

# Enhancing Writing Skills through Recursive Strategy among Engineering Students

M.D.Thamarai Selvi, Dr. Ramesh Kumar

**Abstract---** *The predominant purpose of this find out is to increase English writing capabilities of Engineering Students. They should be aware of how to deal with performance and competence errors. Problem Statement: 1. They are committing a lot of blunders in their written communicative competence. When students are asked to write free writing on any given subject matter (Essay), they are committing mechanical and fossilization errors. They are unable to comprehend how to decrease the performance and competence errors. 2. When they write essays, paragraphs, they are no longer capable to joint sentences and frame sentences coherently. They must understand how to use transitional phrases to link the sentences. 3 Moreover, they are familiar with limited vocabulary. 4. They are not aware of language knowledge. Objective: 1.To strengthens vocabulary skill 2. To be aware of about competence and performance errorsHypothesis: To keep away from the above problems in writing, the recursive approach, self-correction and peer-correction strategy used. By the usage of these approaches, the amount of error level can be decreased. Structure: B. E & B. Tech students are informants for the research survey. Techniques: Self-Correction, Peer-Correction and Recursive strategy usedConclusion: By the usage of this method in writing, the error level decreases. Suggesting this approach for in addition studies.*

**Keywords---** *Free Writing, Recursive Process, Self-Correction, Peer-Correction, Sentence Structure, competence and performance errors.*

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## INTRODUCTION

Writing plays an important role to express ideas and thoughts to the reader in an accurate sense. This always depends upon a correct spelling, punctuation, grammar, and selection of vocabulary, etc... Writing is a very effective tool to communicate. This skill can be developed through continuous practice. The important aspects of good writing has a) clear b) vigorous c) well-organized d) tightly focused e) adapted to its audience.

Your writing should convey three important qualities. 1. It should say something of consequence 2. It should say something to a specific reason. 3. It should say about the purpose.

Through this research, engineering students will learn to improve their writing skills. In this study recursive approach is used to show how errors can be reduced through this method.

“Writers are independent when they are able to write without much assistance”. (Hampton)

Writers are fluent when they are able to write smoothly and easily as well as understandably”. (Hampton)

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<sup>1</sup> M.D.Thamarai Selvi, Research Scholar,Department of Management Studies ,B.S. Abdur Rahman Crescent Institute of Science and Technology.

<sup>2</sup> Dr. Ramesh Kumar, Asst Professor,Department of Management Studies ,B.S. Abdur Rahman Crescent Institute of Science and Technology.

## **PROBLEM STATEMENT:**

1. They are committing a lot of blunders in their writing. When students are asked to write freewriting on any given subject matter (Essay). They are even committing mechanical and fossilization errors. They are unable to comprehend the performance and competence errors in their writings.

2. When they write essays, paragraphs, they are no longer capable of joint sentences and frame sentences coherently. They must know how to use transitional phrases in a sentences

3. Moreover, they are familiar with only a limited vocabulary. With a limited vocabulary, they can only able to understand limited concepts.

4. Competence and Performance errors b) sentence structure c) vocabulary.

1. Slips of the tongue

2. Memory limitations

3. Distractions

4. Interruptions

For example:

1. Wrong: We swimmmed in the lake last month.

Correct: We swam in the lake last month.

2. Wrong: Shake a tower

Correct: Take a shower

3. Wrong: Just a position

Correct: Juxta Position

4. Wrong: lack of pies

Correct: pack of lies

## **HYPOTHESIS:**

To avoid the above mentioned problems in writing, the recursive approach, self-correction and peer-correction strategy used. By the usage of these approaches, the amount of error level can be decreased.

### **A) Recursive Approach:**

As we all know that writing is a process and it is also recursive. The steps involved in recursive are 1. Prewriting 2 Drafting 3 Revising 4 Editing 5 Publishing. This recursive is applied repeatedly.

