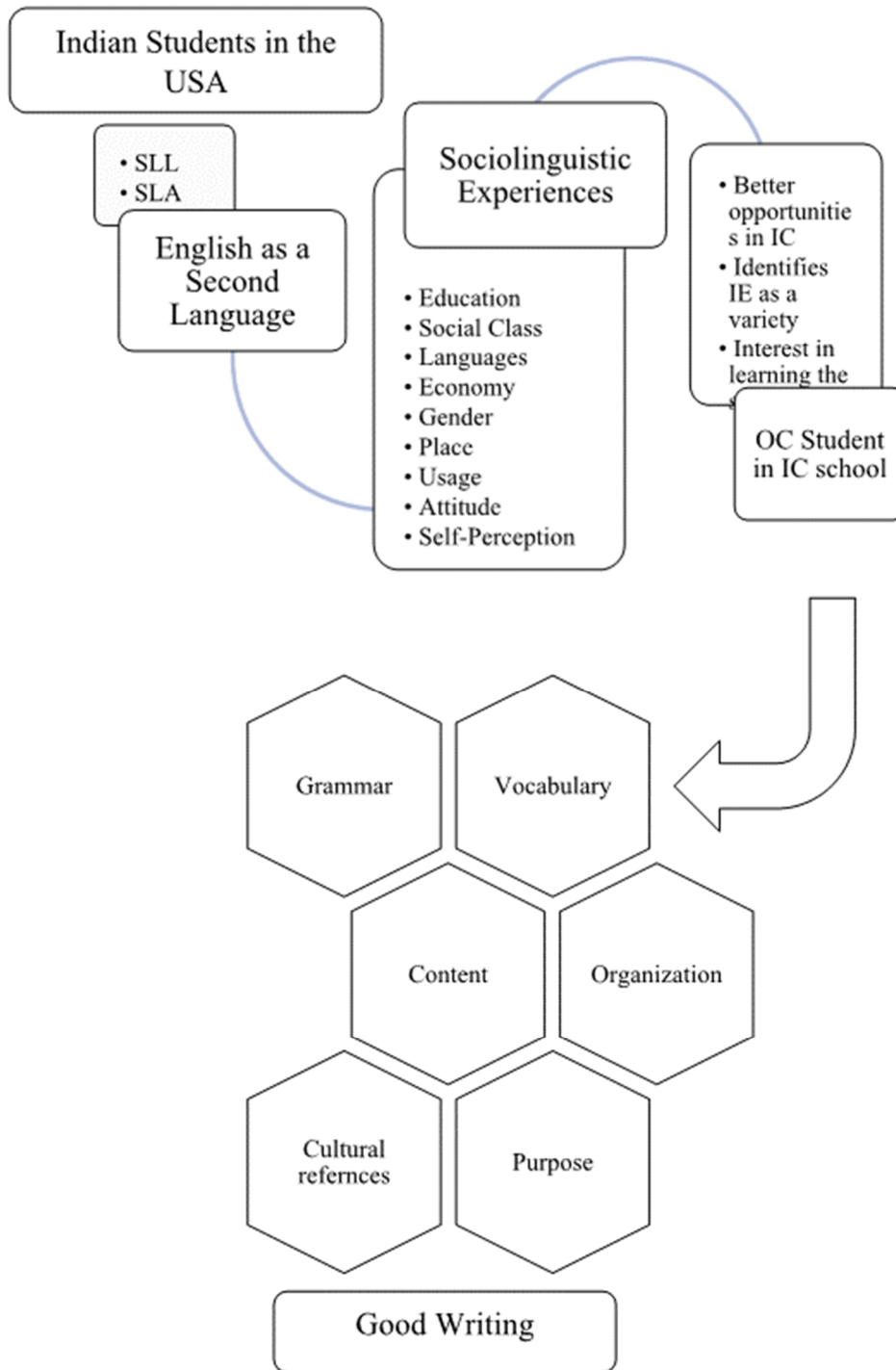study, the limitations, and recommendations for future research.

Indian Students in the USA

- SLL
- SLA

English as a Second Language

Sociolinguistic Experiences

- Education
- Social Class
- Languages
- Economy
- Gender
- Place
- Usage
- Attitude
- Self-Perception

- Better opportunities in IC
- Identifies IE as a variety
- Interest in learning the

OC Student in IC school

Grammar

Vocabulary

Content

Organization

Cultural refernces

Purpose

Good Writing

Figure 5.1 Findings: past and present experiences that influence understanding of good writing

Past experiences: SLL/SLA of English

The participants in the study were from various linguistic backgrounds. They had different mother-tongues, and they studied English as their first or second language in school. Few participants grew up in an environment where English was used on daily basis with the local vernacular language, while for some participants, English was taught as a subject in school and they did not have opportunity to use English on daily basis. As discussed in chapter 2, Krashen (1982) describes the phenomenon when second language is first learned in school through conscious, formal study of grammar rules and later practiced through usage, as second language learning (SLL). He describes second language acquisition (SLA) as the learning of second language as one would acquire their first language through usage first and then learning the grammar rules in school.

This study revealed that some participants experienced SLL of English while others experienced SLA of English in India while growing up. The study also revealed that the participants who experienced SLL in English emphasized on the importance of the knowledge of standardized grammar as an essential aspect of good writing. They also expressed their comfort in writing in English rather than speaking. The participants who experienced SLA in English focused on the importance of content and cultural references in good writing and revealed that grammar was something that came naturally to them so they didn't have to make a conscious effort on it. These participants spoke fluent English but some confessed that they did not often write as well as they spoke in English. Overall, the SLA participants appeared more confident than the SLL participants, who later revealed that they had experienced anxiety over their inadequate English language speaking and writing skills.

One participant was raised outside India, in an English and Arabic speaking environment. He grew up acquiring both English and Arabic, as one would acquire their first language. He used English for all his oral and written communications, except for conversing with his parents at home. His mother-tongue was Gujrati, but he was more fluent in English than in Gujrati. This phenomenon of incomplete acquisition of L1 due to lack of usage opportunities, enhances the SLA process (Montrul, 2013), especially when L2 usage seems more appropriate for context and purpose. Other three participants who also acquired English as a second language while growing up, revealed that they had exposure to the English language before they began learning English grammar formally in school. According to Krashen (1982), SLA initiates listening and speaking of the language before reading and writing in school. The participants who experienced SLA of English were from urban areas. They experienced abundant usage of English, providing opportunities of social influences, interferences and exchanges on daily basis, a prime aspect of SLA as described by Bayley (2007) and Chaudhary (2013).These participants also learned grammar simultaneously in school, therefore experiencing opportunities to gain grammatical competence as well as communicative competence, another essential aspect of SLA, as discussed by Kudchedkar (2013). Krashen (1982) describes SLA as a continuous process of refinement of the output with increased usage with time. Through the daily exposure of English, the participants could refine their speaking and writing in English, although their competence in English was not as that of a native speaker. As Gass and Mackey (2015) highlight that such regular opportunity of interaction in second language not only helps gaining competence through constant feedback and refinement of output, it also differentiates SLA speakers from SLL speakers.

