CHAPTER V

TOWARDS MANAGEMENT OF WRITING

The significant finding of the study is. all learners use revision strategies irrespective of proficiency levels; individual learners use different types of revision strategies; there is transfer of some revision strategies of MT (Mother Tongue) to revision strategies in L2 and most importantly, feedback in the use of revision strategies enhances the quality of the essays.

Learners are required to write extensively at examinations inorder to meet academic requirements. Scrutiny of learner compositions reveals that they are unable to meet this academic need effectively. This is because learners are hardly taught writing skills Instruction at the college level is mainly by way of providing models for copying/imitation Anthologies that include excerpts of short stories and poems form the study materials. Such materials form the basis of any discussion on writing styles which may be raised inadvertantly during explication of texts. Teachers fail to recognise their students' limited experiences and knowledge. Students' lack of control over their own writing processes and strategies not only prevents them from producing texts, but also limits their understanding of the models they may be exposed to.

Likewise, teaching languages is usually associated with drills in language structures Too often **writing curricula** (if there is one, and if it is followed) is synonymous with production of correct sentences. It is assumed that if students cannot produce "correct" sentences, they cannot produce longer texts. Therefore, structural drills are taught by teachers in the hope that some of these structures may percolate to their writing. This leads to a wide-spread use of traditional hand books, sentence-combining books that emphasize style at the sentence level These books suggest to the users that writing is a matter of producing well formed sentences, of choosing apt words and expressions. These books also treat revising as something that occurs only after the text is written. They contribute to the view that composing is a series of discrete stages, the last of which involves editing or revising an extant text It is quite likely that such books influence and shape students' notions about appropriate composing strategies, strategies that are directed towards local, sentence-level concerns during both, the production and revision of the written product

Another point that needs thinking is the mismatch between the syllabus to be covered and the time allotted to the teachers to complete the 'syllabus'. The teacher hypothetically decides on the number of passages to be taught. Either

there are too few passages to teach, or else, too many to be covered in the whole year. Either way, teachers are only 'too concerned to complete their portion'. The result is, hardly any time is spent on any writing activity in the classroom   More often than not, the writing activity which should be assigned as classwork is allotted as 'Home Work' which is hardly corrected. At home, the child resorts to the use of guides, bazar notes and takes the help of someone who is willing to write for him/her. The teacher sees his/her work thinking that the child has written himself/herself and feels quite pleased and satisfied, totally disregarding the fact that the text may not be his/her own.

If at all writing is done in the class, there appears to be a **great disparity between the time spent on the writing activity, and the marks allotted to it. Usually 9/10th of the time is spent on decoding meaning of the passages** from the "anthologies" and the "readers" **while only 1/10th of the time is spent on any writing activity.** But, when it comes to awarding of marks, **all marks are awarded to writing,** as students are tested through the written mode, **while no marks are allotted to reading at all.** More time spent on explication of passages may enhance comprehension skills, but this does not mean that automatically their writing skills get enhanced. Development of the writing ability and orienting learners in the use of

appropriate language structures is a matter of training. It involves a lot of time, which unfortunately our learners are not provided with

Besides, the methodology for teaching writing in the class is not of great help to the learners. Points are given on a topic which are orally discussed in the class. After this discussion, learners are expected to write the compositions. At times, students are exposed orally to the formal categories of rhetoric and modes of discourse, that is, description, persuasion, argument, definition, cause-effect etc. They are also shown some model of compositions from which they are supposed to imbibe the stylistic features while greater emphasis is placed on grammar and usage. Within the classroom, if any writing takes place, it is relegated to a set of rules and models with focus on correct arrangement of pre existing ideas. Once the compositions are written (usually it is only one draft, which is also the final product), the teachers usually mark them in red and return them without providing any feedback or any explanation on the errors they have marked As no feedback is provided, students do not get sensitized to the errors they have made and therefore they are unable to solve them in their next writing task. Learners continue making the same errors and teachers continue making negative remarks on student writing. The cycle continues. As a result

nothing is done to improve the writing skills of learners on which their future depends.

