

EXAMINING INFLUENCES OF A UNIVERSITY WRITING COURSE ON TEACHERS'
DISPOSITIONS, KNOWLEDGE, AND LITERACY PRACTICES

By

Cheryle Anne Dismuke

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DEFENSE COMMITTEE AND FINAL READING APPROVALS

of the dissertation submitted by

Cheryle Anne Dismuke

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The following individuals read and discussed the dissertation submitted by student Cheryle Anne Dismuke, and they evaluated her presentation and response to questions during the final oral examination. They found that the student passed the final oral examination.

Susan Martin, Ph.D.	Chair, Supervisory Committee
Jennifer Snow, Ph.D.	Member, Supervisory Committee
Keith Thiede, Ph.D.	Member, Supervisory Committee
Susan Baum, Ph.D.	Member, Supervisory Committee

The final reading approval of the dissertation was granted by Susan Martin, Ph.D., Chair of the Supervisory Committee. The dissertation was approved for the Graduate College by John R. Pelton, Ph.D., Dean of the Graduate College.

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ABSTRACT

Lack of progress in student writing achievement has been linked to the variability in teachers' instructional practice. This mixed-methods study examines the links between university coursework in writing instruction and the dispositions, skills, and knowledge of twelve practicing teachers, grades 1-6; six of which participated in the course and six who did not. Data from response-guided interviews, daily logs, structured classroom observations, and follow-up interviews have been analyzed, compared, and integrated. Analyses found significant differences between groups for instruction in the writing processes, self-regulation skills, use of social interaction, and writing in multiple genres across the curriculum. Further analysis found differences in teacher's perceptions of their preparation to teach writing and shared perceptions of their state and district's provision of accountability and resources. Findings suggest implications for teacher professional development, literacy teacher educators, and teacher education researchers.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Writing is central to school and workplace success, and necessary for participation in our democratic process (Norman & Spencer, 2005). It is an important means of responding, communicating, organizing, and refining ideas. Furthermore, the integration of technology into our daily lives has elevated the need for effective writing skills among all sectors of our population. In school settings, writing is most often the way in which students are asked to demonstrate knowledge.

Despite this importance of writing in our society, instruction of writing has been sorely neglected in our schools. Only one third of America's students perform at or above grade level on the NAEP writing assessment and since the implementation of this nationwide measurement in 1992, scores have essentially remained flat (National Center for Educational Statistics, 1999, 2011). The National Commission on Writing (2002) stated that the quality of writing instruction in schools "leaves a lot to be desired" (p. 14). In short, our students are not prepared to meet the demands of college writing.

The National Commission on Writing (2002) also reports that The College Board, which represents 4,300 colleges, has long urged the nation to place writing in the center of educational reform. However, recent efforts in literacy educational reform, such as No Child Left Behind (NCLB) (U.S. Department of Education, 2002), have focused on reading and paid little attention to writing. Not surprisingly then, recent gains in student writing performance have been small in scope and limited to moving our lowest

performing students into the most basic level of performance (Schneider, 2008). To date, school reform and professional development efforts have failed to deal with the dismal writing performance of students in American schools.

In an attempt to reverse this poor performance in writing, as well as in other content areas, the National Governors Association for Best Practices and The Council of Chief State School Officers (2010) led the initiative to develop the new Common Core State Standards (CCSS). With 90% of American jobs requiring higher level literacy skills (Darling-Hammond, Barron, Pearson, & Schoenfeld, 2008), the CCSS are designed to ratchet up rigor that will put American students on a trajectory to meet the demands of a college educated work force.

The release of these standards in 2010 placed an emphasis on preparing students for college-level writing. Expectations and thus accountability for student writing has gone from almost nonexistent under NCLB to increasing demands at each grade level for independent, high-quality writing K-12. Students will be expected to use the writing processes to compose informational, narrative, and argumentative pieces' across content areas for relevant purposes. Students will not achieve this level of writing by engaging in prescriptive instructional techniques of the past. In fact, it has been estimated that if we gave an assessment of these new standards today, up to 85% of students would fail (Calkins, Ehrenworth, & Lehman, 2010).

The Problem

As schools move forward with the implementation of the new Common Core State Standards they will need to wrestle with the rigor these widely adopted standards call for in writing. The adoption and implementation of the CCSS by forty-five states, is

finally forcing schools to take a hard look at the inadequacies of their writing programs K-12. Writing instruction has now become the job of all teachers. Whether it is in Math, Science, or Social Studies writing must not just be assigned as a task, but taught as a skill (Calkins et al., 2010). The lead authors of the CCSS refer to the writing standards as a shared responsibility within the school that all subject areas support (Colman & Pimentel, 2012). The level of writing called for in the CCSS for writing instruction are so ambitious that they call into question whether teachers are ready and able to meet these new demands.

Current research suggests there is a gap between what the standards expect to do and what teachers have been prepared to teach. A lack of progress in student's writing achievement has been linked to the variability in teacher's skills, knowledge, and dispositions regarding writing (Troia, Lin, Cohen, & Monroe, 2011). In addition to these inconsistencies in teacher capability, researchers in the field fault the underdevelopment and misalignment of writing curriculums (Troia & Maddox, 2004). A lack of resources, aligned curriculums, and defined expectations for student writing performance compounds problems for teachers that are already ill prepared to teach writing and deal with the diversity of student needs. "Not only is writing challenging for the inexperienced author, but it creates anxiety, avoidance, and frustration for those who teach it" (Troia & Graham, 2003, p. 75).

Many teachers feel that they lack the knowledge, skills, and strategies they need to facilitate children's emerging competencies as writers (Troia & Maddox, 2004). However, with schools scrambling to increase reading scores, few resources have been allocated to alleviate teacher's concerns about their own lack of competency in the area

of writing instruction. This has left many to cite teacher professional development as the solution (Calkins et al., 2010).

However, this cry for more teacher professional development is not new. During 2004-2005, the Federal Government alone spent 1.5 billion dollars on the professional development of teachers. This does not include the monies spent by individual states, districts, and private grants (Birman et al., 2007). The question remains, how effective have these and other professional development efforts been? What types of professional development influence teachers' daily instruction?

Although there is no shortage of workshops, conferences, and classes available that promise to increase the knowledge of teachers, research that links this new knowledge to practice is thin (Ball & Cohen, 1999; Elmore, 1992; Loewenberg-Ball & Rowan, 2004). In a review of the literature on the measurement of teaching, Ball and Rowan (2004) explain that researchers lack adequate knowledge of how to measure good teaching and assess its effects on student academic achievement. They suggested that many studies "use inexact measures of doubtful reliability and validity" (p. 4).

There are several reasons for limited research documenting the links between professional development and practice. One reason is the difficulty of attributing what the teacher knows or does to the influence of a particular teacher education experience. Additionally, the complexity of this research makes it costly (Darling-Hammond, 2006). The difficulty lies in measuring effectively the complexities of teaching and then demonstrating a causal inference between teaching performance and a professional development event.

Conversely, much research has been done on what constitutes best practices in professional development (Garet, Porter, Desimone, & Birman, 2001; National Staff Development Council, 2011; Hawley & Valli, 1999; Loucks-Horsley, 1995), but most studies that examine the effect of proven professional development models on teacher practice have been concentrated in the areas of math and science (Yoon, Garet, Birman, & Jacobson, 2006). Studies are limited that document how these teacher education strategies, embedded in university level coursework in writing, are influencing teacher's daily practice and their students opportunities to learn writing.

Traditionally, studies that seek to demonstrate the effects of a professional development experience have used teacher observations or pre and post surveys. But I would contend that a single method is inadequate to capture the variability in which teachers describe, define, and demonstrate their dispositions and practices. Darling-Hammond (2006) conducted a study in which she evaluated the effectiveness of different tools for evaluating teacher program effects. She found that while each tool she used had the potential to contribute different insights, they possessed their own limitations. I agree with her cautions to resist the intense focus on single measures of teacher education outcomes and to press for the use of multiple measures to ensure the trustworthiness of results. More multiple measure studies that give consideration to the complexities of teaching in their study design are needed to establish convincing links between professional development experiences and improved teacher practice.

Purpose

The purpose of this mixed-methods study is to employ multiple measures to examine the influences of intensive professional development, delivered through a

university course devoted exclusively to writing, on teacher's understandings and daily practices. Furthermore, this study seeks to establish links between the course, teacher practice, and subsequent student learning opportunities. This study has implications for teacher educators, teacher education researchers, and school improvement teams and administrators interested in engaging in or implementing writing professional development, which is aligned with the recommendations of the Common Core State Standards.

Research Questions

1. What shared understandings of writing, writing instruction, and contexts for teaching writing exist between practicing teachers, grades 1-6, who have taken a university graduate course devoted exclusively to writing? How do these perceptions and viewpoints differ between teachers who have taken the course and those who have not?
2. What shared features of classroom literacy practices and student learning opportunities exist between teachers, grades 1-6, who have taken a course? How do these commonalities in practice compare to the practice of teachers who have not taken a course?
3. How do these similarities in understandings and practice link to the university course in writing.

Overview of Dissertation

Chapter One provides the reader with a background on the state of student writing achievement, poor teacher preparation, and failed school reform efforts to improve

writing instruction. Professional development is discussed as a solution for closing the gap between current student writing performance and the expectations set forth in the Common Core State Standards in writing. An overview of the studies purpose and research questions is given. The potential significance of this study is to inform the pedagogy and content of teacher professional development for the purpose of improving writing instruction.

Chapter Two presents a review of literature on: (1) what it is teachers need to know about the cognitive, affective, physical, and social processes involved in learning to write, (2) effective practices in writing instruction, and (3) promising teacher professional development models.

Chapter Three explains in detail this study's mixed methodology. The design and context of the study are discussed along with information on participant selection, contexts, data collection, analysis, and methodological limitations.

Chapter Four presents the study findings. The findings from each data source are discussed separately and then presented again during stages of quantitative and qualitative consolidation and integration. Links back to the professional development course are made.

Chapter Five provides a discussion of the findings as it relates to the research questions of this study. It also includes specific implications for the fields of teaching and teacher education.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter will review the literature that has informed my perspectives on teachers' understandings of writing instruction and teacher professional development. These theoretical perspectives provide the framework for this study of what teachers need to know, understand, and do to be successful teachers of writing. These perspectives define what content knowledge professional development programs in writing should contain to positively impact teacher practice and students learning opportunities. Additionally, I discuss practices that have proved effective in supporting teacher professional development and growth. This required a thorough review of literature on the following: (1) what teachers need to understand regarding the complexities of the cognitive, physical, social, and affective processes involved in writing, and writing development, (2) research-supported practices for teaching writing, and (3) promising teacher professional development practices and models.

What Teachers Need to Understand: The Complexities of the Cognitive, Affective, Physical, and Social Processes Involved in Writing

The production of written communication is a multifarious act (Graham, MacArthur, & Fitzgerald, 2007), requiring simultaneous interface between multiple cognitive processes including long and short-term memory, as well as affective, social, physical, and social processes. This creates challenges for teachers who are charged with teaching writing to a wide variety of learners in classrooms today. It requires that

teachers have understandings of these complex processes and how they develop in children. This knowledge is essential to planning and implementing instruction, which meets the cognitive, affective, physical, and social needs of their students.

In order to change old ways of teaching Bereiter and Scardamalia (1987) insist that, “Gaining insight into the cognitive processes of writing is especially important as a basis for changing from knowledge telling to knowledge transforming” (p. 320). Teachers who lack understandings of these processes must rely on knowledge telling to guide students to teacher directed product completion. Conversely, teachers who understand the interconnectivity between these multiple cognitive processes are able to proactively guide students toward taking a more active role in directing their own cognitive strategies (Berninger, Garcia, & Abbott, 2009). Unfortunately, a lack of preservice and inservice exposure to writing subject matter knowledge reproduces old transmissive, teaching pedagogies.