The participants who experienced SLL of English, grew up in a linguistic environment where their prime mode of communication was in their mother-tongue or the dominant vernacular language of the region. They were not as fluent English speakers as the SLA participants, but they were either confident about their knowledge of English or expressed their need to grasp the English grammar in order to produce good writing. According to Krashen (1982), L2 learners are comfortable writing than speaking because writing allows them to take time to focus on the form and correct the errors, while conversation robs them of the time needed to think and compose during error correction process. One of the participants, who experienced SLL of English since she did not have the opportunity to acquire it from her surroundings and learned the language in school, also appeared to speak English more fluently than the other SLL participants. She was also proficient in writing in English and regarded both grammar and content as essentials of good writing, in addition to other factors like organization, purpose and cultural references. As Lantoff et al. (2015) affirm, SLL and SLA are complex process in a multilingual, multicultural country since the boundaries of learning and acquiring may overlap due to the individual's exposure and multilingual context. As reflected by Veronique (2013) and Chaudhary (2013), proficiency levels cannot be the deciding factor for SLL and SLA in a multilingual, multiliterate context. Participants in this study had range of linguistic experiences. While some participants were comfortable speaking in their mother-tongue, they were not comfortable writing in it; one participant experienced comfort in writing in English, while experiencing the same comfort speaking in her L1; some participants were proficient in speaking and writing in both L1 and L2; and one participant identified English as their L1 because he wasn't fluent in speaking and writing

in his mother-tongue. According to Narang et al. (2016), in addition to SLL and SLA, second language competency is also dependent on several social and linguistic factors.

Past experiences: Sociolinguistic backgrounds

The participants in the study were from different sociocultural backgrounds. Many of the participants were from affluent, upper class families who studied in English-medium schools, had ample opportunities to use English on daily basis and appeared confident about their English speaking and writing skills. Most of the participants were able to speak and write in more than two languages, often displaying signs of growing up in a multilingual society like code-switching and adherence to one language over another for purpose. Some male participants revealed that they were expected to find well-paid jobs post-graduation while some female participants shared their struggle of convincing their families about their interest in higher education. Most of the participants believed that English language speaking and writing competence is essential for educational and professional success.

The study revealed that the participants' perceptions of good writing depended on their sociolinguistic experiences while growing up. In general, the participants who were from affluent families lived in urban areas, and had access to better schools, had received some form of writing instructions in school, had more experience in writing different kinds of papers in English, and had an extensive idea about good writing. As discussed in chapter 2, sociolinguists have theorized that social aspects like age, gender, economy, class, place of residence, etc. and linguistic aspects like multilingual society, formal or casual use of the language, etc. influence an individual's acquisition and competency of a language and their communication styles (Coulmas, 2003; Meyerhoff, 2006; Gupta,

2007). Lillis (2013) theorizes that language competency and writing is dependent on several sociolinguistic factors and good writing happens when the writing is a true reflection of those sociolinguistic contexts as well as grammatically correct. Lillis' linguistic continuum suggests that improvement in writing happens due to social, economic and linguistic influences; which are related to the various level of use (functions, genres, practices), level of user (age, social class, gender, ethnicity), and level of linguistic phenomena (monolingualism, multilingualism, dialect, accent). The study uses this framework to understand how the various sociolinguistic backgrounds of the participants shape their understanding of good writing.

Education and place

Participants' narratives revealed that their English education was related to the availability of the schools in their area, and the type of schools they attended, depending on the affordability of their parents. Most of the participants were from cities with multiple options of government, private and international schools. Participants who studied in private English-medium schools in urban areas have had some form of grammar and writing instructions, which had enabled them to write better than those who had good grammar instructions but very minimum writing instructions in school. It was revealed in the study that there was a difference in the quality of English language education in government schools and private schools. Also, some participants believed that the English-medium schools provided better English language instructions and opportunities for writing than vernacular-medium schools. Vernacular-medium students were generally less proficient in speaking and writing in English due to average language instructions and very little speaking and writing practice (Sheorey, 2006). As discussed in

previous studies, the urban private schools, international schools and expensive residential schools provided better teaching methods, educational resources, well-trained teachers, and ample speaking and writing opportunities than the vernacular-medium or even bilingual government schools in the rural areas (Dhanavel, 2012; Omidvar & Sukumar, 2013; Ramadevi, 2013). According to Lillis (2103), opportunities in education are crucial for the development of writing skills and are related to an individual's social class, age, gender, birthplace, self-perception and situations in life. Some of the participants studied in expensive schools, who had well-trained teachers, modern learning resources, and high-end amenities, for overall education growth of the students. These participants not only conversed in English confidently, but also confirmed that they had experience writing various kinds of papers/essays and also received specific instructions for each paper. Some of these participants also revealed that they attended additional English communicative classes to prepare for their TOEFL. As Susikaran (2012) states that private schools and private classes for the enhancement of English writing skills are a privilege to those who can afford them. A few participants may have paid more attention to STEM subjects than learning of English, not because they thought English was unimportant or did not have interest in learning English, but because they were so comfortable with the usage of the language that they did not realize the need for extra instructions for writing good papers.

Economy and social class

According to Spolsky (2014), families who had higher range of income could afford to send their children to private schools while middle-class families with limited income and resources sent their children to affordable government schools. Linguists have

observed a direct relation between development of writing skills and socioeconomic background of the students (Kubota, 2003; Coulmas, 2013). Students from higher socioeconomic backgrounds had access to better education and developed good writing skills with practice over time, and the students from middle-class, average income groups, looked at English education and writing skills as a privilege and means to social upliftment. For some of the participants who studied in English-medium schools, English was the language they used regularly and would often mix it with Hindi, but for others, it was a language skill that was necessary for higher education and well-paid jobs globally. The one participant who was from small town, went to a private English-medium school, despite lack of funds and opportunities, because his father saw his studying in an English-medium school as means to get well-paid jobs and gain prestige in society. Indians in general believe that English language speaking and writing skills can socially and economically uplift an individual, so they have an affinity towards English-medium education (Ghosh, 2001; Graddol, 2010; Susikaran, 2012; Narang et al., 2016). One participant wanted to get her Ph.D. while another wanted to pursue a master's degree in an IVY college in the U.S. and they knew that their English spoken and primarily, their English writing skills would ensure success of their dreams. Since they belonged to middle-class, average income families, they were looking forward to applying for scholarships, or bank loans.

Gender

Male participants who were from affluent families did not express their need for better education and well-paid jobs. Instead, either they did not have concrete plans, or they revealed that they would explore their interests after graduation and considered returning to family business/family money sometimes later in life. However, the male

participant who was from lower middle-class family, felt responsible for his family back home and wanted to get a well-paid job for the future maintenance of his family. Three female participants struggled to convince their parents against marrying them off and persuaded them so they would be allowed to travel to U.S. for higher education. Lillis and McKinney (2013) posit that male students and female students face different expectations from their families due to primitive practice of assignment of traditional gender roles in the society. As one participant explained, females are often undervalued in several regions in India and this impacts their opportunities in education, although the government had introduced several reforms over the years. Few participants revealed that if parents could afford private schooling for one child, then they would choose to send their male child to the private English-medium school. According to Warshay (2011), not only do female at times receive lesser educational opportunities than men, this aspect also reflects in their writing. She asserts that men and women sometimes write differently, with males being more assertive and direct in their tones while females' choice of tone/words/voice depends on the familial pressures they experience in their family and society.