Based on the findings of the study that all learners use revision strategies to enhance their texts and that feedback helps in the use of revision strategies, it is proposed that **the procedure of teaching writing in the classroom be more result oriented**. The existing procedure of teaching writing, of discussing the points orally in class followed by the writing task should be **replaced by taking learners through the "cycle of revision"** (Butturff and Sommers 1980 : 103) **followed by rewrites of the same task**. This means, **revising, which has proved to be an effective writing strategy needs to be made an integral part of the English Language Classroom**. Learners need to be provided feedback on their writing which would take them through the process of revision. They need ample time to engage in a series of rewrites. If they are trained and oriented to the use of revision strategies, if they are provided with ample opportunities to use these strategies, it would help develop clarity of thought and freedom of expression. The felt need therefore, is to **bring revision into the classroom to strengthen the writing abilities of the learners.**

I. Revision as Problem-Solving

Problem solving is a study of the cognitive and thinking process of learners It explores an array of mental procedures that learners use to process information to achieve their goals. Learners, while articulating ideas and intentions on paper, draw on a staggering array of mental representations to generate language to express simple as well as sophisticated concepts. They review and revise their written work for dissonance and apply problem-solving techniques or strategies to resolve them. Everytime the writer reads his/her text, he/she is guided by the need to improve it, depending on the goal he/she has set for himself/herself. Thus, revision adopts a problem-solving approach to writing, it trains learners in problem-solving and decision making. It is suggested that this problem-solving and decision making faculty of the learners may be developed by :

- providing in-writing feedback (Keh 1990; Dheram 1995; Leki 1991, Pennington and Cheung 1993; Jernudd 1993),

- allowing learners to engage in multiple drafts (Sommers 1980, Faigley and Witte 1981; Ferris 1995, Huff 1983),

- developing their critical reading ability and logical reasoning (Brand 1987; Rubin 1983; Hayes et al 1987) and

- through peer revisions and conferences (Mangelsdorf 1992; Hedgcock and Lefkowitz 1992; Zhang 1995).

To enhance the writing abilities of learners, a strong claim is made to teach revision as a classroom activity   As teachers of English, we need to shift our focus and attention to train learners in collaborative learning, using a wide variety of heuristic procedures to make them aware that writing is discovery of meaning and a meaning making activity.   Today, when communication of meaning is considered more important along with accuracy of form, there is a need to train learners to communicate their intent to the readers.   The reader is not concerned with the processes that go into the production of the text   The reader is interested in a text that is easy to read and understand; which is informative, useful and most importantly, which conveys the author's purpose   In short, as teachers we need to focus attention to both, the process and the product of the writing activity   We therefore need to train our learners to transform their "writer based" text to a "reader orientated" one (Flower 1979).

Any piece of writing is an egocentric enterprise and one tends to express ideas in the same manner and pattern in which it is stored in the mind. But, if the goal and purpose of writing is to communicate his/her intention to the

reader, then the patterns that are stored may not be clear or effective for the reader   The writer's job therefore, is to translate his/her own train of thought into a "rhetorical structure" (Flower and Hayes 1980)   That is, the writer must transform his/her writer-based organised information into a reader-based structure to meet the practical and cognitive needs of the reader   The writer therefore needs to restructure information to support the point he/she wishes to make to suit the purpose for which he/she is writing   The writer by transforming his/her text, tries to create a shared language and a shared context between himself/herself and the reader   To help learners focus their attention on reader needs and expectations, it is proposed that they be taken through the following process of revision

- **Write $\leftarrow$ Meaningful Feedback $\rightarrow$ Rewrite $\rightarrow$ Independent Revision $\rightarrow$ Rewrite $\rightarrow$ Minimal Feedback $\rightarrow$ Final Rewrite**

As the process suggests, learners should be provided meaningful feedback on their writing which would motivate them to engage in redrafting   Their rewrites could be commented upon by their peer group so that they can incorporate their suggestions leading to further rewrites of the task   Further, learners need to be trained to critique their own texts so that they could be in a position to undertake independent revision before writing their

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final drafts. This means that **through the process of revision, learners need to be drawn away from their dependence on teachers and be led towards achieving control over their own writing abilities, and take them to a stage where they would be in a position to manage their writing independently.**

