CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.0   Introduction

In order to provide a background of related theory and research for the study, the first section of the review includes studies dealing with the aspects of writing in a second language context as well as studies on the planning and the organization of written composition. Research studies which focus on the composing difficulties of ESL/EFL learners and the role of formal schemata in the organization of narrative and expository prose are covered in the second section. Finally, research related to reading and writing, to be followed by a discussion on the teaching of text structure on writing as well as an examination on the effects of awareness of expository text structure.

2.1   Writing in the Second Language Context

Writing in the second language context is perceived by Widdowson (1983:34) as a communicative activity. He further states that written discourse, like spoken communication, is an interactive process of negotiation. Widdowson (1978) insists that a large dose of grammar does not activate the knowledge of the discourse process. Thus, attention should be focused to the learner's language needs in some future or target situation which will later enhance the knowledge of discourse in the process.

Raimes (1983) reinforces the notion that writing in a second language context is communicative in nature and writing facilitates learning. She believes that the teaching of writing in a second or foreign language should not aim at finding students' errors. According to Raimes, there are three important reasons why there is a need for the teaching of the writing skill. Firstly, the grammatical structures, idioms and vocabulary that students have learned are reinforced through their writing task. Secondly, when learners write, they have the opportunity to be adventurous with the language by taking the risk to go beyond what they have learned. Finally, when learners write, they become actively involved with the new language, thus reinforcing the purpose of learning.

Like Raimes, Byrne (1979) also believes that the teaching of writing in any second or foreign language is not for the purpose of identifying students' errors. He emphasizes the fact that there are three important reasons why the teaching of writing skill is important in an ESL learning and teaching situation. The first reason is that writing integrates what students have learned, and obtained from listening, speaking and reading lessons. In other words, they apply and activate what they have gained in other lessons in their writing lessons. The second reason is that through writing, we can evaluate students' achievements in learning the English Language since writing comes at the end of the three skills; after listening, speaking and reading. Lastly, writing serves as a tangible source to assess whether or not students have made progress in the language.

To conclude, writing is seen as a valuable learning tool and ESL teachers should realize that writing does not only permit ESL learners to express ideas and observations on paper but also permits them to communicate.

2.2   Planning and Organization of Composition

Writing is `more than just an orthographic symbolization of speech. Most importantly, it is a purposeful selection and organization of experience (Arapoff, 1975: 233). By experience, Arapoff meant all thoughts, ideas and opinions and facts gained through first hand or second hand experience. All kinds of writing, she said, have a purpose and an organized body of selected facts, opinions or ideas. Before a learner can effectively write to communicate ideas, he needs to sort out ideas first and plan a strategy on how to organize these ideas and present them effectively.

Adelstein and Pival (1976) note that like many other problem solving tasks, the writer is deeply involved in maintaining structure and an organizational pattern in writing. They pointed out that there are various methods of organizing different types of discourse. For example, in writing personal narratives, the texts usually follow a chronological order whereas in a descriptive text, the organization may be spatially arranged. In expository writing, logical reasoning and discussion are required. Since the writer's aim is to explain, present or evaluate ideas, a logical organization should be adopted in which relationships between ideas or items can be emphasized.

Many student writers dislike having to do outlines or schemes of organization that may help them to improve writing (Adelstein and Pival, 1976). This is largely because students generally feel that the insistence of form might curb creativity. Adelstein and Pival (1976:52) admit that "many professional writers do not work out elaborate outlines before they start to write, but they have spent so much time and effort at their craft that their organizational skills have become almost instinctive."

On their part, Flower and Hayes (1981) recommended planning as a way of reducing the cognitive strain of writing, as well as fulfilling the task. They also reveal that expert writers can be distinguished from inexpert or novices not only by the composition they produce but also the amount and kind of planning that they do. In their study of adult writers, Flower and Hayes (1980), have identified three kinds of planning strategies, that is getting information relevant to the writing task, organizing and goal setting. Although mature writers may not typically plan very extensively before starting to write (Emig, 1971), they have no difficulty in doing so on request (Burtis et al., 1983).