Languages and usage

As discussed in chapter 2, Indians grow up learning several languages simultaneously and Romaine's (1995) prototypes of multilingual acquisition can be seen in the narratives provided by the participants. All the participants spoke a language at home which was non-dominant in society. They learned and used Hindi and English as they were dominant languages, outside home, with friends and in school. According to Saini (2018), due to globalization, Indians believe that knowledge of English and Hindi is

essential and have a positive attitude towards learning foreign languages for future job opportunities abroad. The private schools in India have introduced their own version of the three-language formula (Kaul & Devaki, 2001) where in addition to Hindi and English, they provide instructions on a foreign language. Many participants studied in private schools and had foreign languages like French and German as their third language. This reduced their opportunity to study their mother-tongue in school. Such participants were not fluent in their mother-tongue due to the lack of usage but definitely identified with it. Each state has a dominant mother-tongue (Singh & Kumar, 2014) and some participants spoke English with a heavy accent of their mother-tongue. Although their accent was the reflection of their ethnic, cultural and linguistic identity (Kubota, 2003; Pandit, 2011), participants saw accents as deficit in English speaking and writing competency. According to Hickey (2007), writing is a reflection of one's sociocultural, economic and linguistic backgrounds but any deviance from the standard in the form of oral or written accents, is considered as a hindrance to good writing. Participants revealed that with Hindi being the dominant language in their discourse with family and friends, there was limited scope of English language usage in these personal interactions. For the participants who did use English with their friends and family, it would often be a mix with Hindi or the dominant vernacular language of the state. Mallikarjun (2019) calls this code-switching aspect a common occurrence in multilingual societies, which may impact general language competency. Some participants revealed they have had less English language speaking opportunities and even lesser English writing opportunities while growing up. As linguistics have proposed, language speaking and especially writing competency increases with regular practice (Krashen, 1982; Labov, 2001; Coulmas,

2013), Lillis (2013) explains that lack of opportunities due to level of use, level of user and level of linguistic phenomena, hinders language writing practice and impacts good writing. Similarly, she adds, opportunities created by these three levels also increase writing proficiency and impacts good writing.

Attitude and self-perception:

Participants considered higher education in the U.S. as an opportunity for a better future. Almost all participants shared their opinions, ideas, plans and views on their socioeconomic backgrounds with confidence. While some participants were aware that they needed to learn about the grammatical conventions and other components of good writing, some were familiar with several aspects of writing and were looking forward to sharpening their writing skills. Most of the participants seemed to have a positive attitude towards learning good writing as they recognized it to be a crucial aspect for success in the U.S. A few participants who experienced SLA of English while growing up and had more exposure to the English language usage in school and community, confessed that they did not take English language learning seriously in school but did understand the necessity and essence of good writing. Three participants believed that learning English writing was essential for their future higher studies, and competent professional opportunities.

Present experiences: ELP

Four participants were advised to take the ELP classes at the research site. Two participants took general listening, speaking, reading, and writing classes for two terms while the other two participants took general classes the first term and advanced writing courses the second term. Overall, all the participants believed that they did not benefit

immensely from the program and that the ELP classes did not prepare them for their Expository writing classes at the university. As discussed in chapter 2, critics have stated that there exists a gap between the writing instructions in the intensive English programs and the college composition classes (Ward, 1997; Matsuda, 2003) and that intensive English programs cannot be considered as a remedial for college writing (Leki & Carson, 1997). One of the participants, who was from New Delhi, studied in a renowned, private English-medium school, studied and communicated in English since his kindergarten, was advised by the university to take one term of ELP classes. The fact that he had to take the classes since he did not pass the entry level English proficiency test embarrassed him. He doubted the process of proficiency test because he believed he was better at communicating in English than his friends from EC countries who passed the test. He also reflected that the ELP classes had international students with various speaking and writing skills, and he believed that he knew better grammar and sentence construction than his classmates. He also mentioned that the ELP class did not help him writer better. As Weigle (2016) posits, since language competency in L2, especially writing proficiency takes time, intensive English classes are unable to address L2 writing issues within a short timeframe. One of the participants who was advised one term of ELP classes because of her heavy Malayalam accent in English, thought she wasted her parent's hard-earned money as the classes did not help her at all. She mentioned that she was fluent in speaking and writing in English and had been doing well in her Expository writing classes post-ELP, but her heavy accent created the misunderstanding that she spoke English with error. She also learned during the focus group discussion that another student who also spoke English with a heavy Bengali accent, was not advised to take the

ELP classes, which made her question the proficiency evaluation process as well. However, there were two participants who attended various levels of ELP classes for two terms and they both felt that the classes helped them with their speaking skills. They also reported that they became more comfortable and confident when interacting with teachers and classmates. According to Gautam, et al. (2016), intensive English programs generally tend to help international students become familiar with the American college setting, help make friends on campus and learn the new learning methods, which help them when they begin with their academic classes. All the four participants agreed that the ELP classes helped them understand that they used a different variety of English, that they needed to work on their writing skills, and that they needed to learn the essential components of good writing. They believed that they learnt about the standard grammar and writing expectations once they began attending the Expository writing class.

Present experiences: Expository writing classes

The participants had an overall positive experience in their expository writing classes. Although many participants accepted that writing in the class had been challenging and their shortcomings have been revealed, they also mentioned that they had learned about the expectations of good writing. Most of the participants revealed that the process approach used in the classes were useful for them and they had experienced and enjoyed learning writing through workshops for the first time. As discussed in chapter 2, over the years there had been many changes to the composition studies in the U.S. Researchers have theorized that the basic requirements in L1 writing like organization, voice, word choice, sentence fluency, audience and conventions are based on culture-specific concepts and the L2 writer may understand these requirements differently

(Atkinson & Ramanathan, 1995; Leki, 1995; Matsuda, 1998; Steinman, 2003; Hinkel, 2009; Silva, 2016). Several changes in the curriculum have been made to include understanding and accommodation of L2 writing issues in the composition classes (Schneider, 2018). Some of the participants had expressed that the expository writing classes have helped them understand that there was a difference between their usage of English and how texts are written in the U.S. One participant pointed out that there were differences in sentence construction, word choice, tone and voice. In accordance with Kachru's (1985) theory of WE, Bhatia and Kathpalia (2019) explain that English in India differs from standard American and British English in its cultural and linguistic context. They highlight several sociocultural references in IE writing and suggest that IC students and evaluators may not be familiar with such concepts just as the OC students may not be familiar with the American aspect of writing. Few participants stated that being in the ELP and the Expository writing class, they noticed that Indian students used English differently than their classmates from other south Asian countries and their American instructors expected a little different language competency from them. Research has established that L2 writings are structurally different than L1 writing (Kaplan, 1998; Matsuda, 2006; Silva, 2016). Some participants shared that since they had travelled to the U.S. for higher education, they thought it was necessary to learn the American way of writing in English. They actually liked the teaching methods used in their Expository classes. Many participants agreed that the informal setting in the classrooms, teaching writing through discussions and participations, writers' workshops, and having specific writing assignment rubrics, all helped them understand the writing expectations and helped them learn the minute details of good writing. Many of these learning experiences

were new for the participants, and they all unanimously agreed that their writing classes back in school were never as interactive as it was in their Expository writing classes in the U.S.