Historical Perspectives

Prior to 1970, writing research validated instructional practice that entrenched students in the use of prescriptive templates and the application of formalist rules (Nystrand, 2008). Despite decades of research to the contrary, some teachers hold tight to these old practices. Vygotsky (1978) challenged these practices as being conceived in “narrowly practical terms” (p. 105), and based on artificial training. New research on the cognitive and social processes involved in writing shifted attention away from considering what students wrote to how students wrote. These processes were first thought to be a linear series of steps, but research from the 1970s through the present

continues to uncover a complex and recursive process, complicated by environmental, social, and emotional issues.

Flower and Hayes (1981) proposed an integrated model of these processes, which identified three major components of the writing process: the task environment, the cognitive writing processes, and the writer's long-term memory. This proved to be a short-sighted view that ignored the role of short-term memory or social and emotional factors.

Research on student error patterns done by Shaughnessy (1977) brought attention to "writing as a social act." The Flower and Hayes Model fell under heavy critique for ignoring the connection between a writer's individual speech community, context, and native language (Hymes, 1974; Bizzell, 1982). A new view of writing began to emerge examining the relationship of co-constructing writing through social interaction within a community of peers (Bruffee, 1986; Nystrand, 1989). The importance of the writer's relationship with their audience was explored and recognized as an integral part of the writing process (Porter, 1986; Voloshinov, 1973). Other researchers uncovered the role working memory plays in the production of writing (Kellogg, 1988; Baddeley & Hitch, 1974).

In the 1990s focus shifted from what cognitive processes students use when they write to a sociocultural perspective that engaged researchers in exploring writing in various situated contexts and across disciplines (Brandt, 2001; 1986). These perspectives created a far more complex conception of writing than Hayes and Flower had first envisioned. These new perspectives prompted Hayes (1996; 2008) to create an updated framework, which still provides the most comprehensive view of the writing processes

for this discussion. Hayes organized his model, which was still heavily rooted in cognitive psychology, under processes occurring in either the individual or in the task environment. Researchers continue to add to these foundational frameworks such as Russell and Yanez’s application of Activity Theory to writing in 2003 (Hayes, 2008).

Figure 2.1 provides a diagram of Hayes’s updated model.

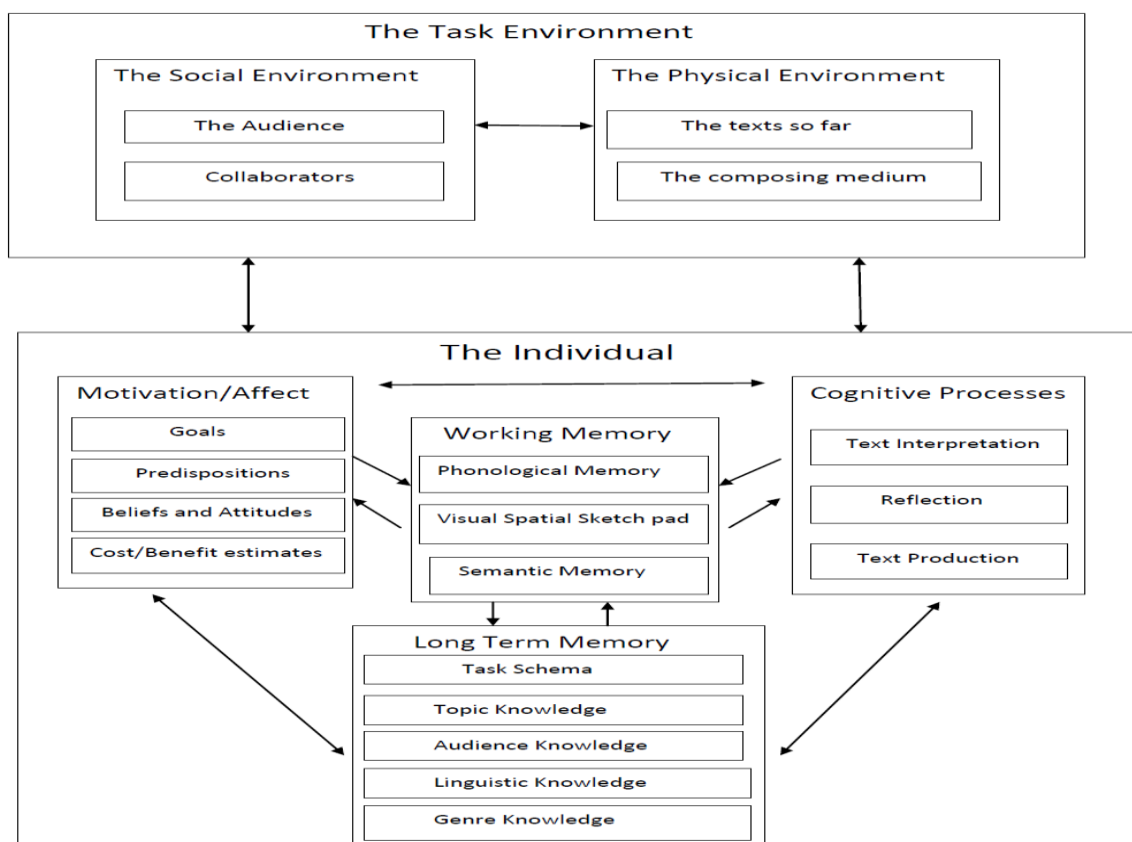


Figure 2.1 Hayes’s (1996) Framework for Understanding Cognition and Affect in Writing.

What Teachers Need to Know about the Cognitive Processes

Writing instruction cannot be scripted, “Merely purchasing a set of instructional materials for teaching writing or a published curriculum of writing is woefully

insufficient for nurturing, supporting and explicitly teaching young writers” (Berninger et al., 2009). In order for teachers to decompose and then teach the invisible cognitive processes involved in writing, teacher preservice and professional development programs should emphasize a balance of process knowledge and balanced writing instruction (Berninger et al., 2009). Through this knowledge teachers can begin to understand how these processes apply to their instruction and support of student writing. In order to scaffold these processes for developing writers they must also understand the demands writing places on both long and short term memory.

Cognitive Processes

Hayes (1996) describes three separate cognitive processes at work in the production of writing: text interpretation, reflection, and text production. These three processes join together during revision and all are dependent on both long and short-term memory. When teachers understand these components and the role they play in a writer’s ability to formulate and organize their ideas, produce a draft, and engage in revision, it should strengthen a teacher’s resolve to include instructional strategies that support and scaffold the development of these intricate processes. Figure 2.2 explains the relationship between the processes of text interpretation, reflection, and text production.

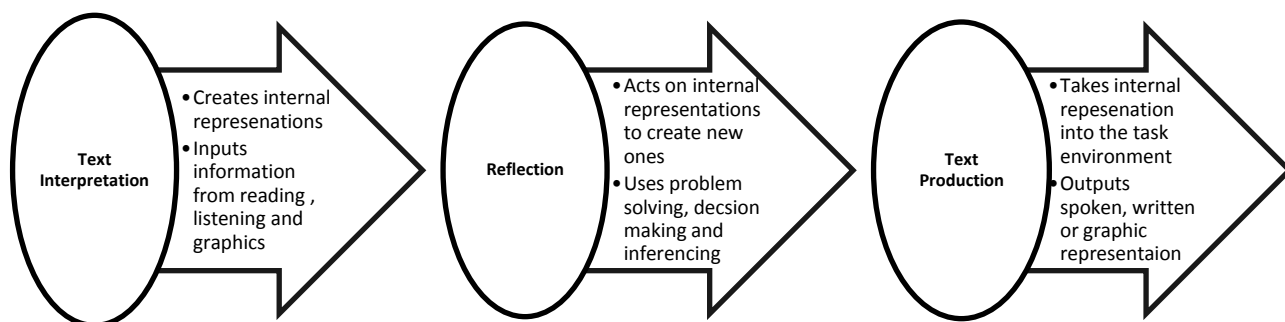


Figure 2.2 Cognitive Processes of Writing

Supporting Text Interpretation. Writing processes cannot be separated from the author’s ability to interpret information through language-based abilities such as reading, listening, and scanning graphic information. Pugh and his associates (2008) found “The acquisition of writing skills requires the integration of visual, motor, language, and the associative cortical regions” (p. 434). This eventually permits mapping between visual forms of words and familiar spoken language representations. This mean teachers need to spend time helping students access, organize, and integrate old and new knowledge before writing takes place. Teaching students to select and apply appropriate graphic organizers can scaffold and develop this cognitive process.

Supporting Reflection. In order to effectively teach students to organize and plan, teachers must understand the reflection process. According to Hayes and Nash (1996), there are two separate types of reflection processes involved in planning: the *action environment* and the *planning environment*. First writers must specify a writing goal and then plan the means to get there. Another view of planning was presented by Bereiter

and Scardamalia (1987). Instead of two separate planning environments, they envisioned two parallel planning environments: or *problem spaces*. The first was called the *content space*, which contains the author's beliefs. The second was called the *rhetorical space*, which holds mental representations of the text to be produced. These two problem spaces interact with each other and create related goals.

To support the development of this mental process, teachers need to provide modeling and instruction that will aid students in reflecting first on what they want to say, and then how best to say it. This means teachers will need to provide students with opportunities to make their own decisions about their topics and choose how to best communicate their message by selecting appropriate genres, developing their voice, and knowing their audience.

Supporting Text Production. Converting internal representations and planning into written, spoken, or graphics communication is a cognitive act that takes place in the physical environment. Kaufer, Hayes, and Flower (1986) studied average to above-average writers to uncover the processes adult writers use to make this conversion from the mental to the physical. They found that sentences are composed from left to right. Most people stop mid-sentence and then add the rest to the end. These stopping points usually occur at natural vocal pauses or clauses where the writer, guided by semantics or syntax or both, completes their thought. Strategies like *Sentence Combining* scaffolds the load this places on the novice writer's memory by allowing students to join short clauses into one more fluent sentence during revision.

Supporting Revision. Why is revision so difficult for burgeoning writers? It is because revision is a decision-making process (Hayes, 1996) that requires the

simultaneous actions of all the cognitive processes. Students need consistent, guided opportunities over grade levels to practice making these decisions about their own writing.

Revision is a complicated mix of text interpretation, reflection, and text production. Hayes (1996) feels, “It is not enough to understand the underlying processes involved in revision, it also necessary to understand the control structure that determines how these process are invoked and sequenced” (p. 14). He proposed that the control structures are packets of knowledge acquired through practice. In order to support this development, teachers must explicitly model and provide students guided practice in: (1) setting goals to improve the text; (2) evaluative reading, problem solving, and text production; (3) what to pay attention to; (4) what errors to avoid; (5) templates and criteria for quality; and (6) strategies for fixing specific classes of text problems.

In addition to enacting control structures, writers must be able to read critically and weigh what they know against what they have written. They have to activate these control structures while using the fundamental cognitive processes. These control structures have to travel in and through both long-term and short-term memory.

Long-Term Memory

Writing takes practice to become proficient. Perhaps if teachers understood the role long-term memory plays in writing success, they would plan for daily writing opportunities. It is only through sustained practice that writers can develop both fluency and flow. Flower and Hayes (1980, p. 33) explained it this way,

A writer must exercise a number of skills and meet a number of demands –more or less all at once. As a dynamic process, writing is the act of dealing with an

excessive number of simultaneous demands or constraints. Viewed this way, a writer in the act is a thinker on full time cognitive overload.

Supporting Fluency. Writing requires the retrieval and orchestration of countless pieces of information from our memory. The long-term memory houses all the packets of information containing the writer's knowledge of the topic, vocabulary, grammar, genre, and audience. It contains what the author has learned about how to write and how to revise. Chase and Simon's (1973) research on developing expertise revealed it can take up to ten years of practice to be able to store and recover patterns fluently and efficiently. Therefore, writing fluently takes daily practice over time.