For the purpose of planning and organization, most textbook writers on composition strongly recommend prewriting activities in which student writers are advised to plan and systematically organize their ideas before they write. These explicit directions for writing used in most composition handbooks are criticized by some contemporary writers. However, some forms of quidelines for student writers are desirable to reduce the anxiety of writing (Zubaidah, 1991). Other researchers in

process writing do recognize that writing requires deliberate planning (Burtis et al., 1983). Burtis et al., (1983), agreed that planning is necessary to deal with the complexity and the quantity of ideas required for a long composition and that able writers are known to include organization of content in the planning stage.

In presenting a recognizable logical ordering during the composing stage, coherence in texts is necessary to determine the interaction of the readers and the text. Halliday and Hassan (1976) define a coherent text as being cohesive. Coherence is achieved when writers shaped ideas into one logical and controlling idea; that ideas flow smoothly and are related to that one controlling idea. Cohesive devices help to assist the coherent display of the writer's thoughts. Indeed, an absence of cohesion would make it difficult for a reader to make sense of meaning and anticipate ideas that follow. According to Grabe (1985), a well-known text-analytical model, there are three interacting features essential to coherence. These features include discourse theme or thesis, a set of relevant assertions and an information structure which includes cohesion features, imposed on the text to guide the reader in understanding the theme of the writer.

In teaching coherence systematically for a writing class, Johns (1986) proposed that global considerations must be given priority followed by more logical considerations. Thus, student writers are asked to consider the appropriate requirements, thesis development, the relationship among assertions to the thesis, the adequacy of the information structure and finally editing for sentence-levels.

It is clear then, that deliberate planning and organization might reveal the writer with a clear sense of purpose, which he might lose in the midst of writing.

2.3   The Composing Difficulties of ESL/EFL Learners

> Writing is an act of discovery. Writing can be viewed, too, as problem solving or as a "thinking problem" whose goal is to communicate ideas to someone else by adapting the intentions of the writer to the needs of a reader (Flower and Hayes, 1977:449).

With that in mind, many ESL and EFL writers encounter composing difficulties in coping with their writing tasks. According to Kharma (1986), the ESL/EFL learners have a limited knowledge of important elements in the English language, namely, an inadequate knowledge of the structure of English at sentence level and a limited knowledge of the meaning and proper use of linking devices.

Kaplan (1972) stated comments regarding the writing efforts of learners such as, "The material is all here, but it seems out of focus", or "Lack organization" or " Lack cohesion". Cohen et al., (1979) substantiated this statement when they found that ESL learners were particularly troubled by cohesive markers. In a study focusing on the ability to use cohesive devices, they found out that the subjects had problems using conjunctions appropriately. It was hypothesized that the restricted knowledge of the type and use of linking devices in English were the major problems encountered by these writers.

It is generally mentioned that both ESL and EFL writers encounter similar writing difficulties and adopt similar writing strategies in composing. According to Widdowson (1983:43), when ESL and EFL writers attempt to compose a prose or a text, they have to keep in mind that their readers or audience need to be able to follow the meaning or the message. At the same time, they have to produce a text which conforms to standards of social acceptability and the text must be coherent and cohesive with the correct linguistic devices used. These standards are those particular uses of the language, rather than forms, which have persisted and developed which readers expect to help them along when they attempt to understand a piece of writing (Hughey et al., 1983).

Clearly, in order to communicate in writing, writers need to master a structural as well as a logical system of the target language. They must not transfer the knowledge of the rhetorical conventions of their mother tongue to the native language when composing. This is because according to Onaka (1984), the rhetoric's of paragraph organization in one language is different from another. She pointed out that most learners in Japanese colleges experienced frustrations in expository writing when they were required to write a thesis demanding logical ordering. This is not surprising since they have not received instruction in how to organize written discourse in English. Furthermore, instruction in English was based on the grammar-translation method. Instructors assumed that a learner could write a composition effectively in English if the learner could successfully translate a Japanese paragraph into English. This is not true because Kaplan (1972) stated that paragraph organization is not universal and cannot be

applied across cultures arbitrarily. Thus, if one is believed to be capable of writing an adequate essay in his native language, it is not necessary that he can write an adequate essay in a second language.

