

## Appendix B

To

All M.Th. II year students  
United Theological College  
Bangalore.

From Mrs. Iris Devadason

**Your Opinion... Please!**

Dear Students,

*As you are all busy now in the "act of creation" -- I mean your thesis writing, I am very interested to know how you are all going about it----from a totally different angle, different from your subject teachers' and guides' point of view.*

*Being an English teacher I am interested in the process of composition not so much in the end-product though even that is important and I will read it next year when it is in the archives.*

*I'm interested in your attitudes to:*

- a) writing\creating*
- b) writing\creating in English which is not our Mother Tongue*

*My interest in this is primarily because I am myself embarking on a research programme in the near future before I retire, and my area of research is Discourse Analysis of STUDENT TEXTS, what you write at this advanced level of composition. I have been helping M. Th. Students since 1980 here at UTC and I continue to be interested in your academic development.*

*Would you therefore be kind enough to fill in this Questionnaire for me from Day 1-when you put pen to paper or fingers to keyboard though some of you, I know, have started already. I request you to fill in, till the very last day---not when you give it for typing-but when typed and bound and handed in the Registrar's Office you breathe with relief!*

*Maybe one entry the day after that too would be interesting, when you feel the pride of authorship and a sense of accomplishment!*

*I look forward to receiving your Questionnaires in FEBRUARY or MARCH.*

*Thanking you for your co-operation,*

*Yours Sincerely,*

*Iris Devadason*

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Sl. No.



**Section (I) Starting to Write**

Q.1 Did you look at other theses in the Archives before you started your own work?

Yes / No

Q.2 What aspects of these finished theses did you scrutinize in particular:

- Opening Chapters \_\_\_\_\_?
- Organization of Chapters \_\_\_\_\_?
- Methodology used \_\_\_\_\_?
- Tables and illustration \_\_\_\_\_?
- Development of topic \_\_\_\_\_?
- Concluding chapters \_\_\_\_\_?
- Bibliography \_\_\_\_\_?
- Appendix \_\_\_\_\_?

Q.3 What was your point of entry or what inspired and impressed you in the work of others to write your own thesis?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Q.4 Did you feel obliged to change your original plan or modify it because of others' work?

Yes / No

Q.5 Did you find any thesis beginning with

- a question? \_\_\_\_
- a quotation? \_\_\_\_

Q.6 Did you find it difficult:

- To get started on your own thesis? \_\_\_\_
- or Were you 'dying to write'? \_\_\_\_

Q.7 Have you heard of the term "writers' block", the inability to put pen to paper? If you said it was difficult to get started how did you overcome it:

struggled to meet deadlines? \_\_\_\_

sat down to rethink your subject? \_\_\_\_  
drew a plan, an outline to follow? \_\_\_\_  
discussed it with a friend? \_\_\_\_

Q.8 Do you believe in the virtues of an "opening conclusion" ?

*i.e. will you state here in chapter I what you claim to offer as NEW in your research or do you intend to declare your findings in the last chapter "like the clash of cymbals in an orchestra"?*

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### **Section (II) Pre-Writing**

Q.9 Does your plan or outline of writing restrict your freedom while writing?

Yes / No

Q.10 Do you tend to forget your outline sometimes?

Yes / No

Q.11 Do you deliberately ignore it as meaning gives a natural shape to your writing whereas an outline tends to dominate you and prevents new options while writing?

Yes / No

Q.12 Did you draw your outline like a flow chart?

Yes / No

Q.13 Do you think of the outline as merely a means to an end, as something flexible?

Yes / No

Q.14 Did you find yourself changing your outline as you worked?

Yes / No

Q.15 Did you create outlines for each chapter?

Yes / No

Q.16 Did you put all the chapter outlines together and review them before you wrote your last chapter?

Yes / No

Q.17 Does Pre-Writing (outline-making) help you to discover:

Ideas Yes / No

Detect underlying patterns and the connections between them? Yes / No

Q.18 Did reviewing your outlines help you to :

Add links between ideas? \_\_\_\_

Omit diffuse portions? \_\_\_\_

Discover weak points in your work? \_\_\_\_

Rearrange profitably? \_\_\_\_

**Section (III) Chapter 1**

Q.19 Does your CHAPTER I contain any or all of the following:

Introduction? \_\_\_\_

Statement of the problem? \_\_\_\_

Background ? \_\_\_\_

Methodology to be used? \_\_\_\_

DPR ( Description of Previous Research ) ? \_\_\_\_

i.e. to point out all that has been done by others yet what is lacking in their work and what you hope to do which will fill in the gaps of past research.

