



## PROCESS DESCRIPTION-A PERCEPTIONAL STUDY

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### Abstract

*Describing a process means writing about how something is made or how something happens. The present investigation was to delineate the perceptions of teachers of English in inculcating the strategies of process description. A questionnaire was developed and administered on thirty-six lecturers teaching English at plus two level drawn from Government Junior Colleges of Hyderabad District in Telangana State. The results revealed that the sample had positive perceptions on the process description and it was suggested that a thorough orientation in this particular skill for teachers is a sine qua non. Eventually, implications as well as recommendations for future research were portrayed.*

**Keywords:** *Process; description; territory level; instructional; informational; sequence markers.*



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### 1.0 Rationale for the Study

In a typical English classroom, the teacher aims at developing *four skills* – listening; speaking; reading and writing (LSRW) The ability to write occupies the last place in this order, but it does not mean that it is least important. Reading makes a full man, conference a ready man and *writing an exact man*”, asserted Bacon. Like fine food, good writing is something we approach with relish and enjoy from the first taste to the last.

According to Robert Todd Carroll (1990) the most important invention in human history is writing. It provides a relatively permanent record of information, opinions, beliefs, feelings, arguments, explanations, theories, etc. Writing is one of the important skills in teaching English. Klein (1985) articulated that writing is the ability to put pen and paper to express ideas through symbols, this way, representations on the paper will have meaning and content that could be communicated to other people by the writer. Writing skills are specific abilities which help writers put their thoughts into words in a meaningful form and to

mentally interact with the message. Writing is not just about conveying content but also about the representation of self (Ivanic, 1998).

Michael (1981) defines that writing could be a semantically visible and permanent representation of the auditory and transient phenomena of speech. Byner (1981) opined that writing is a primary means of recording speech, even though it must be acknowledged as a secondary medium of communication. Writing is about more than making our thoughts and idea visible and concrete (Ghaith, 2002). Nystrad (1998), states that writing is a matter of elaborating text in accordance with what the writer can reasonably assume that the reader knows and expects. And process of reading is a matter of predicting text in accord with the reader assumes about the writer's purpose. Writing to be effective is dependent on a number of features which are not shared by spoken language, not only in terms of linguistic and pragmatic features but also the context in which it will be interpreted (Nunan, 1999).

White and Arndt (1991) describe writing as a form of problem-solving which involves such *processes* as generating ideas, discovering a 'voice' with which to write, planning, goal-setting, monitoring and evaluating what is going to be written as well as what has been written and searching for language with which to express exact meaning.

Adult learners of English have many reasons for wanting to write. Many need to write to carry out functional tasks such as filling out forms, taking a message, or writing email messages. Others may need writing skills to succeed in academic studies or to advance in a job. For many learners, writing enhances language acquisition when they put their thoughts on paper and share them with others, because they also are often practicing the language structures and vocabulary they are learning in the classroom.

### **1.1 Significance of the study**

According to Barbara Walker, Margaret E.Shippen, Paul Alberto, David E.Houchins, and David F.Cihak (2003), writing has many types of it, including writing narratives, expository passages, essays, directions, summarizes, critiques, and letter writing as developmental writing skills are advanced(Nguyen,2015).

One such skill that makes the adult learners suffocate is *process description*. Process description is a broad and written statement of a specific process, based upon the findings of an analysis to generally explore the triggers and outcomes of the process. It specifies a sequence of events that need to be performed throughout the process to reach the process's objectives. Process description usually forms the basis of process specification. On the other hand, a flowchart is a picture of the separate steps of a process in sequential order. It is used

to develop understanding of how process is done; to study a process for improvement; to communicate to others how a process is done and to document a process.

Process descriptions are best used to create a general explanation of what activities need to be carried out and what goals need to be achieved upon process completion. One should make a note that a process defines “what” needs to be done and which roles are involved. A procedure defines “how” to do the task and usually only applies to a single role. Describing a process means writing about how something is made or how something happens. Often uses **Passive** tenses. On the other hand, in procedure directions or instructions are given. Usually in **Active** voice is used.