Another aspect that most participants agreed upon was that they felt that they could only write about their experiences as an international student but not about their culture back home in their assignments for the Expository writing classes. One participant said that he knew his teachers would not understand his cultural references just like he does not understand a lot of American references yet. As stated by Hinkel (2009), L2 students have various sociocultural backgrounds that the L1 instructors may not be familiar with and having multiple writing prompt choices may help the L2 writers express better using their cultural references. Becket (2005) explains that the opportunity to use personal experiences and cultural anecdotes help L2 writer with essential writing aspects like critical thinking and development of ideas. Some participants revealed that they were in the process of learning about the American culture and looked forward to the day when they would be able to understand and use American cultural references in their speech and writing. Regular student-teacher conferences, constructive feedback and opportunities to write multiple drafts help L2 writers not only be familiar with the cultural aspects but also the writing expectations (Puteh et al., 2010). Along with the past experiences, the present experiences of learning in ELP classes, writing in Expository classes and realizing the differences between IE and the American writing standards and expectations helped participants understand the components of good writing.

Understanding of good writing

Although the participants were from different sociolinguistic and educational backgrounds, they did share some common beliefs and understandings about what could be called as good writing. Findings in this study revealed that participants' second language learning/acquisition, their sociolinguistic and cultural experiences in India and their learning experiences in ELP and Expository writing classes in the U.S. have helped them understand that good writing not only involves grammar and standard writing conventions like vocabulary, content, purpose and organization but also cultural references which form a unique identity of the writer. One of the theoretical frameworks used for this study was Lillis' (2013) definition of good writing being a text with three essential components: standard conventions, social contexts and meaningful purpose of writing. The sociolinguistic perspective of good writing is a balance of sociocultural awareness of what is accepted and what is not, richness of individual experience, unique identity as a writer, focused thinking, clear voice, sense of audience, knowledge about topic, good flow in writing, overall logical organization, examples/details, introduction & conclusion, and grammar (Nauman, Stirling & Borthwick, 2011; Blommaert, 2013; Lillis, 2013). Many participants believed that the standard forms of English language were either American or British, and that writing in either of those forms of the language would be an essential part of good writing. International students who are L2 writers of English often see L1 writings as their writing models and misunderstand variance in L2 writings as errors that need to be corrected (Li, 2009). Few participants believed that imitating American style of writing by reading books and magazines written by American writers would help them understand the basics of good writing. One participant, however,

argued that he would prefer writing in IE using standard writing conventions and cultural references instead of imitating a standard American model of writing. Few participants agreed with him and expressed that writing in the Expository class was a refreshing and liberating experience for them and if they could add their own life examples and cultural references to support their ideas, then the whole writing experience would be more satisfying for them. Many participants expressed their wish to be able to write not just with the perspective of an international student but also about their own unique culture and beliefs. Writing, in general, is a reflection of the author's social and ethnic identity (Kubota, 2003, Gargesh, 2018) and Indian students not only had the realization that IE was a variety that was structurally different from the standard form, but also believed that retaining their cultural identity as a writer was an essential aspect of good writing.

Implications for school administration and teachers in India.

The study revealed that there was a difference between the quality of English language education in private and government schools in India. While most of the private schools had English as their medium of instruction, the government schools were bilingual, and it was up to the parent to decide the medium of instruction for their child. Most of the participants in the study were from private schools and they had better English language writing instructions and better opportunities for writing in English than the participants who studied in the government schools. The English language teaching methods in most of the rural government schools in India are archaic and obsolete, where teachers lecture to passive students and the evaluations are based on memorization of traditional grammatical forms (Ramadevi, 2013). The urban private schools, international schools and expensive residential schools, on the other hand, teach English language

through content-based and task-based language teaching methods (Omidvar & Sukumar, 2013). In order to provide equal opportunities in English language learning for students in both government and private schools in India, it is essential to have a standard English language curriculum for all types of schools nationwide. With the advent of globalization, English speaking and writing skills are important for educational and professional growth nationally and internationally. Equality in English language education in government and private schools will bring equal opportunities for all the students, despite their diverse economic conditions.

The study also revealed that most of the students in India had limited exposure to English writing instructions in school. Unlike the government schools, expensive private schools have well-trained teachers and they teach English speaking and writing to students on daily basis to improve their language fluency (Dhanavel, 2012). Nonetheless, there are no separate classes devoted to teaching writing in English. According to Sindkhedkar (2012), English language learning in India is based on the literature-grammar format, be it the private schools or the government schools. Syllabus includes a literature-based textbook, a grammar book, a workbook with activities for students to complete by themselves but not as group activities (Sheorey, 2006; Sindkhedkar, 2012). Apart from a few elite private schools and some expensive international schools, most of the schools in India do not provide a separate writing class in the curriculum (Ramadevi, 2013). Following the schools in IC countries as models, schools in India need to have separate writing classes where learning is collaborative, through workshops and peer feedback, forming a writing community in the classroom (Sheorey, 2006). A separate writing class will benefit the students as they will have the time to learn grammatical

conventions, to write several drafts, and explore various forms of writing. As Chaudhary (2013) highlights that there is a need for teaching regional, global and traditional grammatical forms to students, teaching standard writing techniques, teaching the value of adding cultural meaning to writing and providing a platform for the students to apply these learnings through regular writing practice from elementary level. Kudchedkar (2013) proposes communicative English courses in higher grades, with emphasis on speaking and writing, so the students can attain the English education competency that is required for higher education nationally and especially, internationally. Writing classes in the curriculum are an essential requirement since the students need to be familiar with writing instructions and need time to attain writing competency through regular writing practice. This will also help students understand writing requirements in the college composition classes when they travel to the U.S. for higher education.

Implications for intensive English programs in the U.S.

Currently, the second-highest number of international students in the U.S. are from India. Students from other OC countries and EC countries also study in the U.S. in large numbers. As discussed in chapter 2, undergraduate international students often begin their college experience in the U.S. with 18-credit hours of listening, reading, speaking and writing classes through the university intensive English programs. Students from both OC and EC countries take the same classes, irrespective of their English language proficiency levels (Horner et al., 2011). According to Leki (1995), in OC countries, English is learnt as a second language and is an integral part of their oral, written and academic discourse whereas English is learnt as a third or fourth language in EC countries and is only for the purpose of their international discourse with the native

speakers. Although OC and EC students have different speaking and writing proficiencies, they are often taught together in the intensive English programs, and individual language needs are rarely met (Ferris, 2016). Depending on where they are from and how English language is studied and used in their country, some international students may have higher speaking abilities than the others while some may need help with their writing skills as they have better speaking skills (Alatis, 2005). Undergraduate students from India, generally have higher English language listening, reading, and speaking abilities than the international students from other Asian countries (Matsuda, 2012; Silva, 2016). Findings from this study revealed that the participants did not find much help with their writing in the ELP classes. The ELP classes did not familiarize them with the writing expectations they would have to match at the English Expository writing class, nor did they get much opportunity to practice writing. According to Weile (2016), although many intensive English programs have ESL teaching experts who have experience in identifying and addressing second language/third language writing issues, these writing issues are rarely distinguished and addressed due to all the L2, L3 and L4 students being in the same class level. Therefore, it is absolutely essential to have separate classes for L2 students and L3/L4 students, so their various levels of writing issues can be addressed effectively. This will enable students to work on their writing weaknesses and ensure future success in academy.