Supporting Flow. Writing is also a creative process that requires authors to find uninterrupted periods of creative flow. Flow (Csikszentmihalyi, 1996) is a state of focused concentration and energy in which ideas pour out and the person is caught on the novelty and pull to bring the idea to fulfillment. Additionally, successful writers use both divergent thinking (Lovecky, 2004), which allows them to solve problems in unusual or innovative ways, and flexible thinking (Osborn, 1963), which allows them to bend or ignore schema packages that would constrain creativity. This research is a caution against prescriptive templates that would govern and overrule novel and creative thought.

Supporting Fluency and Flow. When students are learning how to coordinate the act of writing, it can be more stressful than joyful. But when teachers provide ample opportunities for daily practice and encourage students to experiment with their own ideas, young writers can find that flow that results in fluent and original writing. Finding this kind of time in daily classroom schedules will require teachers to advocate for

uninterrupted writing blocks, which have disappeared from so many daily school routines.

Short-Term Memory: Formulation, Execution, and Monitoring

Writing places extreme demands on short-term memory, which can derail the production of written text. After writers retrieve their task schemas and knowledge from long-term memory, it is all laid out in working memory waiting to be constructed into ideas and then translated into speech and transcribed into sentences. Kellogg (1996), who has done much to further research in the area of short-term memory, believes this construction is accomplished through the resources of working memory, which are comprised of formulation, execution, and monitoring.

Supporting the Formulation of Writing. This process requires writers to transform mental images or ideas into speech and then into text. This translation can occur within a partial translation, or what Vygotsky called “inner speech” (1962). According to Vygotsky, this inner speech is a “dynamic, shifting, unstable thing, fluttering between word and thought” (p. 162). This is why one might hear young writers vocalizing as they transcribe their thoughts into text.

Teachers without this knowledge may insist on a silent writing time, but this notion is contrary to the ways children write, who often vocalize while composing. Social interaction throughout the writing process scaffolds the overload on short-term memory and helps students develop their inner voice.

Supporting the Execution of Writing. This process requires the author to output through physical means, whether speaking, handwriting, or keyboarding. This entails

motor commands, muscle movement, and feedback mechanisms (Shephard, 1994). A lack of fluency in execution is crippling to the composing process.

To scaffold execution processes students need exposure and practice with multiple output opportunities. Students with execution difficulties in handwriting can be supported until they become fluent, by composing in a more fluid medium such as speaking. They can then later transcribe their text to print.

Currently, high stakes tests of written ability favor handwriting as a composing medium, but this research supports the notion that handwriting is only one means to an end product. It is not cheating to compose using technology. Given today's multitude of technological execution tools, teachers with this understanding should have no problem not only allowing their students to compose with technology as most adult writers do, but to explicitly teach its use. Composing with technology aligns with the goals of the Common Core State Standards to have college-ready writers.

Supporting the Monitoring of Writing. This process involves reading and editing. Hayes places so much importance on reading critically that he has replaced the term revision with reading (1996). Good reading comprehension enables the author to make more global revisions. Kellogg defines editing as "A comparison between a writers intentions and the output of a given process" (1996, p. 61).

Teachers with these understandings of the monitoring processes would see the beauty of having students use their written text during reading comprehension lessons to teach critical reading skills in a relevant way.

Scaffolding the Integration of the Cognitive Processes and Memory

Explicitly teaching students' skills that scaffold long and short-term memory are crucial to new writers as they gain automaticity. Torrance and Galbraith (2006) explain that cognitive capacity is a fluid resource that is shared among mental processes. When students have achieved automaticity in the individual components of the cognitive processes needed for writing, the system runs smoothly with limited demands on cognitive capacity. "Performance on all tasks can proceed without detriment to any of them as long as total demand does not exceed capacity" (p. 69).

The big idea here is that there is only so much work the mind can do simultaneously. When a student has difficulty with one of these processes, it creates a bottle neck and the whole system becomes overloaded. With these understandings in place, teachers can have students use targeted strategies to help students free up working memory by providing scaffolding in the affected areas until fluency can be achieved. But, the cognitive processes are only one facet of writing. Next, we will consider the motivational and affective processes of writing and how teacher understandings of these processes are crucial to students writing success.

What Teachers Need to Know About the Motivational/Affective Processes

According to Hidi and Boscolo (2006), "Motivation to write is not a 'variable' of writing tasks assigned to students in school, but is deeply rooted in the context in which writing is a meaningful authentic activity" (p. 144). Motivation is a key component for writing success and teachers must nurture its development when planning writing instruction.

During their school years, a child's will to write may decrease or even disappear. The reasons for this decline are many. First, writing may be taught in a rigid way. Second, writing tasks may be detached from the student's experiences and lack meaning. Next, when students are presented with writing tasks that have no audience, students find them to be without purpose and boring. Lastly, students may lack the self-efficacy necessary to sustain them through the difficult process of writing (Boscolo & Gelati, 2007). According to Brophy (1999), motivation has two components: a sense of meaning and a sense of competency. Teachers must plan for both in daily writing activities.

Providing Meaning

Providing authentic tasks gives meaning, real purpose, and develops a student's voice as a writer. This has a considerable effect on motivation (Oldfather & Dahl, 1994; Bruning & Horn, 2000). Motivation to write is based on a set of beliefs that students develop through their writing experiences over time. This attitude toward writing influences a student's approach to specific tasks and their willingness to engage those tasks.

Teachers must understand that when children first come to school they are intrinsically motivated to write. It is when teachers present students with fragmented tasks, unsuccessful writing experiences, and overemphasize graded products that students become extrinsically motivated writers. Students become more concerned with task completion and teacher evaluation rather than the process of writing. "Tragically, many students who enjoy writing in the early elementary grades end up hating or avoiding writing by the time they enter upper elementary school" (Pritchard & Honeycutt, 2007, p. 32). Once writers begin to write for the goal of task completion rather than as a tool for

communication and expression, changing extrinsic motivation to write back to intrinsic motivation proves difficult (Boscolo & Mason, 2001).

These understandings are crucial when planning writing curriculum. Teachers must find ways to focus on process over product by teaching and valuing all steps of the writing process. Teachers should engage young writers in worthwhile writing activities that draw on student's purposes, interests, and experiences. This will increase students' self-efficacy, meaningfulness, and concentration (Bruning & Horn, 2000; Hidi & Boscolo, 2006). However, skill and relevance must be paired with writing tasks that are challenging, yet obtainable.

Developing a Sense of Competency

Self-efficacy was thought by Bandura (1977) to play an influential role in the choices students make, the effort and perseverance a student is willing to put forth, and the level of success they attain. Completion of the complex tasks involved in writing rests on the interdependent relationship that Pajares and Valiante (2006) point out exists between a child's self-perception of themselves as a writer and their perceptions of their writing competency.

A student's self-efficacy as a writer improves when students are provided process goals. Teacher feedback plays a critical role in helping students set specific attainable goals that will improve their writing. Think of them as a series of baby steps with the teacher modeling how to reach the goals, and providing continuous feedback on their progress (Schunk & Swartz, 1993; Schunk, 2003).

Teachers help students develop self-efficacy when they provide students with choices in how to accomplish their writing goals. When reluctant writers are allowed to

participate in the process of goal setting and are empowered to negotiate their product and the strategies they use to accomplish their goals, they can mediate the cost benefit mechanisms of writing. Providing writers with multiple pathways for reaching their goals increases the likelihood they will attempt the task (Hayes, 1996). Assignments should offer enough flexibility in the task environment to allow individual students to pursue their own goals within the confines of the classroom structure.

A student's level of engagement will be a balancing act between their ability and challenge (Csikszentmihalyi, 1975). Teachers must help students monitor their *problem space* by helping them define tasks in terms of proximal goals with clear definitions of how to achieve success (Bruning & Horn, 2000). All learners even those with disabilities find challenge motivating. By aligning the level of complexity with a student's zone of proximal development (Vygotsky, 1978), all learners can be provided with differentiated lessons that are engaging (Bruning & Horn, 2000; Miller & Meece, 1999).

What Teachers Need to Know About the Physical Aspect of the Task Environment

The task environment has two instructional elements teachers need to understand. First, what Kaufer, Hayes, and Flower (1986) called the text-so-far and the composing medium.

The Text-So-Far

Kaufer et al. (1986) found that the monitoring the text-so-far is a construction task that helps the writer produce gradually. It helps the writer decide what to do next without considering the entire plan at once. Hayes and Nash (1996) believe this "interleaving" between plan and action relieves the strain on the writer's memory and gives the writer

information about how the plan is working. The writer can react to small pieces of text and make revisions or decisions about what should come next.

Supporting Construction Tasks. Teachers should model re-reading out loud in order to help students develop their own inner critic. Students need to be given tools, like marking places for revisions with post-it notes, or given opportunities for peer think alouds during revisions.

The Composing Medium

Additionally, better understandings of the role the composing medium plays in writing success should prompt teachers to expose and explicitly teach students to compose in a variety of mediums. Word processing programs on computers make it possible to cut and move entire sections of text around a paper. Students can attend to drafting while the computer auto corrects spelling and underlines grammar problems. The use of computers in writing has cut down planning time, made editing easier and large revisions less tedious (Hayes, 1996). Studies are continuing to explore the effect of voice recognition software that converts a writer's speech directly into text. Teachers must remember the goal is to teach composition and processes.

Supporting Composing Mediums. Exposing students to a variety of composing mediums and then allowing them to choose provides opportunities for individual students to work in their preferred learning styles. Not only is this choice motivating, it can help students see that there is more than one way to be a good writer. Technology offers multi-modal composing mediums such as Animoto, blogs, and pod casts, Xtra Normal, Scripts for dramatic presentation, or filming video. Technology also affords students of today the opportunity to co-construct text with students in other locations and countries. Student

writers can publish their own work to share worldwide. This brings us to the social aspect of writing.

What Teachers Need to Know About the Social Aspects of the Task Environment

The pencil, the pen, and the computer are all physical tools that help the writer produce an artifact of social interaction between the writer and his audience. If studied carefully, this piece of writing provides evidence about the writer and his collaborators. It documents the cultural norms and social practices of which the writer is a part. An author cannot be separated from their historical context or from the people with whom they are communicating. Therefore, writing is always a social act, situated in interactions between participants and expressed in written words and forms acquired and developed in the author's social experiences (Hayes, 1996).

Developing Writing Through Socialization

Children learn to speak through socialization in a community of practice (Lave & Wenger, 1991). Spoken language is naturally acquired and is universal. Vygotsky (1978) reminds us that writing is simply an extension of speech; it's beginning purposes a way to meet children's naturally occurring needs. He warned that "The teaching of written language is not being founded on the needs of children as they naturally develop and on their own activity; instead, writing is given to them from the teacher's hand" (p. 105).

Just like the development of speech, students need to develop their capacities as writers through participation in a community of writers. At first they will use speech to mediate their thoughts with peers'. Then students can begin to translate those thoughts into approximations of written communication. Anne Dyson (2006), who studies the

emerging writing development of young children, has done much work documenting this process. She suggests, “Saying” is essential to young children’s first approximations of writing. They produce symbols that match their speech exactly. Vygotsky (1978) said that children literally “draw their speech” (p. 115) in order to grasp the symbolic nature of the written system.

Vygotsky (1978) argued that social interaction is essential to learning higher level cognitive processes like writing. Through dialogues and think alouds with experienced writers in the community, students will begin to develop more fully as writers. Dyson (2001) feels that official classroom sharing and discussion of children’s writing gives young writers the chance to explain their texts. This public sharing allows teachers to provide analytic language for genre and text structures. It also allows students the opportunity to learn from the audience reaction what is culturally funny, acceptable, too long, or unclear. Wohlwend (2009) finds that this social practice discourse engages writers in two-way recursive mediation between the child and others in the writing community, and creates a natural *zone of proximal development* for writing. But before any public sharing takes place, safe environments must be created.

