An Analysis of Simultaneous Self-evaluation
of a Thesis by example.

One of the more difficult things for students to do in their last semester of college is to prepare a written thesis. Such theses need ideas which can come without too much consideration, but which need compilation into a presentable form. Therein lies the difficulty of

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writing a thesis. The writer must present his or her ideas by forming them in his or her mind, revising them and self-evaluating them, and then putting them on paper. It is this constant self-evaluation which makes thesis writing a hated activity.

As an example, the last paragraph was written in a fairly poor

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style. Although it conveyed the basic ideas of the self-evaluating thesis, it did not do so in a constructive manner. In two of the sentences the same concept is stated: why a thesis is difficult. The

problem

third sentence asserts that the compilation is "what it is" that makes a thesis difficult, and the fourth says it is rather constant self-evaluation. Clearly the writer has an idea what he is writing about, but the ideas become confused when put on paper.

In the second paragraph of this thesis, the writer leaves his topic

Chapter 1

which

of the troubles of theses and presents an example of self-evaluation. There seems to be a discontinuity as in one place the author is building a case for self-evaluation as the difficult part of thesis writing and then switches to an example of such self-evaluation without attempting to tie it in to the relevant subject. He needs to make a statement of how the example proves his argument. Fortunately

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he does so in the third paragraph by saying "This is an example of self-evaluation. Clearly it is confusing, and therefore a real mental challenge when the thesis is being written." This is an example of self-evaluation. Clearly it is confusing, and therefore a real mental challenge when the thesis is being written.

The author goes on to discuss his thesis in general. He states that

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although a thesis must be of a certain quality, the student may choose to simply write without quality, and then later revise the script. Self-evaluation need not be simultaneous. In saying this, the author takes a most roundabout manner. He uses such words as "roundabout" and "liveliness" to give his sentences liveliness, words which are inappropriate in a formal thesis. For instance, in the last paragraph

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the author uses the trite clause "putting his foot in his mouth", and in his analysis of that statement mistakenly describes it as a "clause". Towards the end of his analysis he fails to comment on the concluding paragraph, merely tossing it off as "straightforward". The entire thesis seems to be written on a downhill slope: the author

Out of Whack

begins by analyzing sentence by sentence, then continues analyzing the thesis paragraph by paragraph, and at one point even simply generalizing the entire thesis as "written on a downhill slope". There are even some times when the author seems to make references to sections of the thesis without stating where those places are. These mistakes are an intentional attempt to show how simultaneous self-evaluation is worth the confusion it causes. True, a student can evade the hardship of thesis writing by first making a rough draft of low quality, and then later evaluating and finishing it, but in the second pass over the student may not spot a mistake. Simultaneous self-evaluation guarantees good quality because the author's mind is currently engaged in creation - a later reading may not put the writer in the proper state of mind to find flaws, for instance the words "criticizing" and "misspelled" are spelled incorrectly, the quote "clearly it is confusing" is used three times, and at two points the author avoids saying a certain word, using instead "spelled incorrectly" and "a certain word" because he is too lazy to look missspelled up.

This sentence, for instance, despite its being intentional, makes absolutely no sense at all. The author for unknown reasons has chosen to begin one of his paragraphs with a meaningless sentence, and then attempt to extract significance. He uses a quote from an earlier section of the work which was quoted as being in "fairly poor style", and then for unknown reasons admits his ignorance of the motivating forces behind the new topic. Not being satisfied with his choice of words, the author then simply gives up and quotes himself (in better words than I could use) "clearly it is confusing". Note that as some sort of afterthought the author asks the reader to pay attention to some insignificant trifle.

The beginning of the thesis seems to be a list of examples that the author makes as a base to work with to form his speculations. In fact, he states this in the middle of the thesis as he is about to move on, and then suddenly decides that the portions of the thesis not yet reviewed. are irrelevant, and begins his conclusion. The closing of the thesis is straightforward and not particularly related to the subject matter, so it will not be discussed here.

In all, the process of self-evaluation, though producing the higher quality work, has significant drawbacks. At times it can be so confusing as to scare the writer off, which is something I won't get into now. For instance, in this work the author has become so confused that at the end the conclusion, as he himself admits, is "not particularly related to the subject matter." He seems to feel that the process of self-evaluation, while it has allowed him to complete an otherwise poorer thesis in good form, has destroyed his paths of thought such that he merely ends the thesis in completely unacceptable style, saying "Not that I would ever do this. The End." By doing this he shows that what he originally thought was a good idea may have turned out to instead be something he finds himself criticizing, and towards the end he seems to come to a decision that he is simply putting his foot in his mouth and had better stop. Not that I would ever do this. The End.