Q.20 At this stage of writing have you thought out what you will be writing in:

CH.2 \_\_\_\_

CH.3 \_\_\_\_

CH.4 \_\_\_\_

CH.5 \_\_\_\_

CH. CONCLUDING \_\_\_\_

Q.21 Do you find yourself working ahead of your plan in areas that interest you?

Yes / No

Q.22 Did you start CH.2 after handing in CH.1 or did you wait for comments?

Started / Waited

Q.23 How did your guide respond to CH.1?

Approved entirely? \_\_\_\_

Asked for rewriting? \_\_\_\_

Commented on Content? \_\_\_\_

Commented on Language? \_\_\_\_

Commented on Style? \_\_\_\_

Q.24 How did you respond to your guide's response?

with gratitude? \_\_\_\_

was confused? \_\_\_\_

was upset ? \_\_\_\_

felt it was unfair in some ways? \_\_\_\_

any other response \_\_\_\_\_

Q.25 What did rewriting parts of Chapter I involve?

Re-reading the subject?

Re-organising the matter?

Loss of time?

Any other aspect. (Please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Section (IV): Continuing to Write**

Q.26 Are you still:

Reading books? \_\_\_\_  
Attending lectures? \_\_\_\_  
Meeting your guide? \_\_\_\_  
Seeking outside help? \_\_\_\_

Q.27 How many hours do you actually write each day ?

\_\_\_\_\_

Q.28 What do you consider satisfactory work?

Writing 1-2 pages a day? \_\_\_\_  
Writing 2-4 pages a day? \_\_\_\_  
Writing 4-6 pages a day? \_\_\_\_  
Writing a full chapter? \_\_\_\_

Q.29 Did you have problems with any of the following:

Thesis title?  
Content pages?  
Headings and sub-headings?  
Footnotes?  
End-notes?  
Bibliography?  
References?  
Abstract?  
Any other aspect of academic writing?

How did you overcome this ?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Q.30 Do you have "chronic" problems with any of the following:

The use of the article (a, an, the)  
Spelling  
Vocabulary  
Verbs  
Tenses

**Section (V) The shape of Discourse**

Q.31 How did you indent your prose? If for logical connection, was it

To shift to a new idea? \_\_\_\_  
To shift to a different perspective? \_\_\_\_  
To provide additional support to an idea? \_\_\_\_  
To restate a point? \_\_\_\_  
To emphasize a point? \_\_\_\_

If for formal considerations, taking the reader into account, was it:

To avoid a very long paragraph? \_\_\_\_

To avoid a very short paragraph? \_\_\_\_

Q.32 Do you re-paragraph when you rewrite or when you actually compose?

\_\_\_\_\_

Q.33 Do you think FORM dictates your writing (what you were taught in the English classes) or do your IDEAS and PURPOSES dictate form?

i.e. that a writer is like a sculptor who DISCOVERS form and not a builder who ADDS brick upon brick in a preconceived way?

\_\_\_\_\_

Q.34 Do you find your paragraphs overlapping sometimes?

Yes / No

Is this due to:

Narrative being incorporated in Description? \_\_\_\_

Definition being supported by Examples? \_\_\_\_

Comparison involving Classification? \_\_\_\_

Other similar features? \_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Q.35 Do you:

Worry about this & stop and edit? \_\_\_\_

Ignore it as this is a natural process of thinking & writing? \_\_\_\_

Q.36 Do you think that there is a relationship between paragraphs of Co-Ordination and Sub-Ordination just as there is Main Clause and Sub-Clause relationship within a sentence?

Yes / No

### **Section (VI) Re-Writing**

Q.37 The English novelist and critic E.M.Forster said, "How do I know what I think until I see what I say?"

Can you identify with his words or do you find them frivolous?

\_\_\_\_\_

Q.38 Do you associate rewriting with:

Punishment? \_\_\_\_

An unpleasant & messy job? \_\_\_\_

Crucial to the process of creation? \_\_\_\_

Merely rewording? \_\_\_\_

Narrowing the topic or delimiting ideas? \_\_\_\_

Q.39 Do you think rewriting:

Is not going to improve your work? \_\_\_\_

Is the same as editing or proof-reading? \_\_\_\_

*Involves reviewing ideas you have had throughout the composing process? \_\_\_\_*  
*Involves the reader's expectation? \_\_\_\_*  
*Involves realigning meaning with linguistic forms? \_\_\_\_*

*Q.40 When asked to rewrite a chapter or a part of your chapter do you feel these sentiments:*