Creating Communities of Practice

Teachers who support the learning of writing create environment that are filled with things to read and materials to write with: they provide opportunities or reasons for writing. Emig (1981) referred to this type of environment as an “enabling environment, one that is safe, structured, private, unobtrusive, and literate, one that provides frequent opportunities to practice writing, many of them playful” (p. 25). Classrooms such as these

are intertextual sites where discourse is brought in from the outside and other places and then meet in a clash of social viewpoints across time and space (Bahktin, 1981). Writing that is co-constructed in this type of environment is then sent back out of the community to be shared and intermingled with outside audiences, adding to a larger global community discourse.

The Complexities of the Processes Involved in Writing

This section reveals that writing is a complex set of interactive invisible and visible processes that rely on automaticity within and between processes to achieve fluidity and organization of thought into writing. Without knowledge and understanding of these processes, teachers and teacher educators will be unable to decompose and then teach this orchestration of multiple invisible processes to students. If our end goal is to place students in the roll of conductor over composing and directing their own pieces of writing, then teachers must first become intimately aware of the processes by which their students compose. However, knowing and doing is not the same thing.

Converting knowledge and understandings to practice is difficult. Application of these perspectives on writing will require a great deal of teacher reflection and collaborative inquiry into current practices. In some cases, it will require teachers and teacher educators to advocate for new ways of teaching and new ways of allocating time and resources that go against the status quo. In the next section, I will present effective pedagogical practices in curriculum and instruction that pair with these perspectives on writing.

What Teachers Need to be Able to Do: Effective Practices in Writing Instruction

It is not enough for preservice and practicing teachers to have book knowledge about how students write. They will need practical experience applying these understandings about writing to daily classroom practice. With few tools or comprehensive writing curriculum at their disposal, effective teachers of writing will need to be able to plan and organize writing instruction across the school year, within units of genre study, which provides students with real reasons for writing. This instruction needs to be aligned with student's needs as well as the Common Core grade level writing standards. The following section will consider what research has shown to be effective practices in curriculum planning and instructional approaches.

Planning Effective Curriculum

A strong writing curriculum delivered by an effective classroom teacher is the most effective intervention for the poor writing performance of students in this country (Correnti, 2007). The Common Core State Standards call for an integrated, multi-genre writing curriculum that engages students' K-12 in the writing processes with increasing expectations for growth (Calkins et al., 2010). Additionally, teachers must intentionally plan to meet the needs of a diverse group of learners at different levels of readiness, interests, and who encompass a large range of learning styles. Therefore, a teachers' year-long writing curriculum cannot be a one-size fits all program that comes neatly packed in a box with a script for teachers to follow. It will require a teacher who is skilled, educated, and experienced in all the intricate processes and skills needed to compose, coupled with materials to support that process (Correnti, 2007). Teachers must be able to incorporate all the elements of an effective writing curriculum using a process approach.

Figure 2.3 details the elements of an effective writing curriculum and the components of a process approach (Pritchard & Honeycutt, 2007).

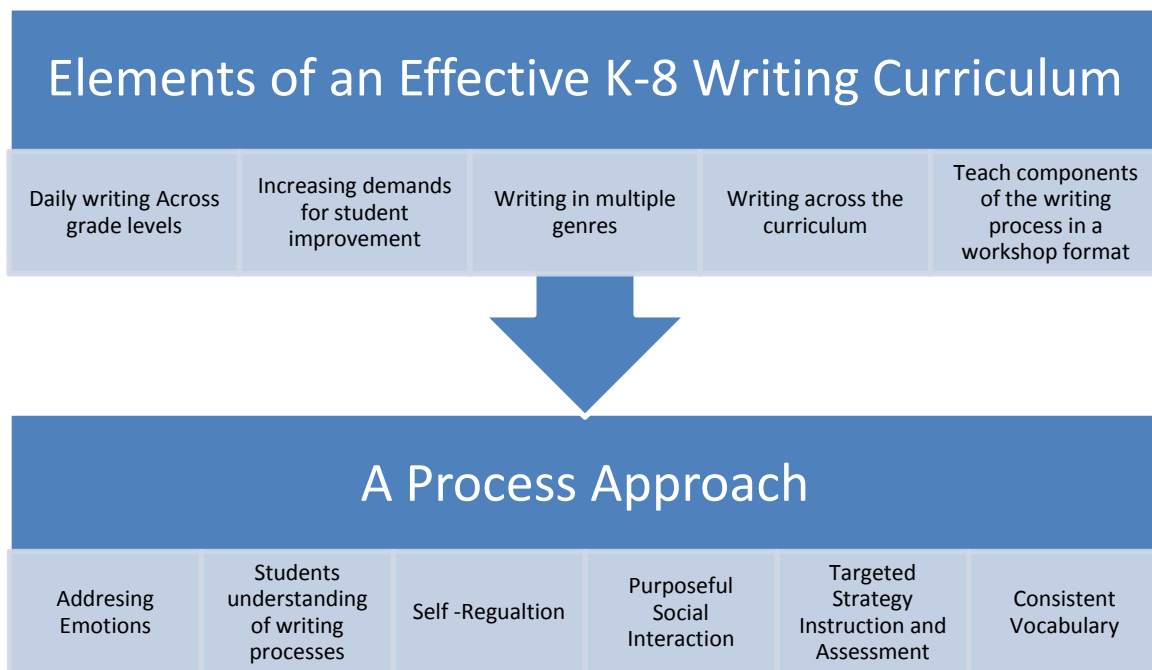


Figure 2.3 Elements of Effective Writing Instruction and Components of a Process Approach

Elements of an Effective Writing Curriculum.

Research tells us that daily explicit writing instruction that is modeled and practiced within a trusted community of writers who support each other's growth and development are part of an effective writing curriculum (Graham, MacArthur, & Fitzgerald, 2007; Troia, Shankland, & Heintz, 2010; Pritchard & Honeycutt, 2007).

A review of research on schools that demonstrate impressive language arts achievement found these schools share five characteristics: (1) They realize learning to write well takes place through daily instruction and practice in an instructionally effective

school over grade levels; (2) There is an increasing demand for improvement within a wide range of genres; (3) There are expectations that writing instruction will occur throughout the content areas; (4) They explicitly and systematically teach students all the components of the writing process; ideas, planning, drafting, revising, and editing; and (5) They used a workshop model (Pressley, Mohan, Finget, Reffitt, & Raphael-Bogaert, 2007). All of these pieces need to be included when planning effective writing curriculum.

Daily Writing Across Grade Levels

If student writing is to improve, it will take a commitment of time. Learning to write well requires daily writing practice and instruction aligned over the lifespan of a student. According to Goldstein and Carr (1996), teachers who implement writing process techniques almost every day consistently obtain the highest average writing score on the NAEP writing assessment. Teachers need to commit at least a 40 minute a day block of time to writing Instruction and engaging practice (Pressley et al., 2007). Calkins (1994) recommends an extended and predictable block of time be dedicated to Writers Workshop. Donald Graves argues that if students don't return to a piece of writing at least three times a week, it is hardly worth doing (2003).

Increasing Demands for Improvement Across Genres

The CCSS in writing demand increasing levels of performance in writing from K-12. These spiraling expectations are aligned and expected to occur at each grade level and in informational, opinion, and narrative writing, each of which represents a larger array of genres.

Increasing demands. Simply striving to have students meet a grade level benchmark will not promote growth (Ravitch, 2010). However, rubric assessment coupled with goal setting and teacher feedback can move students forward on a continuum of writing development that spans their K-12 experience. Students should always be a part of goal setting and have very clear expectations for how to achieve their individualized goals (English & Steffy, 2001; Stiggins & Chappuis, 2011).

In order to reverse the flat student achievement of the past, the CCSS requires students to add new skills and improve the quality of their writing at each grade level. Teachers will need to focus on creating progressive goal setting for not only their class as a whole, but for individual students (Stiggins & Chappuis, 2011). Additionally, documentation of student progress will need to be aligned across the school year as well as across grades and show progress in a variety of genres and formats.

Genres. As writers develop skills in a variety of genres; they learn the particular format, structures, conventions, literary devices, and vocabulary associated with them. Writers learn to match the purpose and audiences for their writing with the genre that can best help them accomplish their goals. The more genres a student can master, the more powerful writing becomes as a tool for accomplishing his or her purpose. Writing in multiple genres provides students with a means of self-expression, a voice to communicate ideas, and gives them the power of persuasion (Graham, MacArthur, & Fitzgerald, 2007).

Developing skills in multiple genres allows students to respond to genuine reasons for writing with the appropriate format. Authentic tasks increase motivation to write by having students respond in their own voice, with their own ideas, to a real

audience, for a real purpose. Bruning and Horn (2000) discuss Elbow's (1994) work on developing voice saying, "Such writing has the potential for expressing the person behind the words and for revealing dimensions of the writer's identity, character, and goal" (p. 30).

Writing Across the Curriculum

In his review of literature on writing to learn, Newell (2006) found three areas of research that support the teaching of writing in the content areas. First, writing assignments in the content areas can become ways of exploring and making sense of new ideas. It is a way of "thinking on paper." E.M. Forster (1956) asked, "How can I know what I think until I see what I say?" Second, students will become aware of the particular conventions, genres, and vocabularies situated in various disciplines. If students are to think like scientists, then they need to write like a scientist. As they pursue the authentic work of scientists in their particular discipline, students need to integrate with authentic purpose, the vocabulary and form in written products that emulate the artifacts that are required of that discipline. Last, using content area facts to write transforms the content area information into ways of understanding ourselves and others through the study of different academic traditions.

Teaching the Writing Process in a Workshop Format

In her book on teaching writing, Gail Tompkins (2012) explains the writing process as recurring cycles. She lists these recursive processes as prewriting, drafting, revising, editing, and publishing. During pre-writing, authors choose a topic and then consider their purpose, audience, and genre. Additionally, writers must gather and organize ideas. Donald Murray (1982) estimates this process may take 70-80% of writing time. As students begin to execute their writing plan, they may rethink their original ideas and purposes. The written piece becomes more and more refined as the writer re-reads, revises, and edits. Peer and teacher feedback help students polish their writing and prepare it for publishing or sharing with their intended audience. Teachers must introduce and model each stage of the writing process and provide practice and feedback.

One format that has been successful at facilitating this type of instruction is Writing Workshop. According to Tompkins (2012), this format has four components: independent writing, sharing, focus lessons, and sharing mentor texts. This format affords teachers time to conference with individual or small groups and promotes the self-regulation of writing. Implementing a successful workshop requires thoughtful long and short-term planning, strategic record keeping, and a community of self-regulated learners.

Even when all the elements of an effective curriculum are planned for teachers will need an instructional approach and strategies that have been proven effective. A process approach is recommended as a best practice in writing instruction (National Council for Teachers of English; International Reading Association, 1996; National Writing Project, 2006; Graham, MacArthur, & Fitzgerald, 2007). However, this term has evolved over time. Pritchard and Honeycutt's (2007) updated view of a process approach

balances explicit instruction with developmental considerations. This viewpoint is in contrast with the more developmental perspectives of the past.

Teaching with a Process Approach

Teaching writing using a developmental process approach began in the 1970s and was commonly referred to as Writers Workshop. This model of instruction was in opposition to the long-time practice of teaching students how to produce a written product using formalistic rules. Writing instruction began to take a more developmental or Piagetian view. Brainerd (1978) wrote of this type of curriculum, “The basic assumption seems to be that children’s minds, if planted in fertile soil, will grow quite naturally on their own” (p. 286). This model of instruction placed the teacher in the role of facilitator. Little direct instruction was given and teachers took a hands-off approach. Research showed very little improvement in student writing as a result of this approach (Hillocks, 1984). The work of cognitive researchers Flower and Hayes (1981) and Bereiter and Scardamalia (1987) informed today’s view of a more balanced process approach as a mentally recursive process coupled with procedural strategies for completing writing tasks (Pritchard & Honeycutt, 2006). Explicit strategy instruction, guided instruction, and modeling are all part of the updated balanced process approach which was influenced by Vygotsky’s notion that, “The only good learning is that which marches ahead of development” (1978, p. 78). Goldstein and Carr (1996) found that teaching students with this approach led to higher average writing proficiency among students.