Usually the passive verb is used:

1. When an action is more important than who does it.
2. When we are not interested in who does the action.
3. When we don't want to mention the author of the action.
4. The passive is often used to describe how a) something is done, b) used or made.

Be + past participle.

To obtain the past participle we add “ed” to regular verbs

Process descriptions are classified into directional or instructional and informational. The directional process description comes in the form of directions or instructions, mainly imperative sentences or commands, addressed to the doer or the agent of the action; it is written in the imperative style and the second-person point of view.

On the other hand, the informational process description comes in the form of information, mainly declarative sentences, addressed to the reader of the description who is not the doer or agent of the actions; it is written in the active indicative or passive indicative style and the third-person point of view.

Sequence markers are words used to mark the particular order of steps in a certain process. Usually it is used in describing a process to indicate the sequence or the order of the procedures in the process. Sequence markers in English are a certain group of items, mainly adverbs and preposition phrases that link sentences together into a larger unit of discourse. These linguistic items go by various names, e.g. conjuncts, sentence adverbials, connectives, linking devices, amongst others.

By being able to use discourse markers, students will then be able to develop a clearer argumentative, persuasive and essay writing style: *Some people think....., so..., therefore...., Some also believe....., ...on the other hand other people think....., ...however*(for a rebuttal of the previous idea)....., *In conclusion I believe....* . A useful idea is to ask them to create a

list of 'pros' and 'cons' for an interesting argumentative topic and then to match them with suitable discourse markers (Christene, 2010).

In a nut shell, the first step introduces the topic sentence. Then, the next two sentences comment on the first step. The next, four to six sentences comment on the description of the process. The paragraph ends with a general statement about the writing process that characterizes it and sums it up.

### **1.2 Need for the study**

Flower and Hayes (1980) identified two fundamental but very demanding problems that writers face during the composing process: the knowledge problem and the communication problem. On the one hand, writers must produce an organized set of ideas for a paper by selecting and arranging a manageable number of concepts and relations from a vast body of background knowledge and experiences. On the other hand, writers must need to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of story components, language skills, vocabulary, mechanics, conventions of print, audience needs and characteristics, and an ability to focus on abstract topics.

Writing as a skill is not imparted at the *tertiary level*, yet, the principal skill in which the students are tested is writing. The typical writing classroom is dominated by a product-oriented approach. Students are given a ready-made essay or composition which they reproduce in the examination. Persistent writing problems, therefore, make it difficult for students to reach their educational, occupational, and personal potential..

Nearly all the research studies conducted in various settings e.g. Europe, Africa, Gulf States, Australia and Asia in different situations, levels and methods, more or less, indicate almost similar type of linguistic difficulties encountered by EFL learners at tertiary level of education in English writing (Sajid, 2015).

Nowadays, writing is also the key to success in college and university. Most context of life (school, the workplace, and the community) call for some level of writing skill, and each context makes overlapping, but not identical, demands proficient writers can adapt their writing flexibly to the context in which it takes place. Otherwise, almost college or university required their students to get foreign language certificates for graduated qualification, and writing is indispensable in these exams. Good at writing can help students get a good job (Nguyen, 2015).

### **1.3 Objectives of the study**

1. To appraise the perceptions of the teachers of English on process description at the tertiary level.

2. To delineate the efficacy of process description as an aid to teach English writing at the tertiary level.

#### **1.4 Limitations**

1. This investigation is confined to study the perceptions of Lecturers of English working in Government Junior Colleges at plus two level in Hyderabad District of Telangana State.
2. This study is limited to study the techniques pertaining to process description in teaching English language at tertiary level in Hyderabad District of Telangana State.

#### **1.5 Hypothesis**

There is no significant difference among lecturers of English with regard to their perceptions in teaching process description at the tertiary level.