### **1. Prewriting:**

This step always depends upon the writer and the situation. It is the first step. It includes whatever you do before start writing anything for example paragraph, essay, reports, letters, and emails. The main purpose of this prewriting is 1. Brainstorming 2. Gathering information 3. Outlining 4. Taking notes 5. Assessing data 6. Researching in the library 7. Thinking 8. Talking to others 8. Interviewing people 9. Gathering ideas etc..... The types of prewriting are a) Clustering b) Questioning c) Free writing d) Venn diagram e) Brainstorming.

### **2. Drafting:**

The first version of a piece of writing is referred as a draft. This first 'go' at a text is often done on the assumption that it will be amended later. As the writing process proceeds into editing; a number of drafts may be produced on the way to the final version. Richards (2002:317).

This step is writer-centered. Here the writer tries to put all the gathered information into sentences and paragraphs. Putting all the ideas into words. In this stage no need to worry about grammatical, punctuation and spelling errors.

### **3. Revising:**

This stage is a reader-centred. The reader is important. Importance should be given to the needs and expectations of the reader. Should make sentences concise, clear, explicit and accurate. There should be a connection between ideas. The meaning of revising is "re-see" or "re-look. In order to make your writing distinct, impressive and effective you must revise. This includes changing, moving, adding and cutting. Feedback can be helpful to identify the mistakes and to revise.

### **4. Editing:**

This stage involves checking grammar, spelling, Usage and mechanical errors. You must check your text and must sure about no errors.

The earliest model by Flower & Hayes (1980:18) included two different reviewing processes: "We distinguish between Reviewing and Editing as two distinct modes of behaviour. On the one hand, Editing is triggered automatically and may occur in brief episodes interrupting other processes. Reviewing, on the other hand, is not a spur-of-the-moment activity but rather one in which the writer decides to devote a period of time to systematic examination and improvement of the text. It occurs typically when the writer has finished a translation process rather than as an interruption to that process".

### **5. Publishing:**

The final stage is publishing or producing. You share your writing with the readers. It is the final draft. Weigle (2002:23) states that: "One of the important insights brought out in the Hayes – Flower model is the fact that writing is recursive and not a linear process: thus instruction in the writing process may be more effective than providing models of particular rhetorical forms and asking students to follow these models in their own writing".

### **B) Competence (Knowing) vs. Performance (Doing) errors:**

The founder of the concept of Competence and Performance was American Linguist Noam Chomsky. Competence is once inner subconscious linguistic ability. The ability to understand and create sentences. They can able to create sentences which they have never heard before. The components such as semantics, syntax, morphology, phonology and phonetics.

For example: If a native speaker writes like this means “I drink a cup of tea yesterday evening”. Is it a competence error or performance error? Even a student knows the past tense of this drink is drank. But by mistake it has been applied as drink. So this is not a competence error. It is only a performance error. There is an assumption that once the language is learned that can be used to all the four skills like Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing.

knowledge that native speakers have of their language is called competence. Whereas Performance is what we do when we speak, read, listen and write. It depends upon the individual acts of verbal behavior.

Competence is what one knows of his language, can able to produce indefinite number of sentences. He can able to recognize any errors and ambiguities. But performance is what a person can produce.

### **C) Self -Correction:**

Self-correcting means correcting one’s own mistakes. Most of the students not aware that they are making a lot of errors when they write. They just don’t bother about what they have written. They expect teachers to correct their mistakes. They never revise their work. Once they started revising and editing their work means they will understand their mistakes. Later they will try to rectify it.

### **D) Peer-Correction:**

Peer correction helps a lot when you correct with your classmate of the peer. You will learn a lot with them compare to the teacher. Because you won’t feel to express your views.

### **D) Vocabulary:**

It helps us to communicate in an effective manner whether in oral or written. It has an important role in learning the English language. We can easily and fluently communicate with others by knowing and memorizing a lot of vocabulary. This will also help in writing.