II. <u>Instructional implications</u>

This study brings to light two important dimensions to the teaching of writing- Teacher Development and Learner Training. A dividing line cannot be arbitrarily drawn between the two because to bring the text closer to its intent, both,the learner as well as the teacher needs to work on a "more or less equal level of participation and collaboration" (Estachio 1979. 193). In such a situation, the role of the teacher is that of a catalyst. The teacher raises issues which are explored and analyzed by both students and teachers. In such a setting, students too play an active role. They are not only involved in finding solutions to the problems but also become involved in the formulation and evaluation of questions and answers. Issues are fully explored, questions are frequently raised, strategies are hypothesized; some strategies are discarded and some questions are left unanswered. Expectation level of both students and teacher is high, progress is recognised and

regressions, instead of regarding them as failures are treated as opportunities to build upon. There is an increase in creative activity; learning becomes a kind of discovery, a process of problem-solving, a kind of learning that is characterised by growth within. No doubt that the single most important factor in the instructional process is the teacher. Hence, to ensure that students are provided every opportunity to enhance their writing skills, the need is to first orient and train our teachers whose role is paramount in creating a successful writing environment for the learners.

A. Teacher Development.

Acknowledging the diversity of revision behaviours, (as this study has also revealed), we need to use and exploit this diversity. Instead of trying to impose prescriptive revision on learners, teachers should encourage revision styles. These could be developed if teachers themselves provide **meaningful feedback** to learners on their writing.

Feedback may be defined as the input provided from readers for review of work from a new perspective. It could be in terms of comments, questions, suggestions to transform their text towards effective communication Writers would then be counselled on how they may have confused the reader

by not supplying enough information, by illogically organising the text, by lacking in developing ideas and by using inappropriate words. Feedback thus seems central to the process of writing and makes writers aware that they need to look at their writing from the readers' point of view.

A central issue to the question of feedback is the **kind of feedback** that is provided to learners. Griffin (1982) notes, "The major question confronting any theory of responding to student writing is where we should focus our attention"(299). For the most part, teachers themselves do not provide thoughtful commentaries which would help students to think about their purpose and goals in writing. Much of the conflict over feedback is whether the focus should be on "form" or "discourse". In providing feedback, the major preoccupation is with grammar (form) than meaning and intent (discourse). Teachers focus on the formal features of the text, giving priority to the correction of spelling, syntax, grammar; they seem only to focus on language specific errors. Correction of organisational structures and focus on ideas and content are seen to take a secondary place (Ferris 1995; McCurdy 1992; Hedgecock and Lefkowitz 1994). However, teachers are not to blame. No teacher training institute or writing workshops or any teacher refresher courses stress the importance of revision. They may receive training in various pre-writing techniques, in planning assignments and in

evaluating papers for grades, but rarely do they receive training to react to students' texts or to offer commentary to motivate revision. Hence, the teacher also regards revision not as a meaning making activity but a 're-wording' one Consequently, their responses are also biased about what the writer should have written **The important aspect that emerges is : teachers need to be trained to provide feedback on learner writing.**

The focus in teacher training should aim at reorientation towards first drafts as finished products The learners' convictions that their first drafts are "complete and coherent" need to be "sabotaged" (Sommers 1980· 154). Apart from the problems learners themselves identify in their texts, the teacher needs to offer revision tasks of a different order of complexity and sophistication so that they can motivate students to see their work and bring them "back into class, back to a point" where they can "reshape and restructure their meaning again" (Sommers 1980· 154).

There is an obvious connection between communication and content. Rather than unearthing niceties of grammar and showing concern whether a particular form is applied to the text or not, teachers should be trained to address feedback to the two crucial aspects of composing - author's intention and audience In not focusing overly on learners' writing proficiency,

teachers need to provide clarification regarding learners' purpose of writing, sensitize them to problem-solving, expose them to a battery of strategies and finally, train them to select appropriate strategies to recreate their texts.