#### **1.6 Sample and instrumentation**

The accessible participants in this study were (36) **thirty six** lecturers teaching English at plus two level from Government Junior Colleges in Hyderabad District. A questionnaire was developed comprising **ten statements** with due emphasis on techniques of teaching process description.

#### **1.6 Discussion and conclusion**

<b>S.No</b>	<b>Statement</b>	<b>Agreed</b>	<b>Dis-agreed</b>	<b>Un-decided</b>	<b>Total</b>
01	Writing as a skill is not taught at territory level	<b>22</b> % 61.0	<b>11</b> 31.0	<b>03</b> 8.0	36 100.0
<b>02</b>	Process description is a subjective one	<b>19</b> 53.0	<b>15</b> 42.0	<b>02</b> 5.0	36 100.0
03	Process description specifies sequence of events	<b>22</b> 61.0	<b>12</b> 34.0	<b>02</b> 5.0	36 100.0
<b>04</b>	There is not much difference between a process and a procedure	<b>14</b> 38.0	<b>18</b> 50.0	<b>04</b> 12.0	36 100.0
<b>05</b>	In Process description active verb (Voice) is often used	<b>16</b> 44.0	<b>14</b> 38.0	<b>06</b> 18.0	36 100.0
06	In process description mostly declarative statements are given.	<b>14</b> 38.0	<b>18</b> 50.0	<b>04</b> 12.0	36 100.0
07	A flow charts is another form of process description	<b>26</b> 72.0	<b>08</b> 23.0	<b>02</b> 5.0	36 100.0
<b>08</b>	Process description is presented in cyclic or linear forms	<b>18</b> 50.0	<b>16</b> 45.0	<b>02</b> 5.0	36 100.0
<b>09</b>	In directional process description imperative sentences are used	<b>13</b> 35.0	<b>19</b> 53.0	<b>04</b> 12.0	36 100.0
10	Sequence markers are often used.	<b>12</b> 34.0	<b>21</b> 58.0	<b>03</b> 8.0	36 100.0

The statistical information has revealed that a good majority of the sample (61.0%) each agreed that writing as a skill is not taught at territory level and it specifies sequence of

events; followed by 53.0% opined it is a subjective one; 44.0% in process description active verb (Voice) is often used; 72.0% agreed for a flow chart is another form of process description; half of the sample (50.0%) agreed that it can be presented in cyclic or linear forms.

On the other hand, the results demonstrated that half (50.0%) of the sample disagreed that there is not much difference between a process and a procedure; another equal number of respondents voted for mostly declarative statements are given; and in directional process description imperative sentences are used was disagreed by 53.0%; finally, a good majority of the sample (58.0%) disagreed that sequence markers are often used.

In the past, number of research studies pertaining to students writing quality and sequence markers have been conducted by different researchers (Fateme&Kamali, 2015; Kalajahi&Nadzimah, 2015; Jalilifar, 2008; Rahimi, 2011). Some of the researchers revealed the positive effect of sequence markers on the students writing performance (Fateme & Kamali, 2015; Modish, 2012).

Finally, the hypothesis formulated '*there is no significant difference among lecturers of English with regard to their perceptions in teaching process description at the tertiary level*' has been accepted.

### **1.7 Conclusion**

The findings of the investigation amply demonstrated that the present piece of research has shown a set of consistent findings that the lecturers of English from Government Junior Colleges in Hyderabad district can imbibe some of the best strategies in process description among the students at the territory level.

Further, these findings have an important implication for lecturers of English in inculcating *required skills* that are needed to produce an effective and efficient process description. An important contribution from this study is that *capacity building programmes* in the specific area can raise the professional expertise of novice English language lecturers in teaching process description effectively.

The present study is not much comprehensive and exhaustive. Hence, it is recommended that further investigations may be focused on the *specific techniques* in teaching process description to students at tertiary level in a better way by the teaching fraternity.

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