Regardless of their English language proficiency levels, all international students also differ in their vocabulary comprehension, speaking fluency, writing aptitude, ability to understand academic jargon, colloquialisms, etc., from the native-speaking students at the university. L2 writing standards, expectations and practices are structurally different

from L1 writing (Silva, 2016). It is essential for all L2 students to understand the L1 writing expectations so they can write good papers and succeed academically at the university. According to James (2008), many L2 writers do not see any benefit of the intensive English programs since their writing in the program is limited to short paragraphs, and they do not get opportunity to learn and practice writing academic essays. In the intensive English programs, writing is considered as one of the many skills required for academic success, so the L2 writers do not receive any instruction emphasizing on writing more than any other skill. Intensive English program courses focus on short paragraph writing, note-taking, summarizing and paraphrasing and not on essays which the students would require to write in a college composition class (Zainuddin & Moore, 2003). According to the findings from this study, participants revealed that they recognized their need to learn the standard English writing skills to succeed in their English Expository writing classes as well as in other academic classes. They also realized that the ELP classes did not help them learn about the English writing expectations. These classes were primarily focused on increasing the listening, reading and speaking skills and did not help in practicing writing. It is important to have at least one advanced level writing class in the intensive English programs that would familiarize students with the good writing expectations, give them opportunity to write various kinds of papers and essentially prepare them for the college composition classes. Atkinson and Ramanathan (1995) assert that the four aspects of L1 composition: voice, critical thinking, textual ownership and peer review have cultural contexts that may be unfamiliar to the L2 student writers. Also, some of the assignments in the college composition classes assume basic understanding of culture-specific concepts like assertiveness,

insightfulness, originality/creativity, logic/rationality, etc., and academic writing concepts like the six traits of writing like organization, voice, word choice, sentence fluency, and conventions, which are common knowledge for a native-speaking writer (Ramanathan and Atkinson, 1999).

Implications for college composition classes in the U.S.

Although some universities have separate college composition class sections for international students and L1 students, Atkinson and Ramanathan (1995) observe that the course objectives, approaches, assignments and grading rubrics remain the same. Since the curriculum is made primarily for L1 writing, and L2 writing is essentially different from L1 writing, the international students are often evaluated on the basis of how different their writing is from a standard L1 writing (Lovejoy, et al., 2009; Horner et al., 2011). As discussed in chapter 2, linguists have established that both oral or written form of the language, are embedded in social contexts, belief systems and conventions, that affects both its form and its function (Scribner & Cole,1981; Scollon & Scollon, 1981; Tannen, 1982, 1984; Heath, 1983; Street, 1984; Farr, 1986). It is, therefore, evident that both L1 and L2 writings are difference due to their basic differences in the sociocultural contexts. Hyland et al. (2016) argue that L1 L2 writing differences in writing are primarily due to diverse linguistic backgrounds, previous writing instructions, writing experiences, writing ability and proficiency, age, motivation and interest in writing, self-perceptions, understanding of writing prompts, and understanding of audience. Findings in this study revealed that some of the participants did not understand the L1 writing expectations and did not do well in their writing assignments as their writing was different from L1 writing models. This study shows that the participants felt satisfaction

and content with their writing if they could use their personal experiences and socio-cultural background knowledge in their writing. However, many of them were concerned that such cultural references would only make their writing more different from L1 writing models. As discussed before, the participants believed that L1 texts were models that they should follow for their writing. It is extremely important for the instructors to let their international L2 students know that differences in writing are not necessarily errors and that cultural references add to the essence of good writing. L2 writing practices that follow standard grammar conventions and social contexts, connect with the audience and are essential components of good writing (Lillis, 2013).

Limitations of the study

There were various limitations to this study, which have been discussed in Introduction. While conducting the study, few other limitations were also noted, and they are as follows:

1. Additional data collection methods like observation of ELP classes, Expository writing classes, English classes in India, would have enabled the researcher to gather rich data on the English teaching methods in India and in the U.S. It would have also helped in gathering additional data on the students' experiences in the English classes in India and in the writing classes in the U.S.

2. Using documents like writing samples and student's journals as additional source of data would have been helpful to the researcher. Various data collection strategies help in making comparisons to reveal more perspectives and ideas.

3. Interviewing the L1 teachers in the U.S. and the L2 teachers in India would have added to the data of this study. The teachers' perspectives would have helped more in understanding the students' writing experiences.

Recommendations for future studies

Further studies are required to explore how socio-economic and linguistic diversity amongst Indian students in the U.S. affects their English speaking and writing proficiencies. This study highlights the Indian students' writing experiences in India and in the U.S. and how their sociolinguistic experiences influence their understanding of good writing. However, research on their various levels of speaking and writing proficiencies would be interesting to explore, given the various social, economic, and linguistic backgrounds revealed in this study. Currently lot of research is available on international students' academic and social experiences in the U.S. These studies are mostly based on EC countries where students learn English as a foreign language. Research on OC and EC students in the intensive English programs would help understand their writing differences that has been highlighted in this study. It would be beneficial for TOEFL research to have perspectives of both EC students and OC students in the intensive English programs. Indian students come from a multilingual, multicultural society and their process of acquisition of English as a second language is different than their international classmates, who are from other IC and EC countries. Current research TESOL groups ESL and EFL students together which then groups Indian students with other international students, leaving a research gap on Indian students' multilingual experiences that affect their learning and practice of the English language.