To enable writers to bridge the gap between intent (the purpose) and output (reader expectation), teachers could be trained to provide oral as well as written feedback. Feedback could be in terms of raising probing and challenging questions, and pinpointing ambiguities in the text It should help writers replace vague commentaries, abstract rules and principles with text-specific strategies and should be in terms of directions, guidelines and recommendations. If the content of the student text is lacking in substance and meaning, if the order of parts must be rearranged significantly in the next draft, if paragraphs must be restructured for logic and clarity, then asking students to correct usage errors or condense sentences would not hold any relevance at all Infact identifying usage problems in the text at the first draft stage, when such problems are likely to abound the most, would send wrong signals to the students. It would signal a disproportionate sense of importance given to language use at that stage of the writing process Teachers therefore, need to be guided by the recognition that they need not place importance on mechanics and usage in the first draft stage. The need is to offer alternatives and suggest possibilities that would make learners

understand **that meaning level issues are to be addressed first.** This understanding is especially crucial in the ESL writing classroom, where students may be convinced that accuracy and correctness are of primary importance. Because of their concern with language and their inexperience in writing, ESL learners may attend to all the various demands of composing simultaneously. Therefore, training teachers to provide feedback in terms of global comments, pertaining to larger issues of discourse and organisation would help writers to make their writing more adaptable and effective for the reader.

Not only providing quality 'feedback' is important, but **timing of the feedback** should be equally appropriate. Feedback should not be offered to writers at the end of the writing activity. **It is best offered when learners are in the process of constructing and producing a text.** Post correction merely notes language items and at best helps learners to replace some words and phrases at discrete points in the text. **In-Writing feedback** therefore, should be provided while the text is being written. This type of feedback allows writers to replace inadequate expressions with more appropriate ones which would be more effective in conveying their intended meaning. It would also engage students in producing adequate language through rewrites, as a consequence of self evaluation and self adjustment.

In-Writing feedback should focus on the content or the message that writers are trying to convey which would induce them to redraft their texts again and again. Teachers should ask for clarifications, request for more facts, comment on ideas, suggest ways to elaborate arguments and support conclusions, so that they could help writers to make a shift from their intention to suit reader expectation. In turn, learners could apply this feedback as a new input in this communicative approach to the process of rewriting drafts. Learners could improve their writing skills when correction is a part of brainstorming, composing, revising and editing. Evaluation of any text outside of the communicative process is otherwise a highly abstract activity. Therefore, if teachers are trained to provide in-writing feedback, they would help learners to reconceptualise their communicative intent which would guide them through subsequent rewrites.

Providing in-writing feedback to learners also assumes importance considering the intense mental activity and the numerous sub-processes that are involved in composing. The cognitive demands made on the task needs to be considered by the teachers. Learners, while attempting to deal with intellectually complex and demanding writing assignments, may encounter some kind of breakdown or set-back in thoughts. Therefore, the aim of the teacher should be to consider strategies for coping with such a breakdown

and involve learners in such activities. By providing assistance before the essay is considered complete, teachers would help learners to re-see the breakdown of thoughts in their texts. This would facilitate more writing and would also reinforce the idea that continual clarification and exploration may be necessary before one's meaning can be articulated.

Teachers need to be oriented to develop an appropriate level of response depending on the drafts they are reading. In the first or second draft, they need to respond as any reader would, that is, registering questions, reflecting confusion and noting places in the text where meaning is not clear. Comments should point to break in logic, disruptions in meaning or missing information. The objective of the teacher in commenting on the early draft should be to engage students with issues they want to communicate and help them to clarify their purpose of writing. Further, teachers need to prioritise their responses to the drafts and the subsequent revisions. This could be accomplished if the teacher reads the learner text first, as a common reader, out of interest and pleasure, reserving comments for later stage; second, to read, judge and make pronouncements, to improve it for subsequent audience; third, to analyse the text as a literary critic and finally, to change the writers point of view. These purposes lend themselves to eight major roles of the reader - "Common reader, proof reader, editor, reviewer, gate

keeper, critic, linguist/psychologist, diagnostician/therapist" (Purves 1984:261). Having read the text, the question arises, which of these roles should the teacher adopt ?