Theoretical Perspectives of a Process Approach

First, effective writing teachers who come to their understandings of the writing process through study and personal experience are able to intentionally model all aspects of the writing process (National Writing Project, 2008). Second, writing is a cognitive, developmental, affective, and social act: “Writing is a social activity that we can share, discuss, and comment on with each other” (Boscolo & Gelati, 2007). Learning is influenced by the values, beliefs, and experiences that exist within a larger community (Bahktin, 1981; Vygotsky, 1978). Therefore a process-oriented instructional model should always occur in a community of writers. This community forms a safe audience through social interaction (Moffett, 1981). Individuals can grow at a pace that is concomitant with a student’s zone of proximal development (Vygotsky, 1978). According to Moffett (1981), it is through this interaction with their writing community that students can begin to move from an audience of self, to teachers, to peers, then to authentic public audiences.

Major Focuses of a Process Approach

Pritchard and Honeycutt (2007) describe six foundational areas of teaching process writing. They include: (1) addressing emotions; (2) developing student’s understanding of the writing process; (3) teaching self-regulation strategies; (4) training and mentoring peer partners and response groups; (5) targeted strategy instruction; and (6) using a consistent vocabulary.

Addressing Emotions. Both teachers’ and students’ dispositions about writing affect student performance. Dispositions must be assessed and negative self-images corrected. This can be accomplished by addressing some key causes. First, teachers need

opportunities to survey their own feelings about writing. Positive guided experiences writing for their own purposes can help teachers to feel more confident about themselves as writers. Next, students need positive writing experiences scaffolded by targeted skill instruction and guided practice in the safety of community of writers. Also, daily writing can help students practice and become more confident in their skills. Students who suffer from writers block need strategies for silencing their internal critics (Boice, 1990). Student interviews can be helpful in determining student's dispositions about writing. Additionally, attitude rating scales are available such as The Writers Self-Perception Scale (Bottomley, Henk, & Melnick, 1997/1998). These assessment practices can help teachers identify and address students' emotions about writing.

Teaching Students the Writing Processes. By taking the time to explicitly model, guide, and practice each stage of the writing processes: generating ideas, organizing, drafting, revising, and publishing teachers help students decompose (Grossman, Compton, Igra, Shahan, & Williamson, 2009) the complex internal and external aspects of producing a written text. Although these steps are recursive, the process approach provides a road map for writers to follow. Skill instruction and practice in each process area can be differentiated and applied to any age and genre. The use of visual representations that make visible internal processes, coupled with whole class discussion and reflective writing, help students come to a deeper understanding of their own processes. These instructional strategies are examples of the high leverage practices identified by Ball and Forzani (2011). First, decomposing strategies make content, theories, and processes explicit through modeling and representations. Next, whole class

debriefings and free writes that follow help students unpack their engagement with visual representations of the processes and force interpretation of each student's thinking.

Teaching Self-Regulation. Zimmerman and Risemberg (1997) describe a self-regulated writer as one who can initiate their own thoughts, feelings, and actions to achieve various literary goals including improving their writing skills and enhancing the quality of the text they create. These are the meta-cognitive skills writers need to monitor comprehension, navigate between the processes, and reflect and refine text as they write. Thinking aloud and modeling these invisible cognitive skills during shared writing can help students acquire the inner voice they will need to sustain attention until the product is completed.

Hidi and Boscolo (2006) reviewed the self-regulation work of Zimmerman, Risemberg, and Kitsantas (1997; 1999). They grouped ten types of writing self-regulation skills into three categories: the person, the behavior, and the environment. First, the writer must learn to persevere during the writing task. They must gain internal control over their person to stay focused and on task. Next, they need practice in monitoring and making choices about their writing behaviors. The student needs practice choosing topics, sticking to their writing plan, monitoring the text for meaning, and making revision choices. Students also need to practice regulating their writing environment by gathering their own tools, choosing where they will work, and with whom they will collaborate. Teachers must provide students' the autonomy and opportunity to self-regulate their writing. Without practice making their own decisions, students will not achieve independence over their processes or products.

Teaching Purposeful Social Interaction. If writing is to take place within a community of practice, then the community needs direction and guidance in how to respond and give feedback to one another. Gere and Abbott (1985) attribute the success of process writing instruction to the interaction between writers and teachers and writers and their peers. Just having peers talk to each other about their writing is not enough to improve the quality of text. Improvements come when peers or teachers use specific criteria for responding to writing (Hillocks, 1986). In other words, teachers need to model peer-to-peer conversations and give specific directions for what aspects of the writing peers should provide feedback. Englert and Mariage (1991) credit writing discourse with developing the inner voice needed for self-regulation. “Interaction with peers helps writers acquire the ability to talk to their text and listen as the text talks back” (p. 339). Role playing, coaching, and modeling are all ways to develop discourse around writing.

Teachers who insist on teaching writing as an individual and silent act stifle students’ opportunities to develop as writers. Teachers must remove the teaching of writing from an artificial, isolated, teacher-contrived activity and should instead allow students to experience writing as the social act it is. Environments that place too much emphasis on teacher control, corrections, and strict adherence to forms and standards create an unsafe environment for interaction and sharing. Students must know they will be respected and their work treated with support and care. Teachers must take the time to establish a safe community of practice (Lave & Wenger, 1991) before diving into peer interaction and sharing of work.

Communities should use guidelines or procedures for sharing work to ensure students and teachers respond with meaningful, specific feedback that is not

overwhelming to the writer. Bruning and Horn (2000) found that teacher guidance and feedback has a significant impact on the development of strategies, confidence, and actual writing performance. “The most useful feedback involves specific knowledge about how to move toward one’s goals (p. 32)”. This study revealed that students deal well with feedback regarding organization and form, but resisted comments about the value of their ideas. This research could be applied to the development of writing feedback sheets. The student’s goal for each piece could be listed and peers could direct their feedback toward specific goals and stay clear of feedback that could impede motivation.

Targeted Strategy Instruction and Assessment. Focused strategy instruction breaks down writing skills, strategies, or processes into a series of steps and scaffolds students to independence. Explicate modeling of these components of writing helps students progress through the developmental sequence of writing self-regulation proposed by Zimmerman and Kitsantas (1999). The following five stages highlight the importance of well-chosen focus lessons in which modeling and feedback take center stage. First, students come to an understanding of a new writing skill, strategy, or process by observing it being modeled. Next, through engagement in guided practice with feedback, writers emulate the model and approximate the skill. With continued feedback students move along this developmental continuum by applying their new skill in their own writing where appropriate. At this point, students should be able to match or surpass the model. Last, the self-regulated writer can then adapt their performance of the skill to different genres, purposes, and conditions.

Teachers must purposefully select focus lessons that pair with selected genres and target instruction where it is needed most. Frequent formative assessments of student

writing along with clear benchmarks and grade-level goals will help guide teachers in choosing focus lesson topics. One approach teachers can take is a Focus Correction Areas approach (Pritchard & Honeycutt, 2007). In order to not overwhelm students with well-meaning guidance, teachers choose one area on which to focus their instruction. To do so, they need an analytic scale. One scale used widely by teachers is the 6+1 traits of writing (Culham, 2005). This approach examines writers proficiency using a rubric assessment and then provides teachers with ideas for lessons which help students improve in each trait area. Teachers are able to focus on one of six aspects of writing: ideas, content, organization, voice, word choice, sentence fluency, and conventions. Like the writing process, The 6+1 steps instruction can be differentiated by skill and interest, and across content. It is appropriate for all grade levels. 6+1 trait instruction compliments instruction in the writing processes. The Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory can offer teachers a variety of instructional strategies to pair with the rubric assessments (Culham, 2005; NWRL, 2011).

Common Vocabulary. Through each step of the writing process, and within the traits, students need to develop a common vocabulary. When teachers and students use a common vocabulary, it promotes a lifespan, growth perspective. This takes coordination school and district wide and requires teacher professional development. It has been argued by Dan Lortie (1975) and Grossman and McDonald (2008) that teacher's lack of common vocabulary interferes with teacher development. Head way has been made in the field of reading where agreement on a common language for terms is beginning to surface in teacher syllabi, teacher logs, and observation schemes (Snow, Griffin, & Burns, 2006; Rowan, Cambum, & Correnti, 2004). No doubt, tests in reading

competencies have driven the consensus. However, the development of a nation-wide common vocabulary in the field of writing instruction would help promote student and teacher growth along a continuum regardless of student or teacher mobility.

Effective teachers of writing need knowledge of how students write, what makes them want to write, and the most effective strategies for helping them succeed at this complex task. If they are passionate about the importance of writing then they will need to set aside at least 40 minutes a day to teach and practice writing, even if it is not afforded to them in their schedules. They will need to arm themselves with a systematic approach to teaching all aspects of the writing processes, in multiple genres, across content areas. They must insist on taking the time necessary to create a safe environment for social interaction before, during, and after writing, even when this means taking more than a day or a week to finish a piece of writing. Research is asking teachers to abandon templates and teach students how to regulate their own writing processes. Last, teachers of writing must be prepared and skilled in teaching, assessing, and guiding students toward meeting the goals set forth in the CCSS for writing.

In order to accomplish these goals, teachers will need to engage in meaningful professional development in writing instruction, which is experienced over the course of their careers. The next section will examine trends in teacher professional development and explore professional development models that hold promise for developing teachers' understandings about writing and their instructional practices.

Promising Teacher Professional Development Models

Conceptions of Teacher Professional Development

It is no longer sufficient for K-12 students to be armed with a body of core knowledge. It has become necessary that all students, not just a select few, be able to formulate solutions to problems, make, and test hypothesis, and to create, invent, and be innovative. Students need to be connected globally, able to learn from one another, and work cooperatively toward common goals and solutions (Blue Ribbon Panel on Clinical Preparation and Partnerships for Improved Student Learning, 2010). “Teaching by telling” will have to be replaced with “teaching for understanding” (Hawley & Valli, 1999, p. 132). If this is what the 21st century expects students to learn, then why should we have different expectations for their teachers?

Historically, teachers have been considered dispensers, not producers of knowledge. This view of teachers has produced a legacy of transmissive, ineffective professional development experiences. “A good deal of money has been spent on sessions and workshops that are often intellectually superficial, disconnected from deep issues of curriculum and learning, fragmented, and noncumulative (Ball & Cohen, 1999, p. 4).

Current reform policies are asking for a new type of student learning, one that focuses on conceptual understandings (Elmore, 1992). This will certainly require a new type of teacher learning, one that parallels what we are asking of students (Little, 2001; Thompson & Zeuli, 1999; Elmore, 1992). This learning cannot be accomplished in one day workshops, drive by lectures, or by tinkering with practice (Huberman, 1995; Tyack & Cuban, 1995; Ball & Cohen, 1999). This type of learning is more than the addition of a

few new skills to a teacher's existing repertoire; instead it shifts the focus from acquiring skills to constructing knowledge (Little, 2001; Hawley & Valli, 1999; Thompson & Zeuli, 1999). This will require transformative learning that challenges current practices and beliefs, resulting in lasting changes in dispositions and practice. Aligning professional development (PD) content with new goals and standards provides a good starting point, but if the PD relies on a transmission model to transfer information from expert to teacher, it will not be enough to change practice (Thompson & Zeuli, 1999).