Chapter Summary

This study was conducted to explore how the past and present experiences of undergraduate Indian students influenced their understanding of good writing. Using Krashen's (1982) theory of language learning and acquisition as framework, it was discerned that some participants experienced SLL of English while others experienced SLA of English in India while growing up. The study revealed that the participants who experienced SLL in English experienced anxiety over their inadequate English language speaking and writing skills and emphasized on the importance of grammar in good writing. The participants who experienced SLA in English were more confident about their English speaking and writing skills and focused on the importance of content and cultural references in good writing. The participants' past experiences were also categorized using the sociolinguistic framework. The study revealed that the participants' perceptions of good writing depended on their sociolinguistic experiences while growing up. In general, the participants who were from affluent families lived in urban areas, and had access to better schools, had received some form of writing instructions in school, had more experience in writing different kinds of papers in English, and had an extensive idea about good writing. Regarding the present experiences, all the participants believed that they did not benefit immensely from the university intensive English program and that the ELP classes did not prepare them for their Expository writing classes at the university. However, many participants found the Expository writing classes useful. Few participants stated that being in the ELP and the Expository writing class, they noticed that Indian students used English differently than their classmates from other south Asian countries and their American instructors expected a little different language competency

from them. Although many participants accepted that writing in the class had been challenging and their shortcomings have been revealed, they also mentioned that they had learned about the expectations of good writing. Findings in this study revealed that participants' second language learning/acquisition, their sociolinguistic and cultural experiences in India and their learning experiences in ELP and Expository writing classes in the U.S. have helped them understand that good writing not only involves grammar and standard writing conventions like vocabulary, content, purpose and organization but also cultural references which form a unique identity of the writer. The implications of the study were noted as (a) the study revealed that there was a difference between the quality of English language education in private and government schools in India. In order to provide equal opportunities in English language learning for students in both government and private schools in India, it is essential to have a standard English language curriculum for all types of schools nationwide; (b) the study also revealed that most of the students in India had limited exposure to English writing instructions in school. A separate writing class would benefit the students as they would have the time to learn grammatical conventions, to write several drafts, and explore various forms of writing; (c) the study revealed that OC and EC students were placed in the same ELP class in the U.S. despite the varied language competences. It is essential to have separate classes for L2 students and L3/L4 students, so their various levels of writing issues can be addressed effectively. This would enable students to work on their writing weaknesses and ensure future success in academy; (d) participants revealed that they recognized their need to learn the standard English writing skills to succeed in their English Expository writing classes as well as in other academic classes. It is important to have at least one

advanced level writing class in the intensive English programs that would familiarize students with the good writing expectations, give them opportunity to write various kinds of papers and essentially prepare them for the college composition classes; and (e) this study showed that the participants felt satisfaction and content with their writing if they could use their personal experiences and socio-cultural background knowledge in their writing. It is recommended for the instructors to let their international L2 students know that differences in writing are not necessarily errors and that cultural references add to the essence of good writing. The study had a few limitations. Additional data collection in the form of observation of ELP classes, Expository writing classes, English classes in India; documents like writing samples and student's journals; and interviews of the L1 teachers in the U.S. and the L2 teachers in India would have enabled the researcher to gather rich data on the English teaching methods in India and in the U.S. and explore other perspectives on the students' experiences in the English classes in India and in the writing classes in the U.S. Currently lot of research is available on international students' academic and social experiences in the U.S. However, further studies are required to explore how socio-economic and linguistic diversity amongst Indian students in the U.S. affects their English speaking and writing proficiencies.

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Appendix A - Email

Email sent to the students requesting participation:

Dear undergraduate Indian students,

My name is Lopamudra De, and I am a doctoral candidate in Curriculum and Instruction, at the Kansas State University. I am requesting your participation in my research study exploring undergraduate Indian Students' past and present writing experiences and their understanding of good academic writing in the USA.

This research has been approved by the Kansas State University Institutional Review Board (IRB). Participation involves a one-time focus group discussion with other undergraduate Indian students for about 60-75 minutes and an individual interview for about 20-30 minutes. Both the focus group discussion and the individual interview will be scheduled as per your convenience and will be held on campus and will be audio taped.

As a token of appreciation, you will receive a $15 Amazon Gift Card for each of your participation in the focus group discussion as well as the interview. Your participation is voluntary, and you can always withdraw from this study at any time. You will still be compensated for your time. Your academic and social life will not be disturbed in any manner and all the information collected will be confidential and carefully secured, until the completion of the study, upon which all the audiotapes and transcriptions will be destroyed.

If you are interested to participate in this research, please fill out this short form:

https://forms.gle/ovVGNqfTRC6TXMXL9

If you have any questions, please contact Lopamudra De (lde@k-state.edu).

Best regards,

Lopamudra De,
Curriculum and Instruction,
College of Education
Kansas State University
lde@k-state.edu

Appendix B - Consent Form

PROJECT TITLE:

Past and present experiences of the Indian students and their understanding of good writing in English.

PROJECT APPROVAL DATE:	10/8/19	**PROJECT EXPIRATION DATE:**	10/8/22	**LENGTH OF STUDY:**	4 weeks

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR:

Dr. J. Spencer Clark, Associate Professor, Curriculum and Instruction, College of Education.

CO-INVESTIGATOR(S):

Lopamudra De, Ph.D. Candidate, Curriculum and Instruction, College of Education.

CONTACT DETAILS FOR PROBLEMS/QUESTIONS:

Dr. J. Spencer Clark
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IRB CHAIR CONTACT INFORMATION:

Rick Scheidt, Chair, Committee on Research Involving Human Subjects, 203 Fairchild Hall, Kansas State University, Manhattan, KS 66506, (785) 532-3224; Cheryl Doerr, Associate Vice President for Research Compliance, 203 Fairchild Hall, Kansas State University, Manhattan, KS 66506, (785) 532-3224.

PURPOSE OF THE RESEARCH:

You are invited to participate in a research study I am conducting with students who have completed their prior education in India and are now pursuing undergraduate studies at Kansas State University. I am interested to learn about your past and present English writing experiences and your understanding of good writing.

PROCEDURES OR METHODS TO BE USED:

If you agree to participate, I would request you to be part of a 60-min focus group discussion and a 30-min individual interview, at times that are convenient for you in the next four weeks. The individual interviews and the focus group discussion will be audiotaped.

The focus group questions will be centered towards the writing instructions you have received in India and the USA, your views on different levels of English proficiency in India, and your understanding of good academic writing. The individual interview questions will be more geared towards your personal socio-economic background, your education and English literacy in India, and your experiences of writing in an American English classroom.

At the beginning of the individual interview, you will receive a $15 Amazon Gift Card as a token of appreciation. Similarly, you will receive another $15 Amazon Gift Card on the day of the Focus Group Discussion. If you decide to drop out during the interview or discussion, you will still be compensated for your time.

The focus group discussion and the individual interviews will be conducted at the K-State Student Union small meeting rooms. I will be responsible for booking the rooms and informing you well in advance about the date, time and venue.

RISKS OR DISCOMFORTS ANTICIPATED:

There are no risks or discomforts associated with this study.

BENEFITS ANTICPATED:

This research will inform the incoming Indian students about the writing experiences and what to expect in an American English writing class and help writing instructors/Education Administrators in the U.S. and in India so that appropriate changes can be made in the writing instructions and teaching methods.

EXTENT OF CONFIDENTIALITY:

Your participation is completely voluntary, and you can quit any time before or during the interviews/ focus group discussion. Your academic and social life will not be disturbed in any manner and all the information collected will be confidential and carefully secured, until the completion of the study, upon which all the audiotapes and transcriptions will be destroyed.

Terms of participation: I understand this project is research, and that my participation is voluntary. I also understand that if I decide to participate in this study, I may withdraw my consent at any time, and stop participating at any time without explanation, penalty, or loss of benefits, or academic standing to which I may otherwise be entitled.

I verify that my signature below indicates that I have read and understand this consent form, and willingly agree to participate in this study under the terms described, and that my signature acknowledges that I have received a signed and dated copy of this consent form.