By closely observing writers as they write, researchers hope that the kind of problems experienced by writers and their writing strategies may be revealed. Research has found that the difficulties of ESL writers appear to stem from the constraints of the act of composing which includes the learners' ability to generate ideas, plan and organize, write, revise and rewrite (Raimes, 1985). Thus, by clearly observing writers as they write, researchers hope that the kind of problems experienced by writers and their writing strategies may be discovered.

Raimes (1985) conducted a study and offered useful insights into the composing strategies involving eight ESL unskilled writers. Raimes found that one of the difficulties encountered by the students was lack of adequate vocabulary. Her study showed that students with low proficiency exhibited similar strategies as proficient students, in that they strive to generate language and ideas. She is of the opinion that with the relevant context, preparation and feedback, students at any level of proficiency can write meaningfully. The ESL writers in her study showed some similarities to unskilled writers. Raimes pointed out that they lack the knowledge of rhetorical structures in organizing and their recursive process were only at sentence level, not involving the entire discourse. She concluded that these students need to be taught on

how to generate, to organize and to discover rhetorical organization when expressing their thoughts.

Another study by Raimes (1988), examined the composing processes of eight ESL learners at different levels of instruction; four in a remedial course and four in a college-level writing class. These learners were given two different writing tasks for thinking aloud protocols. The study showed that the ESL learners spent little time on prewriting and planning. It was observed that the ESL learners read and reread the assignment topic and ventured into writing. Rehearsals were common while writing. Then, when a comparison was made between proficient and less proficient ESL learners, Raimes noted that the more proficient ESL students engaged in more interaction with their text and they were involved in more planning. Raimes concluded that the main problem of the students is related to content, thus not having adequate information about a topic, and having problems of selecting relevant ideas and organizing the ideas. She also discovered that ESL writers not only lack linguistic proficiency but also knowledge of the conventions of written products in the English Language. Raimes recommended a writing course for ESL learners which should include instruction on how to deal with the text, how to generate ideas and devise a plan for organizing ideas.

Zamel (1983) conducted a study on proficient ESL writers in order to discover their composing processes. Her findings indicated that these skilled ESL writers explored and clarified ideas in their attempt to discover meaning. Her findings also

indicated that ESL students should be allowed the opportunity to explore ideas related to a topic, to make choices or decisions on how to present their ideas in the most effective manner. According to Zamel (1983), proficient writers devise certain strategies which allow them to pursue the development of their ideas without being distracted by lexical and syntactic difficulties. Proficient ESL writers are similar to native writers in that they experience writing as a process of creating meaning, and that ideas and thoughts are explored on paper. In the process of discovering meaning, the writers try to discover the best form to convey meaning. Furthermore, they are flexible and they rewrite to suit the reader's frame of reference. On the other hand, less proficient writers have to be taught to make use of prewriting strategies which begin with the more fundamental process of exploring topics and developing related ideas.

Finally, to overcome these composing difficulties and problems of ESL and EFL writers, writing instruction should be geared to providing learners with the necessary tools with which learners create meaning in composing a prose.

2.4   Formal Schemata

Schema theory discusses prior knowledge as "knowledge structures" (Irwin, 1986) or "schemata" (Bartlett, 1932; Anderson, 1977; Rumelhart & Ortony, 1977; Rumelhart, 1980). According to Rumelhart (1980), a schema is a data structure for representing the generic concepts stored in memory. Furthermore, a schema can also be

thought of as a knowledge structure or framework which interrelates all of one's knowledge about a given topic.