The Role of Professional Development

Traditionally, the role of teacher professional development has been to further the agenda of school reform efforts (Little, 2001). Unfortunately, this can result in a top-down training approach that has little regard for the long term professional growth and development of teachers. Reformers must quickly train teachers to perform tasks in ways that comply with the reformer's agenda and hopefully result in student progress. But Fenstermacher (1994) argues that in order for teacher professional development to affect change in practices, teachers must develop a theoretical understanding of the knowledge and skills to be learned. The professional development must engage teacher's beliefs, experiences, and habits. To add more disagreement Fenstermacher (1978) challenges the practice of indoctrinating teachers to behave in prescribed ways and instead he advocates for teacher PD that causes teachers to think critically and reason soundly about their teaching.

When examining the role professional development plays in meeting new standards, researchers have found that meeting ambitious goals, like are found in the CCSS, requires adequate opportunities for teachers to learn, experiment, consult and

evaluate over time, (Little, 2001; Ball & Cohen, 1999). Little (2001) uncovered that during reform efforts, change in student learning opportunities ran parallel to teacher learning opportunities. That is to say, the most impoverished learning environments for students persisted when teacher professional development was marginal. Research clearly demonstrates the role of teacher education should not be to train teachers, but to engage them in meaningful inquiry into their own practice, over time. This will require rethinking professional development that promises to bring teachers up to speed in quick fashion with new reforms like the CCSS.

A new conception of professional development will be needed that engages networks of teachers in the use of collective inquiry to identify areas of practice not congruent with content knowledge and content-specific pedagogies. These networks can then adopt, reflect upon, and refine new practices that support both student and teacher learning (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 2001; Thompson & Zeuli, 1999; Ball & Cohen, 1999; DuFour & Eaker, 1998; Troia et al., 2010).

This conception of teacher development allows teacher expertise to develop with others, over time, across topics, and situated within the context of practice (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 2001; Ball & Cohen, 1999; McLaughlin & Talbert, 1993). Research in the content area of writing instruction supports the use of these new conceptions of teacher professional development and provides links between their use and improved teacher practice and student performance (Lieberman & Pointer Mace, 2009; Lieberman & Miller, 2008; Correnti, 2007; Liberman, 2000)

Effective Practices in Teacher Professional Development

The National Staff Development Council (2007) lists several effective strategies for professional development: coaching, action research, content-specific workshops, examining student work, lesson study, mentoring, observing classrooms, study groups, technology, and walk-throughs. The Eisenhower Model of Professional Development (Garet, Porter, Desimone, & Birman, 2001; Quick, Holtzman, & Chaney, 2009) organizes this list of strategies into three core features: (1) focus on content knowledge, (2) active learning, and (3) coherence. A careful study of content knowledge helps teachers understand the ways of thinking and habits of mind associated with particular fields of study (Ball & Cohen, 1999).

Focus on Content Knowledge

Student achievement improves when teachers develop deep content knowledge of the subjects they teach, as well as the pedagogy specific to the content (Hill, 2007; Carpenter, Fennema, Peterson, Chiang, & Loef, 1989; Shulman L. , 1987; Sykes, 1999). This finding favors the development of content knowledge through intensive study of the subject matter rather than one-shot workshops that teach a few new classroom activities. This has been corroborated by researchers studying a variety of content areas (Correnti, 2007; Garet et al., 2001; Sykes, 1999; Shulman L. , 1987). The National Staff Development Council (2011) advocates for teachers to participate in staff development that moves beyond comprehension of the surface features and develop a more complete understanding. Teachers need to move beyond book study and have experiences that place them back in the role of the learner. “Learning designs that engage adult learners in applying the processes they are expected to use facilitate the learning of those behaviors

by making them more explicit” (National Staff Development Council, 2011). This allows teachers to experience firsthand the pedagogical approaches they will be using with their own students. These experiences may be further enhanced by attending follow-up workshops, participating in study groups, co-teaching, observing lessons, or watching videotapes of high performing classrooms.

“Because it is natural that teachers will teach as they themselves are taught, it is imperative that the instructional methods used with educators be congruent to the greatest extent possible with those they are expected to use in their classroom” (National Staff Development Council, 2007). Additionally, when the acquisition of deep content knowledge is used in concert with modeling and mentoring, it provides teachers with the self-efficacy and confidence to make changes in their practice. “Teacher efficacy is enhanced and fidelity improved when teachers have the opportunity to see new strategies modeled, practice them, engage in peer coaching, and use new teaching and learning strategies regularly and appropriately” (Hawley & Valli, 1999, p. 130). When professional development in specific content instructional practices is combined with active learning opportunities, it not only increases the use of those practices but increases student’s intellectual engagement with the content (Desimone et al., 2002)

Active Learning

Michael Fullen called out for a change in transmissive, inactive learning when he said, “Nothing has promised so much and has been so frustratingly wasteful as the thousands of workshops and conferences that led to no significant change in practice” (Fullan, 1991). Active learning provides learners the opportunity to link prior knowledge

to new knowledge. Strategies are rooted in the assumption that knowledge is constructed and co-constructed by learners through their interactions (Bruner, 1960; Vygotsky, 1978).

Active strategies such as role playing, think pair share, cooperative learning, case study analysis, debate, and reacting to video scenarios involve participants in their own learning, require higher level thinking, and encourage social interaction (Bonwell & Eision, 1991). Active professional development should be situated in everyday practice by engaging teachers in action research, reflection and discussion of their own lessons, student work, planning, curriculum, and assessment (Garet et al., 2001; Lieberman & Miller, 2008; Quick et al., 2009). Through activities like reacting to video scenarios, group case study analysis, and role playing, learners are able to clarify perspectives and try out the viability of new strategies in a safe environment (Grossman, 2005). Trying things out can clear up misconceptions and remove barriers to adopting new practices (Bransford, Brown, & Cocking, 2000).

Ball and Cohen (1999) stress the importance of teachers being immersed in inquiries that are powerful enough to overcome their apprenticeship of observation (Lortie, 1975) and the grammar of their own schooling (Tyack & Cuban, 1995). These activities would have to cause teachers to question the techniques they experienced as students and be contradictory to the apprentice of their own current practices. For change in practice to take place, some feel “Teacher education will have to be an agent of counter socialization” (Ball & Cohen, 1999, p. 6). Teachers will have to develop an inquiry stance questioning the authority of their own practice. Cochran-Smith and Lytle (2001) purpose we change the purpose of professional development. Professional

development should no longer be viewed as a way to improve teachers' skills but its main goal should be to;

Develop an inquiry stance on teaching that is critical and transformative, a stance linked not only to high standards for the learning of all students but also to social change and social justice and to the individual and collective professional growth of teachers. (p. 46)

Coherence

While these strategies hold promise for improving the practice of teachers, without the development of a strategic professional development plan that aligns teacher growth and development with desired student performance outcomes, the goals of school reform will not be realized. Learner-centered strategies are essential to effective learning experiences, but a larger goal must be considered. Many districts have a menu of development opportunities available for teachers to choose from. One may desire to learn new art techniques and another may need to beef up their classroom management. But according to Sparks and Loucks-Horsley (1990), "This approach might bring personal satisfaction and even professional growth; but it will do little to foster school improvement and student achievement if it is disconnected from teachers daily practice and a coherent school improvement plan" (p. 235). This type of purposeful professional development plan requires strong leadership and a school-wide commitment to building capacity toward a shared vision.

Fortunately, there is a general consensus in current research guiding school leadership in creating professional development plans that do result in teacher growth and improved student performance. The promise for writing instruction lies in examining the

large gaps between what students will need to do to meet expectations set forth in the Common Core State Standards for writing, and existing teacher practices and school curriculums. Hawley and Valli (1999) call for providing collaborative opportunities for teachers to learn that are linked to solving authentic problems that are defined by the gaps between goals for student achievement and actual student performance.

Guiding and supporting teachers toward filling these gaps and meeting goals set forth by the CCSS will require effective PD models. Professional development will need to engage teachers in active learning that is in alignment with these standards and focuses on developing subject matter knowledge.

Filling the Gap: Professional Development for Common Core State Standards (CCSS)

With the implementation of the CCSS, teachers will clearly need to collaborate and build capacity over time. However, to get teachers started, they will need some specific development in: (1) the content and spiraling expectations of the CCSS writing standards; (2) developing a new tool kit of methods for teaching and assessing writing; (3) understanding the pedagogies of specific content area writing; (4) the use of a workshop model; and (4) selecting an approach to teaching the writing process that is grounded in current research. Any professional development effort must include a school-wide assessment of a staff's current understandings of the CCSS and their readiness to meet these expectations. Existing models of professional development will need to update their content to address these new standards.

Unfortunately, even existing models of PD in writing that sustain development over time and engage teachers in professional learning communities have limitations. The National Writing Project (NWP) and university course offerings have shortcomings when

it comes to delivering PD to the enormous numbers of teachers who need development in order to meet the requirements laid out in the CCSS. What follows is a review of the most promising practices in writing professional development for helping teachers develop both the *conceptual* and *practical tools* (Grossman et al., 2000) needed to meet these new expectations in writing. This is accompanied by an examination of successful models currently being implemented.

Effective Practices for Developing Teachers of Writing

According to Troia et al. (2010), “What is needed is a discipline-wide commitment to combining best practices for teaching writing with an exemplary professional development delivery model” (p. 6). Effective professional development in writing places teachers in the role of a writer, learner, and teacher (Martin & Dismuke, 2011) in order to intentionally bridge the divide that exists between professional learning and classroom practice (Carpenter et al., 1989; Little, 2002). Three key elements for developing teachers of writing are: experiential learning, sustained learning over time, and building knowledge of student writing development. Next, existing models that have demonstrated success will be explored for strengths and deficiencies.

Experiential Learning

To build active understandings about writing, it is recommended that for teachers to explicitly teach all aspects of the writing processes, they should experience the writing process by writing themselves (Troia et al., 2010; National Writing Project, 2006). Teachers need time for meta-cognitive reflection about how they feel when writing, and be encouraged to consider how their own students might respond in similar circumstances. “The hallmark of high-quality professional development is that there is a component in which teachers engage in writing in ways that parallel their student’s engagement” (Troia et al., 2010, p. 183). But teachers also need opportunities to experience teaching writing through the roll of a teacher.

This means creating links between professional development experiences and teacher practice by asking teachers to bring student work samples, participate in field experiences, and create student profiles. By accessing *The Gallery of Learning* website (Carnegie Academy for the scholarship of teaching and learning, 2011) teachers can enter a classroom writing workshop and watch lessons with real students to continue to develop even after they leave formalized workshops or courses. Because teacher development occurs over time, coaches should enter teacher’s classrooms to help them adjust the practices learned in class to their own context.

Learning Over Time

Teachers need to sustain the work of developing as writing teachers over time, with other teachers. Learning to teach writing is as complex as learning to write. Even teachers with extensive training in writing instruction push writing instruction aside, reporting, “It is HARD to teach” (Fry & Griffin, 2010). There is no script or formulaic

program for teachers of the writing process to follow. There must be scaffolding from instructional coach to teacher through a process of modeling the art of writing instruction. While this kind of support is available for reading instruction, it is rare for writing instruction. “Learning how to explain, model, and scaffold, writing strategies takes a great deal of time and effort” (Pressley et al., 2007). This kind teacher professional development will require ongoing school-wide support.

Building Knowledge of Writing Development and Motivation

It will not be enough to aide teachers in developing knowledge of the writing processes, traits, and sound assessment practices. They will also need knowledge of how students learn and develop writing skills and dispositions to write. Teachers will need effective tools for teaching, modeling, and motivating students (Pressley et al., 2007). They will need to develop confidence in their abilities to teach writing, and their ability to produce writing (Keifer et. al., 1996; Grossman et.al., 2000).

Bruning and Horn’s (2000) study on motivation linked teacher attitudes about writing with student motivation: “The beginning point for building student writing motivation is teacher beliefs about writing” (p. 30). They found if teachers held a view of writing that was socially isolating and narrowly focused then it was unlikely they would be able to create an environment that was motivating for their students. Therefore, teacher development programs must place teachers in the role of the writer and learner so they can reform their conceptions of being a writer and discover what factors motivate them to write.