Teacher development lies in assuming and adopting each of these changed roles depending on the situation in which writing is produced. Unconsciously, teachers tend to adopt the role of the proof reader or occasionally, the editor. By adopting this role at the beginning of the writing task, the teacher may create a negative effect on many students and produce apprehension about writing. This does not mean that the teacher should not adopt the role of proof reader. It is equally important to adopt this role, but at the final stages of writing. Perhaps, at the first and second draft stage, a combination of the common reader and editor would be most ideal because the editor primarily raises matters of consistency, content, style and organisation. The judgements of the editors are proximate not final, they show concern for audience, act as surrogates for common readers or reviewers and lend themselves to develop a working relationship with the writer. **To lead students through the revision process, the need is to train teachers to consciously adopt all kinds of roles as Purves (1984) suggests, either in isolation or in combination, depending on the stage at**

which the composition is ready - one of the early drafts, a revision or a final product.

Participating in this meaning-making activity would mean that teachers no longer present themselves as authoritarians, judges or evaluators, but act as interested readers, guides, counsellors "consultants, assistants and facilitators (Zamel 1985.96). The interaction, due to the collaborative relationship built, would go a long way to help negotiating "ways to bring actual effect (on the reader) as closely in line with desired intention (of the writer) as possible" (Brannon and Knoblauch 1982 162)

B. Learner Training.

Coaching learners in revising is equally important. "Writing often begins with an intent and not a finished thought" (Irmscher 1979) The task of learners remains incomplete even after writing the first draft of the assignment, because the intent may remain tentative or lead towards concretization depending upon what writers discover in the process. To transform this intent into a complete thought, writers need to be kept actively engaged in the writing process, through the process of revision.

Central to the process of revising is multidrafting through which learners need to incorporate teacher feedback. At the outset, learners need to be adequately motivated and trained to engage in a series of rewrites of their task, because usually, they are reluctant to go through the cycles of revision and redraft their essays as they find "redrafting a laborious process" (Monahan 1984). Those students who have a tendency towards single drafting would have to be trained to do more reviewing of their written text as they write and also after their text is complete. They need to be made aware that they should use more strategies that provide for exploration and invention than they presently allow themselves. They need to be made to understand how multidrafting could be productive and effective and how it could provide assistance to those who sometimes have preference of choosing one, two/three strategies as options even after they recognise that it/they may not be the best ones. **The felt need therefore is to sensitize learners through the process of writing multiple drafts, to re-see and re-view their texts,** because re-seeing and re-viewing will help them to detect problems in their texts and apply strategies to resolve them.

Every learner has an individualised way of processing information, hence revision is a highly individualised behaviour. Learners need to be led through writing of multidrafts to uncover problems in their written texts and

discover which revision strategies would solve specific problems and then successfully apply them to their writing. Learners could be trained to take their writing through the process of **"Zero-drafting, problem-solving drafting to the final drafting"** as Huff (1983) suggests. Zero-drafting is the discovery and initial realization of the topic. During the writing of this draft, learners need to be made aware that progression of text is important, not mechanics of writing Next, taking writers through the problem-solving drafts would be sensitizing them to the identification and resolution of major conceptual and organisational problems. At this stage they may be asked to engage in focused drafting of the problem areas. The final drafting would be an attempt to arrive at the best possible solution of a "rhetorical problem" (Flower and Hayes 1980) Although these three stages are presented in a sequential order, the intention is not to define drafting as a three-stage process. They are stages on a continuum to develop critical awareness of the type of drafting required at specific points during the production of a particular text

Even findings of the present study substantiates the importance of multidrafts in bringing the intent of the writer closer to reader's expectations. Learners in the present study were asked twice to revise and rewrite their compositions They were provided feedback in the use of revision strategies

before writing the second draft. On analysing their rewrites before and after the feedback, it was observed that the changes they made by using various strategies revealed reader awareness. Multiple drafting also helped them to make a transfer of certain L1 strategies to L2 production corroborating transfer of literary related skills in composing and revising (Cummins 1981; Hall 1990; Vanikar and Mujumdar 1994). Engaging learners in multiple drafts, would make them conscious that there is an audience for their writing. This awareness would help them to detect dissonance in their text and apply strategies to communicate their intent to the readers.

Training learners to engage in multiple drafts would be making them understand that meaning is evolved through writing. It would help in clarity of thought, independent thinking and freedom of expression. Based on teacher feedback, learners are likely to engage in transformimg the structure of their texts to capture the interest of the reader.