Formal or textual schemata specifically refers to background knowledge of the formal, rhetorical organizational structures of different types of text (Anderson et al., 1978; Barnett, 1989; Carrell, 1990; Carrell and Eisterhold, 1990). Formal schemata relates to the form or organization of the ideas in text. Different types of texts have different conventional formal schemata. Thus, they are organized differently. It has been pointed out earlier, a narrative prose is usually organized or structured differently from an expository prose.

2.4.1 Organization of Narrative Prose

Although the focus of this study is on the structure or organization of expository text, an attempt is also made to review previous studies concerned with the organization of narrative text. The purpose is to highlight the differences which may appear between the two types in terms of structure or organization.

It has been demonstrated that narrative prose typically have a hierarchical schematic structure variously referred to as story grammar or story schemata (Heng, 1992). Story grammar provides principled methods of analyzing stories in meaningful parts.

Theoretically, stories in narrative prose possess a recognizable and describable ordered set of categories (Mandler & Johnson, 1977; Kintsch & Greene, 1978; Chafe, 1990; Cooper, 1986; van Dijk, 1986) and elements to make the narrative comprehensible. For example, Mandler and Johnson's story grammar describes six major categories of narrative information which consist of setting, beginning, reaction, attempt, outcome and ending. Nevertheless, van Dijk's description includes four categories, namely complications, climax, falling action and resolution. Cooper's description on the other hand, shows that narrative prose follow a sequential pattern with a beginning, a middle, and an end. Both van Dijk's and Cooper's narrative schema of a story is founded along a chronological sequence of events. However, meanings in narrative texts are not conveyed by propositional meanings but have to be inferred from text. To a great extent, inferential meanings are influenced and dictated not only by cultural aspects embedded within the text, but also by the text structure (van Dijk, 1986; Stubbs, 1987).

When readers make use of this knowledge about the hierarchical structure of the units in a story (that is, their story grammar or story schemata) to guide them in reading narrative prose, then both comprehension and recall are enhanced (Mandler and Johnson, 1977; Thorndyke, 1977; Glenn, 1978). This finding was later confirmed by Carrell in 1984. She found differences in the quantity and temporal sequence of ESL readers' recall of simple stories when those stories were presented in the standard story structure (using story grammar as proposed by Mandler and Johnson) and in the

interleaved version. In brief, the finding demonstrated that readers are aware of and utilize story schemata in their comprehension and recall of narrative prose.

In 1992, Cohen examined the effects of instructional mediation on students' metacognitive awareness during story grammar instruction. The main purpose of this study was to explore whether narrative instruction, a story grammar acronym, and think sheets for planning and editing stories enhanced to story recall and composition performance of two grade three students of poor reading. Post-test findings confirmed that the instructional strategies enhanced students' ability to both recall and compose a story. Interviews with the students revealed that metacognitive knowledge of story grammar increased story recall and writing performance. Qualitative and quantitative assessment of the data support the notion that poor readers benefit from mediated instruction that increases their participation and collaboration in the learning context.

Thomas (1995) investigated the effect of four instructional strategies on the recall patterns, composition scores and written production of 10th grade English Literature students. This study examined the comprehension of complex short stories using a generic story-grammar as a means of instruction. The research recommended that genre specific story grammar be developed for complex stories read in secondary content domains. It was found that the recall patterns and written story production scores were significantly higher for the group who received instruction using the genre-specific story grammar. Thus, it can be seen that story grammar training has proven

effective in helping students' comprehension, recall of narrative prose and written story production.

2.4.2   Organization of expository prose

A great deal of research has been carried out regarding the organization of expository prose. Meyer and her colleagues (Meyer, 1975; Meyer, Brandt and Bluth, 1980; Meyer & Freedle, 1984) have classified five different types of expository rhetorical organization which include description, collection, causation, problem solution and comparison/contrast.   However, Englert and Hiebert (1984) used the terms "attribution", "sequence", "covariance", "response", and "comparison" or "adversative" for the five different texts mentioned respectively. According to Meyer, the relationship of these top-level structures are signalled to the reader by sequence structure and is signalled syntactically through such temporal indicators as "first," "second," "then," and "finally", whereas the comparison structure is signalled by such indicators as "in contrast to," "like", and "similarly."