Professional development experiences should seek to place learners in experiences that help them see writing as a critical tool for intellectual development and

serve a wide range of purposes such as, cognitive stimulation, self expression, or social affiliation. It is only through a change in dispositions that teachers of writing will seek to create similar learning conditions for their own students (Bruning & Horn, 2000).

Current Models of Writing Professional Development

While many professional development opportunities exist for developing teachers of writing, examples of sustained professional development that meet the criteria listed in this study are limited. While workshops abound that promise a quick fix, they are generally designed to train teachers in a particular program or methodology in 30 hours or less. Models that engaged teachers in the co construction of knowledge and practice over time are rare.

Currently, teacher networks like The National Writing Project and graduate-level university courses are providing teachers with writing professional development that is more intensive.

The National Writing Project (NWP)

The National Writing Project provides the best example of a successful teacher network that operates outside individual buildings, providing teachers with opportunities to collectively develop knowledge of practice in one content area (National Writing Project., 1999). The NWP teacher's network seeks to improve student writing by improving the teaching of writing (National Writing Project, 2006).

The NWP network places teachers in the center of their own development and takes a holistic view of teaching and learning. Started in 1973 at the University of California Berkley, the NWP now operates in all fifty states and US territories and serves

to support the development of more than one hundred thousand teachers annually. This approach rejects teaching as a set of techniques and instead insists upon a continuous cycle of learning, practice, and evaluation. It promises no templates or readymade solutions, but instead invites teachers to bring their own disequilibrium about teaching writing and being a writer to the group and to pursue solutions to their own dilemma (Lieberman & Wood, 2001). “The NWP starts with the assumption that teachers bring an abundance of craft knowledge to their work, and that this knowledge is the building block for increased learning through collaboration” (Lieberman & Miller, 2008, p. 22). This combination of insider and outside knowledge opens for the door for inquiries into teaching and learning that produces real “knowledge of practice” (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 2001). The NWP seeks to develop teacher leaders who will become resources and advocates in their schools and communities.

The NWP begins with participation in the project’s summer institute. Here teachers, in the safety of a community of peers, are immersed in the act of writing. Writing activities, processes, and genres are modeled and then experienced from the perspective of the learners. There are three core activities: author’s chair, small writing groups, and teaching demonstrations. Participants write in a variety of genres and then share their writing in the “author’s chair.” This provides a forum for the author and audience to voice their experiences, ideas, and fine tune the art of giving feedback. In small groups, teachers meet several times a week to share, receive feedback, and revise their work. Sometimes a writing coach may participate (Lieberman & Wood, 2001). These activities not only put teachers in the roles of their students, but place them in the

role of writers. This time allows teachers to develop their talent as writers boosting their confidence in their own abilities and finding their own voice.

Teachers develop new practices through participation in teaching demonstrations. They “go public” with their practice by teaching a model lesson to a group of their peers. This provides opportunities for group reflection and growth. This activity places teachers back in the role of the teacher where they have an opportunity to integrate their experiences as learners and writers into their teaching. Some teachers go on to share lessons they have created for more collaborative inquiry. In addition to core activities, teachers also participate in mini-lessons and quick writes. Teacher consultants offer workshops and teachers are introduced to resources for ongoing development over time.

The NWP weaves together best practices in writing professional development but it does have draw backs as a district-wide solution. Bringing it to scale building wide would be an enormous undertaking. Many teachers cannot leave their families to attend the summer institutes and cannot afford the additional time commitment during the school year on top of other professional responsibilities in their building. However, any professional development program in writing instruction should look first to this model of success.

University Coursework as Professional Development in Writing

Required coursework in writing methods for degree completion in Elementary Education are rare (National Council for Teachers of English; International Reading Association, 1996). Even though a specific writing course is not required for graduation, more universities are offering specific coursework in writing instruction (The National Writing Project, 2006). Some states require prospective teachers to demonstrate

knowledge of writing processes and the ability to teach writing across the genres. “But in terms of coursework and competency requirements, the disparity between those for reading and those for writing is striking” (National Writing Project, 2006, p. 60).

Many universities offer practicing teachers week-long summer writing institutes or host local National Writing Projects through their campuses. But currently, there is little research that documents the quality or content of semester-long university graduate coursework on writing. This coursework is often embedded in literacy coursework, which focus on reading. In response to this lack of data, Teacher Education researchers from the Literacy Research Association (LRA) have launched a study that will examine the quality and quantity of writing methods curriculum being offered at universities across the nation. Until those findings are available we are left to guess about the content and pedagogy of these courses. Unfortunately, research done by Norman and Spencer (2005) would suggest teachers seeking professional development in writing come with a lack of preparation in their preservice experience.

Like graduate courses, preservice writing instruction is also embedded within literacy coursework that focuses on reading instruction. This limits the amount of exposure preservice teachers have to writing research (Norman & Spencer, 2005). Many literacy courses dedicate a week or two on writing at best. When universities do not place importance on writing instruction, it sends a message to schools, states, and curriculum developers that the “experts” do not find writing instruction important enough to include in a comprehensive way in their programs or requirements.

In addition, many preservice teachers have limited exposure to the teaching of writing in their internships (Fry & Griffin, 2010). Teacher professional development

experiences will have to be powerful enough to overcome this apprenticeship of disregard for the importance of writing instruction in preservice teacher's experiences.

Conclusion

Correnti's (2007) study on writing professional development, has linked intensive professional development in the writing process with gains in student achievement and improved instruction. This study demonstrates that professional development does hold promise as a solution for the poor writing performance of American students.

Professional development that focused on writing processes had a greater influence on teacher practice than any other classroom characteristic, including teacher experience, prior literacy coursework, and whether they had a Master's degree (Correnti, 2007).

When teachers participated in writing professional development that was intensive and sustained over time over time, they were more likely to have students practice, edit, and make substantive revisions to their writing, than teachers without PD. In addition, they were more likely to provide direct writing instruction and do genre studies. Teachers receiving the PD were more likely to teach writing on a daily basis and more likely to enrich their instruction. Students whose teachers participated in the PD had a 12% increase in the amount of text they wrote. This study provides convincing evidence of the promise professional development holds for improving teacher practice and student learning. However, this study was limited by its large-scale, surface level perspective on practice.

Before large-scale professional development efforts are constructed and implemented, there is a need to look more closely at what informs and influences teacher's writing practice across their careers. This study intends to look under the

surface of teacher practice at teacher's dispositions and preparation to teach writing and then examine the realities of that preparation on the complexities of daily practice and students opportunities to learn.

The review of literature reveals the teaching of writing is multi-faceted and the understandings and skills required to teach it well should depend on rigorous teacher education and professional development over time. If this is true, then there should be marked difference in dispositions and practice between teachers who have been afforded intensive professional development in writing and those who have not. This study seeks to examine those differences, if any exists, to better understand gaps in teachers' knowledge, skills, and dispositions in order to construct professional development for teachers, which has the potential to influence daily practice.

The next chapter will lay out this study's methodology, main research questions, context, and design.

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

The intent of this mixed-methods study is to examine the influences of intensive professional development, delivered through a university course devoted exclusively to writing on teacher's dispositions and practices by integrating both qualitative and quantitative data sources.

Research Questions

To better understand the influences of Intensive professional development on teacher practice, I undertook a mixed-methods investigation of teacher's enacted writing knowledge, skills, and dispositions in the classroom. Teacher practice is an incredibly complex task (Lampert, 2001; Jackson, 1990) and the study of its intricacies calls for multi-dimensional methods. A single data source would be insufficient to attribute what the teacher knows or does to the influence of professional development (Darling-Hammond, 2006). Therefore, multiple data sources, both qualitative and quantitative, were collected. Participants included six teachers, grades 1-6, who had taken a writing methods course and six teachers who had not. Guiding questions for this inquiry into teacher writing practice were as follows:

1. What common understandings of writing, writing instruction, and contexts for teaching writing exist between practicing teachers, grades 1-6, who have taken a university graduate course devoted exclusively to writing? How do these

perceptions and viewpoints differ between teachers who have taken the course and those who have not?

2. What common features of classroom literacy practices and student learning opportunities exist between teachers, grades 1-6, who have taken a course? How do these commonalities in practice compare to the practice of teachers who have not taken a course?
3. How do these similarities in understandings and practice link to their university course in writing?

In order to fully address the complex nature of these questions, from multiple perspectives, a mixed-research design was necessary.

Mixed Research: The Third Research Community

While researchers have included both qualitative and quantitative data in the same study for years, mixed-methods research has now emerged as its own distinct research methodology (Creswell & Plano, 2007). It is being called by some, the “third research community” and is now an alternative to the dichotomy of qualitative and quantitative research (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009). The framework of this study design has been informed by the works of Collins, Onwuegbuzie, and Sutton (2006), as well as other current mixed-methods researchers (Creswell, 2008; Greene, Caracelli, & Graham, 1989; Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004; Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2006). Because this study focuses on literacy research, I have also drawn on the work of Onwuegbuzie and Mallette (2011) for the specific use of mixed-methods in studies of literacy. Like qualitative and quantitative research traditions, mixed-method studies have their own vocabulary and procedures for designing, conducting, and presenting research.

Definition and Typology

A current definition of mixed-methods research is provided by Johnson, Onwuegbuzie, and Turner (2005):

Mixed research is formally defined as the class of research where the researcher mixes or combines qualitative and quantitative research techniques, methods, approaches, concepts, or language in a single study or set of related studies. This type of research should be used when the contingencies suggest that it is likely to provide superior answers to a research question or set of research questions.

(p.19)

This study combined two mixed-method designs used in educational research: a *Triangulation* design, which uses findings from one method to corroborate findings generated from another, and, a *Complementary* design, where findings from one method are enhanced or elaborated through findings from another method (Greene, Caracelli, & Graham, 1989). Mixed-method designs are also concerned with the timing of each event in the research. This study contained research events which happened *concurrently*, and others that were *sequential*. One must also determine the dominant feature of each piece of the design, particularly in respect to data collection. Each source has been labeled, either dominant, indicated by (QUAL) or (QUAN), or if given lesser weight, lowercase letters have been used (qual) and (quan). If the weighting is the same, then it has been given *equal status*. Another typology used in this design is the term *mixed-models*, which refers to mixing both qualitative and quantitative approaches *within* or *across* the stages of the research process. This study was conducted in three stages: *The Formulation*

Stage, The Planning Stage, and the Implementation Stage (Collins, Onwuegbuzie, & Sutton, 2006).

Theoretical Foundations for the Mixed-Methods

This study's mixed-method approach takes as its theoretical perspective a pragmatic view. Johnson and Onwuegbuzie (2004) explain that this position lends itself to resolving the dualism of conducting qualitative and quantitative research by taking a balanced approach. They go on to say:

Philosophically, mixed research makes use of the pragmatic method and system of philosophy. Its logic of inquiry includes the use of deduction (testing theories and hypothesis), induction (or discovery of patterns), and abduction (uncovering and relying on the best set of explanations for understanding one's results. (p.17)

A pragmatic position is problem centered and considers the consequences of any actions. It is open to multiple perspectives allowing researchers to blend perspectives (Creswell, 2008). This makes it a good fit for combining deductive, quantitative analysis methods seeking to make casual comparative inferences with that of a more inductive qualitative analysis method such as grounded theory. In this study, grounded theory analysis generates theory from data that contains both inductive and deductive thinking (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). Pragmatism makes it possible to join seemingly different perspectives by employing them cooperatively toward the same goals.

Research Design

Overview of Methodology

In order to answer the questions posed in this inquiry, I chose an equal status, triangulation design because it does not favor either a qualitative nor quantitative paradigm. This model uses a mix of methods to corroborate findings by using the strengths of each method to offset the weaknesses in the others (Creswell, 2003; Johnson & Turner, 2003). The mix of methods includes descriptive and comparative case study and causal-comparative research.