While writing, value of peer responses and peer comments cannot be undermined. Learners require peers to ask them questions on their writing, so that they receive different points of view on their drafts. When learners collaborate and interact, talk with each other on their writing, give suggestions, new thoughts, ideas as well as new perceptions of the text are

stimulated. Peer comments are usually suggestions not commands, hence learners are at liberty to incorporate suggestions in their subsequent drafts, which they feel are appropriate for their readers When writers are interacting actively with each other and their texts, this interaction helps them to expand their ideas The more views they receive on their writing, the greater would be their vision of their own writing from different perspectives, which perhaps they may not have thought about. More options are thus available to them It is also likely that peer response may help them to clarify and develop a particular point. Peer responses thus make learners understand why a piece of writing fails or succeeds. Training learners to incorporate these responses in their subsequent drafts is to assist them to convey their purpose

Considering different ideas about their topic and helping them to develop and clarify ideas, peer comments also allow learners to experience reader expectation as well Audience being authentic, peer responses enable learners to know the response to their writing, thus allowing them to determine whether the intended message has been communicated successfully. This would also bring to light the problems their audience are likely to have as they read the text. Learners thus need to be trained to review their texts in the light of the different perspectives offered to them by

their peers, incorporate these comments and suggestions at appropriate places in subsequent drafts, to transform their text to a "reader based" one. Training learners to incorporate teacher and peer feedback in their subsequent drafts is to **help students gain self confidence in their judgements and also to develop their ability to "analyse a text and evaluate it"** (Mangelsdorf 1992 279)

Apart from motivating and training learners to engage in multiple drafts, learner training in revision also helps in reaching a stage where they can revise their texts independently. Generally, students fail to see dissonance or incongruities in their texts This is because they view revision not as an activity in which they can modify their perspectives and ideas but mainly because they consider it a rewording activity, concentrating on surface features Their inability to perceive problems in their texts also stems from their own belief that they do not possess the ability to write (Mcleod 1987· 429) This belief restricts any chances they might have to improve, for many of their problems seem to arise directly from their inability to monitor their own writing process On account of lack of training, learners do not accessstrategies from their experiences in other languages which is a rich multilingual resource. They resist independent thinking and want to be told explicitly what to do at every stage The need therefore, is to make them rely on their

internalised sense of effective writing and help them to see their writing in a detached way with their "own" eyes **This ability to detach oneself from one's writing and detect dissonance and incongruity in one's own text can be achieved by developing the faculty of "critical reading" in learners.**

In this cycle, writers must be trained to view their own work with a critical eye. It means that, they should be oriented to rethink the written text in terms of the established purpose, audience and content, "to tear it apart, throw it away and start again if it does not accomplish what is intended" (Hughey et al 1983: 27). To do this, writers must take on the role of spectators and critical readers. They must be coached to imagine themselves as their own reading audience and question the clarity, understandibility and persuasiveness of the message To distance themselves from their texts, to assist them towards potential resolution of the major problems in their texts, the need is to train and orient learners to critique their texts by asking heuristic questions. These questions would help writers generate information, substantive details, organise the form needed to expand the piece of writing which in turn would help them to identify the subject, purpose and the audience. The questions addressed to the text could be ·

1   Who am I writing this text for ?

2. Who is my target audience ?

3 Why am I writing this text ?

4 What does the audience know about the subject ?

5. Is the audience likely to believe or accept what is told by me ?

6. Have I provided new information to the audience ? If so, what is that new information ?

7. Will the opinion of the audience change on reading my text ?

8. What is the desired out come of my writing ?

9 Does the text achieve the intended impact ?

10. What are the strategies used to achieve the intended impact ?

11. What additions/deletions need to be made to create an impact on the audience ?

To create the desired impact on the audience, learners could also be trained to **evaluate their texts, to reconceptualise the topic** and **organise the text** in the context of the following questions:

1. What is the thesis point of the text ? Are all ideas clearly subordinated to the main point ?

2. Would the progression of the text profit by sequencing major ideas ?

3. Are major ideas related by means of comparisons, contrasts of size, number, duration, cause-effect and so on ?

4 Are all major ideas demonstrated with concrete examples?

5. Are all assertions or arguments supported with convincing evidences?

6. Are there places where definition or elaboration was necessary?

7. Are there places in the text where the flow of thought breaks, that is, the thought pattern does not connect what comes before and after it?