The structure of texts is described in terms of its organizational components. Description, for example provides information by giving attributes or explanations about a topic. Hence, there is a notion of superordination and subordination of ideas and events here. The collection schema includes ideas that are linked by one or more common factors. The causation schema reflects an antecedent/consequent relationship

and shows a causal link between ideas. The problem/solution schema involves a response rhetorical relationship which are problem/solution, question/answer and remark/reply relationship. Finally, the comparison schema shows the differences and similarities among ideas between two or more topics.

Besides these five expository text structures, there are other structure types like argument, definition, procedural description and psychological report structures (Kintsch and van Dijk, 1978), conventional text structures (Armbuster, et al., 1987), a "pseudonarrative" text structure (Gallagher and Pearson, 1982) and text "superstructures" (Hoskins, 1986). Therefore, in order to read and write expository prose effectively, readers/writers must be adequately equipped with the background knowledge and rhetorical organization on expository structures.

Empirical investigations focusing on text structure support the notion that readers who are sensitive to the organization of ideas in expository text have better comprehension and memory for what they have read than readers who do not demonstrate this sensitivity to text structure. Meyer, Brandt, and Bluth (1980) found that ninth-grade students who read and later wrote everything they could recall about an expository passage were able to remember more if they spontaneously organized their writing with the same organizational pattern found in the text than if they did not organize their writing in this manner. Many students designated as good readers organized their recalls of the passage, but most students designated as poor readers did not follow the text organization in their written recalls. In a similar investigation,

Taylor (1980) found that more adults than good sixth-grade readers and more good than poor sixth-grade readers organized their 2-day delayed written recalls (Taylor, 1982) of expository material according to the structure of the text they had read. In addition, readers who followed the text structure in their written recalls were able to remember more than readers who did not follow the text structure.

Bartlett (1979) designed instruction to develop ninth-grade students' ability to note main ideas as well as general writing patterns such as antecedent-result, problem-solution, favoured view-opposing view and general statement-supporting details in 250 word expository texts. Furthermore, students were instructed to organize their written recalls of these texts according to the general writing patterns of the material. Bartlett found that instruction focusing on text structure improved the students' memory for short texts they had read.

In conclusion, recent research supports the notion that sensitivity to text structure is an important component in text comprehension and text production processes.

2.5 Effects of Expository Text Structure Instruction on Reading and Writing

Studies carried out on native English speakers suggest that both reading and writing abilities can benefit from text instruction (Gordon & Braun, 1982; Hiebert, et al., 1983; Armbuster, et al., 1987; Raphael, et al., 1988). This is because according to

the directional model of the reading and writing relationship, when both reading and writing share a structure component, whatever component is found in reading is applicable to writing. Hence, structural information can be transferred from reading to writing or vice versa. Shanahan (1984) and Carson (1993) agreed with this notion and said that whatever knowledge a reader utilises to construct meaning of a text may also be the same knowledge that a writer uses to create meaning. Eisterhold (1991) states further that improvement in one domain will result in improvement in the other.

Fatimah Dinna (1997) examined the effects of teaching text structure on the reading and writing ability of ESL learners. This study demonstrates explicitly the bridging function of text structure instruction in effectively providing an essential shared-knowledge base and a common systematic text-processing strategy to improve ESL learner's recall from an expository text and expository writing simultaneously. Her study involved 30 ESL students who were all tertiary level students enrolled at the Language Centre in ITM Shah Alam, Malaysia. The subjects had to undergo the Reading Comprehension Tests for recall performance and the writing tests for guided and free writing.