PARTICIPANT NAME:		
PARTICIPANT SIGNATURE:		**DATE:**
WITNESS TO SIGNATURE: (PROJECT STAFF)		**DATE:**

Appendix C - Interview Protocol

1. Where are you from? Where were you born? Where did you grow up?

2. How many people are there in your family? Do you have siblings?

3. What are the highest education levels of your parents and siblings?

4. What are your parents' occupations? Are there any other working members in your family?

5. Do your parents own or rent, or do they live in an ancestral property? How would you describe your home in India and your current living arrangements as a college student?

6. Did you go on vacations with your family while growing up? Which places did you visit and with whom? Do you have relatives living outside India? Have you ever visited them?

7. What is your mother-tongue?

8. What languages do you speak, read and/or write?

9. What would you consider as your first language, second language and third language?

10. What languages did you learn in school? When did you start learning English?

11. What is the highest education level you have received in your home country?

12. What educational institutions have you attended in India? Who financed your studies in India?

13. What was your Secondary Board in India? What was your Higher Secondary Board in India?

14. What kind of English writing experiences you have had in India? Do you remember which English writing assignments you really liked and ones that you disliked? Can you describe those experiences and your reasons for liking/disliking them?

15. Why did you decide to come to the U.S.A. to study? Which program are you enrolled in? How are you financing your study in U.S.A.? Describe your process of application for this program. What writing assignments were required for your application packet? How was your overall experience during the process?

16. What were your family's reactions to your decision? What expectations do you and your family have from your learning experience in the U.S.A?

17. In what languages do you communicate with your family and friends?

18. How would you describe your English-speaking proficiency and your English-writing proficiency?

19. How do you think your cultural background affects the way you write in English?

20. How long have you been in the U.S.A.?

21. How many semesters/courses of English composition or literature have you had at the college level?

22. In what ways do you think your education and English literacy in India helps you to study here in the U.S.A.?

23. How do you feel about writing in English?

24. Describe the similarities and differences in your English writing experiences in India and in the U.S.A.

25. What would you consider as your strengths in your writing process?

26. What would you consider as your weaknesses in your writing process?

27. How often do you speak English with native English speakers? Do you think that helps you improve your writing?

28. How does your Indian English language learnings align with the requirements of American academic English writing practices?

29. What other things would you like to share with me today regarding your writing experiences and understanding of good academic writing in English?

Appendix D - Focus Group Protocol

1. Tell us your name and what do you study at this university?

2. When did you come to the U.S.A.?

3. What would you consider as your first language, second language and third language?

4. How do you feel about writing in English?

5. When was the last time that you took an English class in India? At what institution?

6. What was your last English class like? What kinds of assignments did you have to complete?

7. What kind of English writing experiences you have had so far at this university?

8. Which of the following writing options are most enjoyable for you and why:

    a. Writing from experience

    b. Writing about relationships

    c. Writing about opinions

    d. Writing about issues

    e. Writing to compare

    f. Writing about problems and solutions

9. How would you describe the similarities and differences in English writing instructions in an Indian classroom and an American classroom?

10. What academic activities help you improve your English writing skill? Which activities do not benefit your writing process?

11. Were there any writing challenges that you expected at the beginning of a course that actually turned out not to be an issue?

12. What types of following texts have you written in English: short paragraph, essay, book report, translations, research paper, creative writing?

13. On an average, how many hours a week do you spend writing in English?

14. What is the easiest thing about writing in English? And what is the hardest?

15. When you think about writing, what kind of emotion do you feel?

16. How would you compare your English writing assignments in U.S.A with those in India?

17. How would you compare your English writing learning experiences in U.S.A with those in India?

18. How many varieties of English would you say are spoken in India? What about English writing in India? Do you think there are variations?

19. How would you describe the function and usage of English language in multilingual India?

20. What do you understand by "Indian" English?

21. What do you understand by "American" English?

22. What do you understand by good academic writing in English?

23. What do you enjoy the most about English writing class here in the U.S.? What do you miss the most about English writing class back in India?

24. Is there anything regarding your English writing experiences that we should have talked about today but didn't?

25. Related to your English writing experiences in the U.S.A., what recommendations do you have for the incoming Indian students?

26. In a global context, how would you rate Indian students' English speaking and writing proficiency?

Appendix E - Sample Transcription and First-Cycle Coding

R: Okay, so when you think about writing, what kind of emotions do you feel?

F: It gives me happiness:: But not in school ( ) I wrote journals as a kid, ((which I)) loved but in school : we had to write what teachers would dictate (.) *rattofying* and writing is not fun. That ways ((it)) is very confining. You can't write what you think about a poem or what the poet is meaning. You know (.) my character analysis will be different from my classmates. Teacher will not like it. ( ) Here it is better. With all the workshops a:nd discussion with classmates… writing is a fun process (.)

S: For me, writing in English ((is)) not easy. At times, I forget the words ::: How to begin. How to write everything ((that)) I think. ( ) In school in Surat… our teacher dictate the essays. It is easy (.) we just write that in exams. How to remember (..) not remember.. you know ; new ideas in exam… very tough.=

F: =Also no competition…you know :: who got what..who is better than me. HERE it is refreshing to know that (.) your teachers want to hear your voice a:nd know about your experiences… You can write all your opinions ( ) no one will judge… no will tell your ideas is wrong (.) you should not think like that being a girl ( ) I feel here I have an advantage. Learnt good grammar in India and can write about so many topics here :: so best of both worlds. But here you cannot write about movies… nobody knows *Yeh haath mujhe de de Thaku[r*= ((laugh))

K: [Agree 100% ((laugh)) I can't write much about my native place (.) Am not sure anyone would get it;; Kerala is a unique state… We have 100% literacy rate… it is also the state with India's lowest rate of population growth. (.) One of the first states to rally for LGBTQ Rights… For my ethnography… I wanted to write about my experiences in ( ) matriarchal society where you like still have to fight ((for)) gender equality. It is complicated ( ) because in my state :: women enjoy more power and prestige (.) It is perhaps the only state where the sex ratio is ((such)) that women outnumber men you know ::: I really wanted to write about being a true *Malayali* at heart… with love for Malayalam literature a::nd poetry ::: festivals of Pooram and Onam (.) I am such a foodie… I miss all the ( ) cuisines like *achappam, appam, sadhya, biryani,* and Malabar prawns… I am not sure if anyone would relate to my native stories (.)

M: ( ) Ya Ya I have that issue also.. Actually, ELP does not give you ((the)) opportunity to write much:: And in English 100 also you write specific things they ask for :: ( ) I can feel a cultural disconnect (.) with my Chinese classmates a::nd American classmates also :: If I am calling someone brother,.. you see it is much more than just, hey bro ((makes a waving gesture)) In my community you are brother for life…. Loyalty, brotherhood, patriotism, generosity, all these things :: are ( ) big in my community (.) Yes, there is caste system :: and dowry in India which is also kind of going away gradually ( ) … Not everyone is like that… But the main thing is (.) if I write about these issues, like she said…I am not sure if it will be good paper. I mean : the topics they discuss ((for the papers)) is different.