8 Does the introduction clearly establish the thesis point?

9 Does the final paragraph serve to conclude the paper as a whole or only the preceeding point? Could I simply delete it? Or could I rewrite it in an interesting way?

Training them to critique their own texts would be sensitizing them to detect problems in their texts. This training would help them to think independently in terms of organising their writing and expressing themselves. Most importantly, **this training would help them to consider their readers.** Developing critical reading in learners, is to lead them from the vagueness of error-detection to accurate confident diagnosis. It would train them to look beyond lexical levels towards global concerns, to transform their intent to the desired output; to bring their text closer to create the desired impact on the reader. The felt need, is to discover and establish connections between critical reading and use of revision strategies. Learner training should contribute towards helping them in linking dissonance and selection of appropriate revision strategies.

Research evidence claims that learners are aware that a gap exists between intention and the desired output. At times, learners reach a stage of problem detection in their texts. They do use a range of revision strategies to bridge the gap. Unfortunately, most of their changes are restricted to correcting surface errors; they are unable to select appropriate strategies to make meaningful changes. Therefore each learner needs to be guided and assisted to make meaningful changes to help him/her communicate his/her purpose or intent. Training each learner to select appropriate strategies is a challenge to teachers in India who face the problem of large classes. It may not be practical and possible for them to give personalised attention and feedback to each individual learner. Training learners to critically see their texts therefore, solves not only the problem of large classes but helps them to bring their text close to the purpose they are writing for. **More importantly, it leads them to a stage where they can gain control over their writing abilities and revise independently with minimum teacher involvement.**

Developing critical reading in learners is providing them with a repertory of alternatives which they can use. It strengthens their power of selection when they are caught in the struggle with words. It provides self conscious access to some of the thinking techniques and most importantly, it helps focus on two major intellectual tasks: one, generation of ideas in language and two,

construction of those ideas into a written structure adapted to the needs of the reader and the goals of the writer. **Helping writers and training them to manage their own writing is a step towards learner autonomy**

Engaging learners in the revision process also means taking them through the cyclical process of writing (Vanikar and Mujumdar 1995).
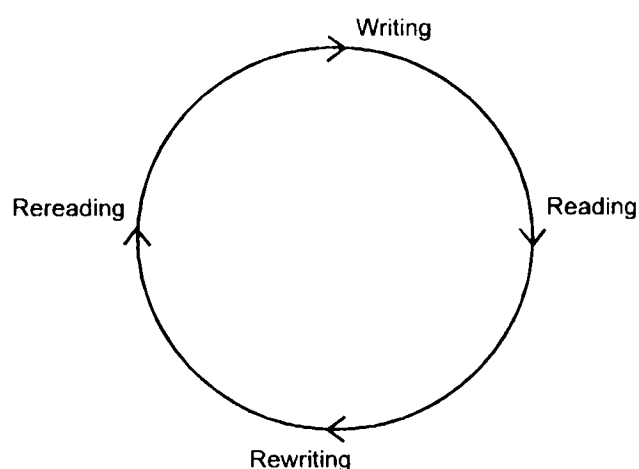

Figure 14. Cyclical Model of Writing (Vanikar and Mujumdar 1995)

Detecting dissonance and applying appropriate strategies to resolve them is only possible when writers re-read their drafts. On re-reading, they detect problems, apply strategies, and rewrite the drafts again. These rewrites are read again to detect further incongruities in meaning. These new incongruities are resolved by applying various strategies and the draft is re-written again. This cycle continues till the writer is satisfied that the form

conveys the intended meaning. This **continual process of rereading followed by rewriting** brings to the fore, an important aspect in revising - **interlinking of reading and writing.**

Research on writing views writing as not directly related to reading and ignores the role of reading in the construction of texts. But reading and writing are inextricably interlinked. Writing is based on the learners integrated skills of writing, reading, revising and recreating. Therefore learners need coaching in intensive reading to help them write effectively. Today, through reading, learners are only taught to comprehend meaning. What is essential is the assimilation of different structures, markers, inter-sentential links, cohesive devices etc which would help them to compose. It is only through intensive reading that learners can internalise these aspects and use them while writing. It is therefore very essential to teach learners to position themselves as readers of their own texts. Everytime writers read their texts, they are guided by the need to improve them depending on the goal they have set for themselves. Thus revision, which is cyclical involving reading and writing, teaches learners problem-solving and helps them to sharpen their decision-making skills.