Interestingly, text structure instruction was effective in eliminating differences between skilled and less-skilled readers' recall ability. The above findings suggest that text structure instruction is effective enough to assist less-skilled ESL readers to perform as well as the skilled readers. Text structure instruction is clearly an effective tool to assist less-skilled ESL intermediate readers to compensate for their generally low

reading ability. In expository writing, text structure instruction definitely provided higher gains to skilled ESL readers than to less-skilled readers for both free and guided writing. However, such instruction can also offer less-skilled ESL readers some conceptual support to improve their expository writing particularly, in content development and text organization.

The same effects were concluded by Troyee in 1993. Troyee tested the effectiveness of three instructional strategies in three expository text structures on students' reading comprehension and writing performance. A hundred and seventy-three fourth, fifth and sixth graders participated in the six weeks study and were randomly assigned to one of three treatment conditions; mental modelling, graphic organizer or a control read/answer group. They received instruction in the characteristics of three text structures : attribution, collection and comparison. High ability readers outperformed low ability readers in all measures. Attribution and comparison tests were significantly higher than collection tests. Students wrote better after attribution and comparison formats than after the collection pattern. This study identifies that attribution and comparison formats were the most salient with upper elementary students.

Moore (1995) conducted a similar study to test whether an intervention based on collaboration and the integration of reading and writing would build schemata for processing expository text, and if so, would the effects of the intervention differ systematically as a function of students' initial status, reading levels, prior knowledge and initial awareness of text structure instruction in 2 rhetorical structures,

compare/contrast and cause/effect. This study was a modification of a procedure designed for a previous study by McGee and Richgels (1985). The subjects were 76 sixth graders from two urban middle schools. The findings of the study provide evidence that the combination of direct instruction, socially-mediated activities and integrate reading and writing abilities contribute to the building of schemata for expository text structure.

Raphael, Kirschner and Englert (1988)'s study showed that an expository writing performance that included instruction in specific expository text structures improved both writing and reading comprehension. The fifth and sixth-grade students were introduced to the specifics of informational writing and giving opportunities to utilize text structure knowledge as a basis for collecting information and presenting it in an organized and interesting manner in two stages. In the first stage, they were encouraged to write in different structures using organizing "think sheets" which had different sets of questions appropriate to each text structure as "prompts" to guide them. In the second stage, connections were made to reading in two ways. First, students learned to identify the text structure elements in written texts, using samples of other students' writing. They were to pay particular attention on specific gestures of each type of text structure, for example, key words and phrases that provided signals to the reader about the text structure used. Second, students were guided to provide explanation, comparison/contrast and problem/solution texts. They were encouraged to use text structure questions they had learnt for the various text structures to help them gather critical information from texts.

The above studies demonstrate that instruction focusing on text structure in reading and writing can lead to both improved reading achievement and better writing performance. Furthermore, studies by Meyer et al., (1980), Taylor (1980), McGee, (1982), Meyer & Freedle (1984), Carrell (1984), Richgels, McGee, Lomax & Sheard (1987) suggest that text structure is a strong assisting factor to better a) reading comprehension, in terms of more information comprehended and recalled and b) writing performance in terms of organization of ideas.

2.6 Effects of Expository Text Structure Instruction on Writing

Previous research has pointed out that text structure instruction can improve native English speakers' reading and writing performance in integrated and separate contexts. Researchers like Raphael, Englert and Kirschner (1989) provided useful data on the facilitative effects of text structure instruction on only the expository writing performance of native English speakers.

Besides audience and purpose, Raphael et al., (1989) found that instruction focusing on the characteristics of the comparison/contrast and problem solution improved fifth and sixth-grade students' free writing. The study involved four different groups:

1) the "social-context" group was taught the writing process which emphasized on audience and purpose of the writing task. These students wrote texts that needed

explanation, the comparison/contrast and problem/solution structures. The writing topics were ranged from personal experiences to social issues. The students in this group participated in peer-editing sessions and publication of class books.

2)   the "text structure" group, was taught the writing process which emphasized the role of text-structure in planning, drafting and revising.

3)   the "social-context-text-structure" group was taught the writing process, the role of purpose and audience as well as the role of text structure in planning, drafting and revising.