*I have no time to rewrite \_\_\_\_*  
*My first draft is the best I can do. I can't improve it \_\_\_\_*  
*I don't know where to begin and I wouldn't know where to stop. Frankly, I'm lazy \_\_\_\_*  
*When I retouch my sentences they get worse \_\_\_\_*  
*Rewriting is my guide's responsibility \_\_\_\_*  
*I'm so weak in English I feel like giving up \_\_\_\_*  
*Rewriting is so painful. I can't stand the agony \_\_\_\_*  
*If my first draft is bad I must be a very poor student \_\_\_\_*  
*Words seem to manipulate me instead of my manipulating words \_\_\_\_*

*Q.41 Have you developed a special strategy for rewriting? If so, describe it briefly.*

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

*Q.42 Rewriting is reading in a series of purposeful cycles each with a different emphasis as follows:*

*To check the relationships established between writer, reader and subject \_\_\_\_*  
*To check the overall organisation of the discourse, rediscovering the message & strengthening the relationships between inner parts & outer shape \_\_\_\_*  
*To examine paragraph structure \_\_\_\_*  
*To examine sentence construction and diction \_\_\_\_*  
*To examine surface features such as punctuation and spelling \_\_\_\_*

*Do you consider these 5 cycles of rereading as:*

*Good \_\_\_\_ Tedious \_\_\_\_ Worth trying \_\_\_\_*  
*Any other comment \_\_\_\_\_*

*Q.43 Have you ever share your first draft with your friends?*

*Yes / No*

*If yes, what insights did you gain?*

\_\_\_\_\_

*If no, what prevented you from doing so?*

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

### **Section (VII) Sentence & Paragraph Problems**

*Q.44 Do you know how to establish subordinate or coordinate relationships between sentences and paragraphs thus reducing the emphasis on one aspect while subordinating it to another ?*

*Yes / No*

- Q.45 Do you know how to tighten your writing by using synthesis i.e.by using compound-complex sentences rather than a series of simple sentences of the affirmative \ declarative kind?  
Yes / No
- Q.46 Do you always begin your sentences with NOUNS (Subjects) or do you also begin with:  
Adverbial phrases \_\_\_\_  
Conjunctions \_\_\_\_  
Citing opinions of others (according to etc). \_\_\_\_  
Guiding comments of your own \_\_\_\_  
Infinitive structures (To write a thesis etc) \_\_\_\_  
Participial structures (Writing a thesis etc) \_\_\_\_
- Q.47 Are you guilty of composing "throwaway sentences" like: "X was born on 6<sup>th</sup> June 1897, in Germany." which would provoke the reader to say "So what?"  
Yes / No
- Q.48 Do you look at your sentences in isolation? i.e. perhaps write it on a separate sheet of paper and LOOK at it?  
Yes / No
- Q.49 Do you ever LISTEN to your prose?  
Yes / No
- Q.50 Does looking & listening to your work help to find new implications in the subject?  
Yes / No
- Q.51 Do you allow your work to "cool" before you hand it over to your guide?  
Yes / No
- Q.52 What do you think is the advantage of letting it cool before you hand it in?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

### **Miscellaneous**

- Q.53 Are you using a computer for writing? Yes / No
- Q.54 Are you trained in this or are you learning by practice? Yes / No
- Q.55 Are you aware of the disadvantages of using the computer? Yes / No
- Q.56 Are you scared of using the Computer? (Be honest, we all are at first) Yes / No

### **Section (VIII) The End of the Road**

- Q.57 Looking back at your work, did you find yourself using language to impress the reader?  
Yes / No



Q.58 *Have you been careful in acknowledging all sources and quotations?* Yes / No

Q.59 *Do you resent having to write in English feeling you would have done better in your mother-tongue?* Yes / No

Q.60 *Do you think writing is a magical talent only teachers and guides and some select students have?* Yes / No

Q.61 *Or do you think that you too can excel in writing by doing a little pre-writing, working sincerely and doing a lot of rewriting?* Yes / No

Q.62 *Did you experience a "EUREKA MOMENT", a moment of illumination at any time of writing? (theologically speaking, an epiphanic moment)* Yes / No

Q.63 *Comment on the following views of famous writers:  
C.Day Lewis: We do not write in order to be understood, we write in order to understand.  
True? \_\_\_ Don't agree? \_\_\_*

*W.Churchill: Writing (a book) was an adventure. To begin with, it was a toy, an amusement; then it became a mistress, and then a master, and then a tyrant!*

*Can you identify with this writer's view on writing? Yes / No*

Q.64 *To check your spelling have you ever read your script backwards?*  
Yes / No (Try it. It helps)

**THE LAST QUESTION!** *Answer this after submitting the thesis.*

*Did you experience the sense of being put together by the process of putting together?  
"We have composed, and in a sense we are composed."*

***Thank you for your co-operation. I do appreciate your help.***