“Without grammar very little can be conveyed; without vocabulary nothing can be conveyed.” (Wilkins 1972: 111) A rich (strong) vocabulary is a necessary tool in any writing assignment like essays, paragraphs, reports, letters, mails etc.. Everyone must know several synonyms.

“When students travel, they don’t carry grammar books, they carry dictionaries.” (Krashen in Lewis 1993: iii)

People are judged by others based on their vocabulary. Learning more vocabularies makes you to understand the information very fast.

“Researcher Johnson O’Connor found that “a person’s vocabulary level is the best single predictor of occupational success.” For occupational success we need to know more vocabulary.

Vocabulary is very important because,” Those who know 90 percent of the words in a text will understand its meaning and, because they understand, they will also begin to learn the other 10 percent of the words.” (E.D. Hirsch, 2003)

#### **E) Sentence Structure:**

Students should know how to frame different types of sentences. Framing different types of sentences will help emphasize different ideas and meanings. The sentence structure provides a clear framework for the expression of the ideas. The main purpose of the sentence is to convey the meaning properly to the reader. If the structure of the sentence is wrong means the sentence becomes nonsense. So sentence structure is very important. A meaning full-sentence always consists of subject +Verb +Object. This sentence should convey a complete idea. The complete sentence must fulfill two criteria's 1. Grammatically correct 2. Semantically correct.

A good writer must know how to write different types of sentences for different situations like a driver uses different gears. They are a) Loose Sentences b) Periodic Sentences c) Complex Sentences d) Compound Sentences d) Declarative Sentences e) Exclamatory Sentences f) Interrogative Sentences g) Imperative Sentences.

#### **F) Transitional Words:**

This transitional word helps to link the sentences together. The transitional words like furthermore, for instance, moreover, firstly, secondly, lastly, finally, in addition and specifically etc...

### **OBJECTIVES**

- 1.To improve vocabulary skill.
2. To learn about competence and performance errors.
3. To joint sentences and frame sentences coherently.
4. To make the writing understandable to the reader.
5. To write effective content.

### **LITERATURE REVIEW OF THE STUDY**

CheeKuen Chin, Cheng Gong, and Boon Pei Tay, authors published an article in Winter2015. The title of the paper is “The Effects of Wiki-based Recursive Process Writing on Chinese Narrative Essays for Chinese as Second Language (CSL) Students in Singapore”. Here they proved that how writing skills can be developed through online wiki-based recursive writing. The authors proved the effects of using peer-revision. This research also proved that high, medium and low language ability students also benefited. The research found that overall writing performance increased among the students.

There are only a few articles available on a recursive process. This study describes more on what recursive is and how it is used to develop the writing skills.

## METHODOLOGY

For this study 1st year engineering students were used. A class consists with 40 students. First the teacher instructed the students to write free writing on any given subject matter (Essay). For example: Advantages & disadvantages of mobile phones. She asked to write 250 words in one and half hours. After the test she collects and corrects the paper.

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2. When they write essays, paragraphs, they are no longer capable of joint sentences and frame sentences coherently. They must know how to use transitional phrases in a sentences

3. Moreover, they are familiar with only a limited vocabulary. With a limited vocabulary, they can only able to understand limited concepts.

Next, the teacher submitted the papers to the students, asked them to correct their mistakes on their own. The teacher instructed to revise and rethink the ideas asked them to add more. After that instructed to share that with the peer. Both exchanged the papers and corrected them. They gave and received the feedback. They have seen the changes in all aspects.

Finally, she identified that recursive, self-correction and peer-correction approaches given an immense change in their writing.

## CONCLUSION

This study has shown the effectiveness and importance of the recursive process in writing skills. It also identifies how this revision and editing helped the students to produce errorless writing. It shows the difference in their proficiency level also. The peer-correction helped immensely. When they get feedback from the peer, their critical thinking also developed. Peer-Correction, self-correction and recursive methods provided a good opportunity to enhance their exposure as well as proficiency. I strongly recommend that this study will contribute more to the students in learning writing skills.

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