Handwritten margin annotations (left):
- CODE MIX
- DICTATION
- CONFINING
- TEACHER'S VIEW
- HESITATION
- NOT EASY
- FORGET WORDS
- GENERATING NEW IDEAS IN EXAMS TOUGH.
- IDEAS AS WRONG! ↓ BEING A GIRL
- NO REF TO MOVIES
- UNIQUE
- NATIVE PL REF – NO ONE WILL GET IT.
- CULTURAL DISCONNECT
- WANT TO WRITE ABOUT PRIDE
- NEGATIVES? "KIND OF GOING AWAY" "NOT EVERYONE"

Handwritten margin annotations (right):
- WROTE JOURN
- HAPPINESS
- DISCUSSIONS WORKSHOPS
- FUN
- DICTATION EASY
- NO COMPETITION
- REFRESHING
- WANT – HEAR VOICE
- KNOW EXPS.
- OPINIONS
- NO JUDGEMENT
- ADVANTAGE ↳ GOOD GRAMMAR + TOPICS (USA).
- LOWEST /100/ FIRST / PRIDE
- TRUE MALYALI
- ENGL 100 ASSIGNMENTS
- GOOD PAPER = GOOD GRADES?

Handwritten annotations (above text):
- GRADES HEALTHY LOUD
- SHOLAY
- HEY BRO → CULTURAL SIGNIFICANCE | BROTHER FOR LIFE

Appendix F - Sample Memo and First-Cycle Coding

Memo 1

1. Emotions. Question is on emotions so left column will be negative emotions and right column will be positive emotions.
2. Fatima: Happiness. Not writing school assignments but personal journal. Loves writing when it is personal.
3. Dictation from teachers not fun. Dictation is not writing. Dictation tests speed, listening power, not writing merit. *Rattofying*: Hinglish. Code-mixing. Memorize = *ratt* (Hindi).
4. Confining – when writing teacher's ideas. When not able to write personal views/ideas on poem.
5. Teacher will not like it – Teacher's view does matter. Is it about grade?
6. Workshops, discussions – is Fatima extrovert, likes to talk, share ideas with friends? Collaboration helps her write?
7. Fun process
8. Sayeeda: with hesitation. Always speaks after Fatima. Shy? Lack of confidence? Does not begin a topic or answer first. Writing not easy. Forgets words – is she translating from L1?
9. Dictation helps. Teacher's voice.
10. Difficult to generate new ideas in exam. So easy to write memorized essay.
11. "very tough" with lots of pause.
12. Fatima: almost overlap. Continues with the positive experience of writing. No competition - grades? Who is better? Not practiced healthy competition in India?
13. Refreshing with a loud voice. Perhaps new experience of teacher wanting to know
14. Experiences, opinions – will not judge. Was she judged in India?
15. Ideas as wrong? She was told that her ideas were wrong in the past. Being a girl? Gender roles and expectations in writing.
16. Advantage: knowing grammar. Good grammar lessons in the past. Variety of topics at present. Mix is good for Fatima. "Best of both worlds"
17. Reference to *Sholay* – cannot use it in writing in USA. Disappointed.
18. Kavya agrees. Overlaps. Excited at the reference. But cannot write about native place.
19. Talks about Kerala with pride – uniqueness – 100% literacy – not common in other Indian states.
20. Lowest / first: all national records of Kerala. LGBTQ : well-informed. Do they write Q in India? Did she learn it here? Is she from the community?
21. Ethnography – for ENGL 100? 200?
22. Matriarchal society, fight for gender equality. Kavya – interest in social issues? Earlier mentioned LGBTQ Rights.
23. Uniqueness of the state. Sense of pride. Wants to write about it.
24. True Malayali. What does it mean? Her difficulty in translating this emotion in her writing at present. Fear of not being understood.

Appendix G - Sample Memo and Second-Cycle Coding

Memo 2

1. Emotions. Students ended up talking about how and why writing is a positive or a negative experience for them. Once positive (in India) is not as positive here (in USA) or always positive, or once negative (in India) now positive (in USA), or was never positive.
2. Writing is personal for Fatima. Journal is about self and personal experiences. Journal does not have any audience.
3. Uses Code-switch. Use with M's Hinglish and Ma's Banglish.
4. For her essays here, is she aware of her audience? Has a strong reaction against dictation, against writing teacher's opinion/ideas as own, dictation is confining for her, a way to stop her from expressing.

Appendix H - Color-coding and Emerging Themes Memos

LANGUAGE EXPERIENCES

GOVT VS PRIVATE SCHOOL
↳ ECONOMY
↳ CITY VS VILLAGE

HOME
↳ PARENTS – USAGE + KEEN
↳ GRANDPARENTS – LETTERS, USAGE
↳ FRIENDS
↳ RELATIVES

GENDER IDENTITY

MEN
↳ RESPONSIBILITY
↳ EXPECTED MORE COMPETENCE

WOMEN
↳ AWAY FROM HOME
↳ MARRIAGE
↳ LESS PREFERENCE
↳ PASSIVE VOICE/OPINION

☐ LANG EXP – HOME + SCHOOL

☐ GENDER IDENTITY

☐ SPEAKING + WRITING

☐ AMERICAN ENGLISH INDIAN ENGLISH

CANNOT USE POP-CULTURE REFERENCES IN WRITING

AMERICAN REFERENCES	DON'T KNOW NOT FAMILIAR WITH EXACT USAGE
INDIAN REFERENCES	TEACHERS WILL NOT UNDERSTAND/ RELATE

Appendix I - IRB Approval Letter

KANSAS STATE
UNIVERSITY | University Research Compliance Office

TO: Dr. J. Spencer Clark   Proposal Number: 9889
Curriculum and Instruction
006 Bluemont Hall

FROM: Rick Scheidt, Chair
Committee on Research Involving Human Subjects

DATE: 10/08/2019

RE: Approval of Proposal Entitled, "Indian Students' Understanding of Good Academic Writing in the USA.."

The Committee on Research Involving Human Subjects has reviewed your proposal and has granted full approval. This proposal is **approved for three years from the date of this correspondence.**

APPROVAL DATE: 10/08/2019

EXPIRATION DATE: 10/08/2022

In giving its approval, the Committee has determined that:

☒   There is no more than minimal risk to the subjects.
☐   There is greater than minimal risk to the subjects.

This approval applies only to the proposal currently on file as written. Any change or modification affecting human subjects must be approved by the IRB prior to implementation. All approved proposals are subject to continuing review, which may include the examination of records connected with the project. Announced post-approval monitoring may be performed during the course of this approval period by URCO staff. Injuries, unanticipated problems or adverse events involving risk to subjects or to others must be reported immediately to the Chair of the IRB and / or the URCO.

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Appendix J - English language usage in India

Advertising banners/signs in English - Jamshedpur, India

Street side wall painted advertising signs in English and Hindi - Jamshedpur, India

Road Signs in English and Kannada - Bengaluru, India

Traffic divider signs in English - Bengaluru, India

Clothing price tag printed in English - Bengaluru, India