4)   the control group received instruction in a traditional writing programme stipulated by the curriculum in their language text-books.

The three experiment groups were given "think-sheets" for different aspects of the writing process namely, planning, drafting, editing and revising. The social-context group was given think-sheets that did not have any reference to text structure. On the other hand, for the text-structure group, the think sheets emphasized text structure in planning, drafting and revising. The social-context-text-structure group received think sheets that were given to the two previous groups.

Of the four above-mentioned groups, the `text structure' group showed the greatest improvement in their ability to write comparison/contrast texts. Raphael concluded that text structure instruction was an effective tool for teaching expository free writing, especially with comparison/contrast structures.

However, an earlier study by Taylor (1985), revealed that instruction in writing compare/contrast essays in social studies was not particularly effective in improving the quality of seventh-grade students' free writing in terms of organization and elaboration of ideas. The students were taught how to elaborate comparison or contrast paragaraphs from general statements and important details and how to write a free composition, utilising the compare or contrast structure. According to Taylor, the lack of any significant results in her study was due to the fact that there was only one instructional task. On the other hand, Raphael et al., (1989) obtained positive results because the students were involved in a diversified range of writing tasks.

Witherell (1993) distinctly demonstrates the relationship of children's knowledge of expository text structure to their expository writing ability (graphic organizers, reading interest). The purpose of this study was to discover the effect of direct instruction in expository writing patterns upon the expository writing ability of second graders.

The four second-grade classrooms used in this study were randomly selected from an available group of seven, in a medium-sized town school system in Southeast

Massachusetts. There were 52 students for the experimental group and 47 students for the control group.

The findings suggest that the direct instruction of expository text structure through the use of graphic organizer is an effective method to help improve the expository writing ability of second grade students.

However, in the ESL context, there were more research studies that investigated the effects of text structure instruction on reading comprehension than on writing. So far, only Chelliah (1993)'s study has provided some evidence on the effect of instruction focusing on text structure on the guided writing of university students of good and poor reading ability. She obtained the effects of text structure on writing performance in terms of two writing aids : model texts with explicit structure cueing and model texts without text structure cueing. The study involved three groups namely,

1)   the METC (Mode Texts with Explicit Text Structure Cueing) group who received model text and supplemented with structural organizers.

2)   the MTC (Model Texts without Explicit Text Structure Cueing) group who received model texts but were not supplemented with structural organizers.

3)   CON group which is considered as the control group that did not receive any model texts and structural organizers.

All the three groups wrote a guided writing composition with the comparison and contrast structure. The MEC and MTC group did their compositions with the model texts present while the CON group did their compositions with the model texts absent.

Chelliah found that exposure to text structure in model texts facilitated the overall writing performance of both good and poor readers in two ways. First, both the good and poor readers in the METC group performed better in their overall guided writing performance and across the five elements of content, text organization, vocabulary, language use and mechanics than those in the MTC group.   Second, Chelliah's study showed very clearly that instruction focusing on text structures had benefits for ESL learners of poor reading ability. The poor readers who received model texts with text structure cueing performed as well as the good readers in guided writing in terms of text organization. Furthermore, they outperformed the good readers in the MTC group.

Skillings (1993) investigated the interrelationships between literature - based instruction in expository text structures and third - grade students' writing behaviours and products and reading selections. The subjects were six third grade students, three male and three female, identified by teacher judgement as high, average and low achievement writers. For the purpose of comparison, 6 students, 3 male and 3 female, from another third grade classroom not receiving expository text instruction also participated. Results indicated the following trends in the instructional group:

1)   improved attitudes about writing and reading non-fiction,

2)   improved ability to use expository text structures in written products and

3)   increased volume of expository writing.

Findings suggest that instruction empowered students with the capacity to control or adapt appropriate generic models in their writing.

In the same year, Risemberg examined students' use of two self-regulated learning strategies during a writing task. One of the studies carried out was to examine how information seeking affects the learning of a pre-writing strategy known as graphic organizers and to gauge the effectiveness of graphic organizers in composition writing. In this study, 71 college undergraduates were randomly assigned to two conditions, graphic organizer training and a control condition. After training, both groups were assigned the same essay writing as in study 1.