The challenge today is to provide inherent reasons for students to revise their texts. Students have not learned that revision is discovery of meaning; a repeated process of beginning again, or starting anew the process of making meaning through language. We need to teach our students how to seek in revision dissonance, and through in-writing feedback, peer comments and critical reading, make new choices that could positively change their texts. Training learners in this "multistage process" (Flower 1979:37) would help them to achieve a greater degree of control over their writing. This would also introduce them to some skills and strategies which they either already possess or may yet have to develop.

Revision then is further rewriting. There is a high degree of frustration among ESL students because they see inadequacies in their writing as a direct result of their limited vocabulary, incomplete mastery of grammatical structures or incorrect use of mechanical devices. They fail to think of revision or rewriting in terms of meaning and form and view it only in terms of grammar. As teachers therefore, we need to help our students perceive rewriting as an integral part of the composing process, and not something done after the process is complete. Revising has to be made "the most exciting, satisfying and significant part of the writing process" (Murray 1978a:86). This is particularly important for ESL students so that they move

beyond revising only grammar, language and usage to improve content and meaning. We need to encourage our students to think of rewriting as an opportunity to think about, respond to and restructure ideas. If students recognise that departures from ideas and expansion of ideas are natural to the composing process, then transition from the mental mode to the linear written mode can be viewed as a factor which does not impede the writing process, and instead enhances it.

III. **Conclusion**

Revision offers much unexplored territory for answering questions about the writing process. In a way it provides a window into the cognitive operations which occur when a writer writes The present study attempted to map revision strategies of ESL learners. It was based on the assumption that revision is an integral part of the composing process and therefore it was necessary to take learners through the revising process to enhance their writing skills. Detection of errors in the texts, selection and use of appropriate strategies could be considered an outcome of the integrated process of the writer's thinking, reading, writing and interaction with the text. The study traces revision strategies is terms of range, frequency and patterns. Each individual has a repertoire of revision strategies, there are

variations across individuals in use of strategies, and feedback has an important role in making texts more meaning oriented.

A shift in pedagogy is consequently proposed. It is proposed that a planned and more focused instruction in revision be made integral to the methodology of teaching writing Learner training in the classroom would increase motivation and make writing an enjoyable work. They need to be taken through the revising process by engaging them in multidrafts incorporating teacher and peer comments Training imparted in critical reading would help them to manage their writing independently. This experience of revising would ultimately enable them to transform their writer based prose to suit reader needs. Teacher training is also recommended to provide effective feedback at various places, at appropriate stages of writing Finally, teacher development in assuming changed roles contributes significantly to motivate learners to revise and bring their text closer to the desired output

This research focused on the kinds of revisions made by learners, the differences in the types of revisions across writers of different abilities and the effect of revisions on learner writing. The approach to this study was not in terms of the end product, but to emphasise that training in revision is of utmost importance for learners and teachers alike, if writing abilities of

learners are to be developed   This reserach reveals that an area for further investigation is transfer of certain writing and revising skills from mother tongue to target language   This study did reveal transfer of some L1 cognitive and affective strategies to L2. If writing expertise across L1 and L2 were analysed and compared, perhaps more specific areas of transfer could be located and kinds of transfer indentified. It is felt that L1 writing resources and skills of learners are not being adequately tapped and exploited to further develop L2 writing. Without training, L1 writing abilities would lie dormant resulting in likely language loss for learners   Transfer of cognitive and affective strategies is of importance because use of cognitive strategies makes the text more meaningful and use of affective strategies makes it more communicative. Training could be imparted on transfer of meaningful strategies which would enable learners to recognise and identify their writing skills and use strategies to enhance and develop their writing in L2. Thus their language background could be used as an effective resource to enhance their L2 writing skills. Teaching revision in classroom may take a new direction if learners' language resources could be perceived as the elan vital