All the variables except information-seeking were significantly correlated in their writing quality. In addition, in comparison with the control group, the experimental group had significantly higher scores in self-efficacy, organizing and writing quality and lower scores in information seeking.

Findings of Robinson's study (1993) also suggest that graphic organizers and not outlines should be used when learning comparisons among concepts and organized writing is desired. Dicecco (1992), in her study on "Graphic organizers as an aid in fostering comprehension of expository text" (comprehension aids, learning disabilities)

revealed that students who received graphic organizer instruction expressed greater relational components in their written essays than students in the control group.

2.7   Effects of Awareness of Expository Text Structure Instruction on Writing

This refers to those studies which aim to find out if subjects are aware or sensitive to the different ways in which espository text are organized. Englert and Hiebert (1984) examined the subjects' awareness of four different structure types namely, description, comparison and collection (enumeration structure and sequence structure) with the third and sixth-graders.   Subjects were given one or two topic sentences that signal a text structure, followed by three statements, one of which is compatible with the given topic sentences while the remaining two are distractors.   The subjects' task was to rate how well target and distractor statements belonged with the original topic sentences.   The third-grade students performed very well on the sequence structure, followed by the enumeration and then the comparison/contrast.   They performed very poorly on the description structure.   In contrast, the sixth-grade students performed equally well on all the four structures.   Thus, the results indicate that the different discourse types varied in their saliency to children, and that knowledge (or awareness) of text structure was highly related to grade level and reading ability. Englert and Herbert concluded that the sixth-graders were somewhat structure-aware (as demonstrated by their ability to recognize intrusive information), whereas third-graders were not.

In an earlier similar study, Hiebert and his colleagues (1983) compared high-ability and low-ability college students awareness of the same four structures. They found that the high-ability students identified enumeration and comparison/contrast structures better than those of low-ability. However, both groups performed equally well on the identification of sequence and description structures as well as in the detection of distractors of different structures.

After examining the results of both the above studies, Richgels et al., (1987) noted that:

1)   by sixth-grade, students already display structure awareness, although they differ in their levels of awareness of the different structures.

2)   awareness of text structures is a complex phenomenon, and as such, when drawing conclusions about structure awareness, one must consider how awareness is assessed.

In 1987, Richgels examined these 2 aspects of awareness. They studied sixth-grade students' awareness of four expository text structures (collection, comparison/contrast, causation problem/solution) using 3 different measures of awareness (written recall, use of organization in composition or discussion summaries and responses to interviews).

The findings from the above study confirmed their hypothesis that structure-aware students are more likely to use a "structural strategy" (Meyer, Brandt & Bluth, 1980) when they read than unaware students. Noting that by sixth-grade, students already possessed some text structure knowledge, Richgels et al., suggested that this group "may be promising candidates for instruction in how to process expository text strategically" (1987:77).

In the same year, Garner and Gillingham (1987) examined the awareness of text structure on the fifth and seventh-graders. From the findings, Garner and Gillingham conclude that students are not well-equipped to face tasks (writing or reading) which require them to attend to the structural properties of texts. They therefore suggested that there is a need for direct instruction in the use of text structure in upper elementary and secondary language classrooms.

To summarize this, it can be seen that researchers could not come to a conclusion to the extent of students' awareness of text structures. While Englert and Hiebert (1984) and Richgels et al., (1987) agree that by the sixth-grade, students are aware of text structure, and definitely by college-age (Hiebert, Englert & Brennnan, 1983), Garner and Gillingham (1987) found that even seventh-grade students are not "well-equipped" in terms of structure awareness. These conflicting findings may be due to the different ways employed in measuring awareness as well as the different aspects of text structures that they focused on. Nevertheless, what is more important is that

researchers conclude that text structure is a strong assisting factor to better writing performance in terms of organization of ideas.