The rationale for the use of this mixed-methods approach is to increase the validity of constructs and results by counteracting or maximizing the heterogeneity of irrelevant sources of variance attributable especially to inherent method bias (Greene et al., 1989). This is matched with the studies stated purpose to seek triangulation of data within a small sample size.

This inquiry is embedded within a larger longitudinal study of teacher writing practice (Martin & Dismuke, 2011). This five-year study included data from teachers who experienced a university writing methods course at both a graduate and undergraduate level. Participants from this larger study were invited to join me in taking a closer look at teacher's understandings and practice.

Participants

Twelve, K-8 teachers in five different school districts, within the same northwestern state, volunteered to participate in this study. All participants had their Master's degree, a state Literacy Endorsement, or equivalent units. Six of the teachers

participated in a university, master's level writing methods course. This course engaged teachers in learning opportunities that modeled research-supported writing instruction and facilitated the construction of content knowledge and dispositions pertaining to writing. All teachers who took the course did so from the same university professor. The other six had not experienced significant professional development in writing and acted as a control group. All teachers in the study were labeled as highly qualified by their districts.

Identical data sets were collected from all twelve participants. *Identical* is a mixed- method typology, which means all participants were involved in both the qualitative and quantitative parts of the study at the same time. Also, the twelve teachers who volunteered were a subset of the larger sample members that participated in the earlier phases of the research (Onwuegbuzie & Collins, 2007).

Selection of Participants

I recruited participants out of a pool of teachers who had volunteered to take an on-line questionnaire as part of the larger study mentioned earlier. Participants were identified for the survey from past course rosters, Literacy Department graduation records, and other university records. Once identified, participants were located using social media, school district staff searches, and existing university and alumni association records. Participants were contacted through e-mail or phone using a predetermined script that asked them if they would participate in the electronic questionnaire.

A few participants were recruited who were participating in a week-long intensive math professional development over the summer. I chose this site for recruitment because

of these teachers' engagement in intensive professional development. This professional development course was being conducted through the same university. The same recruitment script was used and a list was made available for teachers who may be interested in participation. They were then contacted by e-mail using the same procedures above.

From those who returned the survey, participants were selected for invitation to the interview phase who would improve generalizability and provide diversity from multiple sites with different contexts (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007). Survey responses were not read prior to selection except to determine sample criteria. Criteria for invitation included:

- permission given on the survey to be contacted for a follow up interview
- Master's degree, substantial university level post graduate units or Literacy Endorsement
- representation across and within school districts and grade levels K-8
- years of experience
- designated as highly qualified by their districts
- diversity of teacher preparation to teach writing

Thirty-one teachers participated in the interviews. After the interviews, it became clear that there was a group of six teachers who had experienced significant professional development in writing from another source. They were placed in their own group and their data was removed from this study so as not to confound the comparisons between our teachers who had the PD and those who did not. As well, two kindergarten teachers

and one middle school teacher were excluded due their differences in schedules and student writing expectations. Teachers who lived more than three hours by car from the researcher were also excluded.

Seven teachers who had taken the graduate university course exclusively devoted to writing and ten teachers who had a master's degree or significant graduate coursework but did not take the writing course were invited to participate in the classroom observations and daily logs: 13 consented. After matching the two groups for years of experience, grade level, school type, district size, socio economic factors, and population of English language learners, I decided that one teacher would be excluded due to lack of grade-level match. Table 3.1 documents the selection of participants.

Table 3.1 Participant Selection

Table 3.1 Participant Selection	Teachers with PD (PD Teachers)	Teachers with No PD (NPD Teachers)
Number of Questionnaires sent	n= 48	n= 50
Number of Questionnaires completed <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Selection Criteria was applied • Invitations were made 	n= 26	n= 22
Number of Interviews <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Removed those with confounding PD • Removed grade level outliers • Removed teachers in specialist positions • Removed teachers out of mileage range 	n= 14 n=2 n=3 n=2	n= 17 n=6 n=1
Number Invited to Phase 3	n= 7	n= 10
Phase Three Participants <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Removed 1 teacher who had no grade level match. 	n= 6	n= 6 n=1

Participants Characteristics

Participants were placed in two groups: (1) PD teachers, those with 50 hours of intensive professional development, sustained over 16 weeks during a university writing methods course, and (2) teachers with little to no PD, those with less than 12 hours of professional development or training. For ease of identification throughout the study, these groups will be labeled: (1) PD teachers and (2) NPD teachers.

A data display of participant characteristics was made to permit the viewing of participant characteristics important in this study (Miles & Huberman, 1994). This was done to better understand the participants themselves as teachers, as well to understand variables that existed between and within groups that may confound and interact with my findings. These data displays were comprised of information collected from the qualitative interview data and quantitative data available on state and district websites. Table 3.2 and 3.3 compare and contrast participant characteristics for years experience, grade level, education, and any additional professional development outside the writing methods course.

Table 3.2 PD Teachers, those with over 50 hours of Professional Development in Writing.

Pseudonym	Grade Level	Years exp	Degree	District Writing PD	District	NCLB Status	% of Students in Poverty	% of Limited English (LEP)
*Amy	1	4	MA	0-1 days	District 3		41% Title 1	2%
*Dena	1	14	MA	0-1 days	District 1		33.3%	2.4%
*Olivia	2	6	MA RE	25 hrs	District 5		73 % Title 1	13%
Sharon	4	10	MA	2 days	District 4		74 % Title 1	24%
Graham	4	6	MA	2 days	District 2	SIP	34%	4%
Kayla	5	5	MA	0-1 days	District 1	SIP	80% Title 1	20%
*	Primary Grades			Title 1- Schools with over 35% Free and Reduced Lunch				
	Upper Elementary			SIP- Designated for School Improvement				
	*District Writing PD is in			addition to the over 50 hours in the university course				

Table 3.3 NPD Teachers, those with less than 12 hours of Professional Development in writing.

Pseudonym	Grade Level	Years exp	Degree	District Writing PD	District	NCLB Status	% of Students in Poverty	% of Limited English (LEP)
*Amber	1	27	MA (IP)	Not current	District 1	Alert	36% Title 1	0.5%
*Teresa	1	19	MA	1 day	District 1		54% Title 1	2.8%
*Linda	2	20	Post Grad. RE	1-2 days	District 1		21%	1.9%
Tessa	3	25	MA	0-1 day	District 1		7%	0%
Melissa	4	10	MA	0-1 day	District 1		7%	0%
Alyssa	5	5	MA	0-1 day	District 2	SIP	61% Title 1	4%
*	Primary Grades			Title 1- Schools with over 35% Free and Reduced Lunch				
	Upper Elementary			SIP/Alert –Designated for school Improvement/ Or on Alert				
	*District Writing PD is			Defined as limited training or inservice workshops				

While all participants had similar levels of education and district PD, it was noticed that NPD teachers had some advantages that could lead to inconsistencies. NPD teachers had an average of 18 years of teaching experience in the two largest districts. In contrast, the PD teachers averaged only eight years of teaching experience and represented the diversity of all five districts. Next, it was noticed that the PD teachers had students with higher incidents of poverty, with an average free and reduced lunch rate of 56% compare to only 31% for NPD teachers. This difference between groups matters because despite participation in Title One programs, which offer professional development, extra staff, and literacy blocks, the writing performance of our nation's poorest children is still below that of non-Title schools (Persky, Daane, & Jin, 2003). Last, PD teachers had a higher level of Limited English proficient students with an average of 11% compared to .5%.

These differences between teacher characteristics and their settings are noted and I recognize that the group of teachers with the professional development could potentially face greater hurdles when teaching writing due to less teaching experience and students who face greater incidences of socio-economic challenge and emerging language skills.

The Contexts for the Study

School Districts

It was important to recognize that there were differences in the contexts for teaching that existed between participants in their school districts. These differences had the potential to influence teachers' instruction. The teachers worked in five different school districts in a northwestern state. These districts and communities of which they were apart were categorized as suburban, urban, or rural. District sizes ranged from 34,000 students to just over 1,000. The schools contexts of participants within District 1 ranged from an urban city center school, which services refugee children, to a fairly affluent suburban school. District 2 was set in a rapidly growing, suburban district located on the edge of the state's capital. District 3 was the smallest district, located in a small mountain resort town and surrounding ranch lands. Districts 4 through 7 were rural, agricultural communities with suburban sprawl approaching. Although the individual school sites of participants from districts 4 and 5 were in newly constructed building, students and their families face a poverty rate of nearly 75% and high levels of English Language Learners: 24% of students in the school site in District 4 were not proficient in the English language.

Resources, teacher salaries, and working conditions varied from district to district. The larger districts had more funding, higher salaries for teachers, and more resources and support available. For instance, teachers in District 1 are not expected to work recess, lunch, or bus duty. Many of the other districts require teachers to use what could be preparation time to supervise students. Each district presented unique obstacles to instruction such as a large refugee population in District 1, exploding student growth in District 2, and high levels of poverty in Districts 3-5. Districts 1 and 2 had populations between schools sites that were vastly different and participants were sought out within those districts that corresponded to the diversity of student populations. Table 3.4 compares some of these district characteristics.

Table 3.4 District Profiles 2011-2012

District	Type	Student Population	Students living in Poverty	% of ELL Students
District 1	Urban/suburban	25,228	44.65%	8%
District 2	Suburban	34,125	31.77%	4%
District 3	Rural/mountains	1,080	43.89%	2%
District 4	Rural	15,200	66.01%	12%
District 5	Rural	7,300	67.92	13%
District 6	Rural	6,298	78.35	14%
District 7	Rural	4,863	44.86%	3%

Note. Source: State Department of Education, Nutrition Programs, 2011-12 Eligibility Reports (2012).

Source: State Department of Education, spring 2010, Limited English Proficient student count (2010).

The Writing Methods Course

Participants who had the intensive professional development all took the same university course sometime over the preceding years. This course focused exclusively on writing instruction and was taught by the same instructor, with experience and research in writing. This class was designed to accommodate working teachers in pursuit of a

Master's degree and or endorsement in literacy by holding classes in three, weekend sessions across a semester.

The course was modeled partly after the National Writing Project (2006) and situated teachers in the role of the writer, learner, and teacher through active participation in book clubs, collaborative learning activities, writing across genres, and construction of student profiles. In the role of writer, students were immersed in their own writing processes and provided an opportunity to reconstruct their own self-images as writers. In the role of learner, students experienced a process approach to writing, genre instruction, cognitive writing processes, differentiated instruction, and rubric assessment (Martin & Dismuke, 2012). This active approach to learning developed deeper understandings about writing and writing instruction, but the complexities of these new ideas had to be grounded in practice.

This co-construction of knowledge was intentionally bridged to practice by placing students back in the role of teacher. They begin to weave together new understandings and dispositions into lesson designs that they implemented in elementary classrooms. They returned to the classroom community to share, reflect upon, and problematize their new practices.

In order to gain clearer understandings of my participants experiences and better understand my content area. I took the course myself for credit. I took further steps to understand the context of the course by co-teaching it with the original instructor. I believe this gives me an emic perspective that affords me a more comprehensive understanding of my participants' descriptions and responses.

Data Collection

The design of this study included a mix of four data sources: (1) semi-structured interviews; (2) daily logs; (3) classroom observational notes; and (5) The Writing Observational Framework. When sources were combined, they painted a balanced yet complex picture of the teachers' dispositions, understandings, and skills regarding writing and writing instruction. Additionally, in order to explore links between teachers' understandings and practice and the professional development, two additional data sources were collected. First, I conducted observations of the professional development course in progress and second, I surveyed course documents. Figure 3.1 shows the sequential progression of the study design beginning with individual, semi-structured interviews and then moving to a concurrent, three-pronged comparative case study using teacher daily logs, structured observations, follow-up interviews, and the addition of PD course observations.

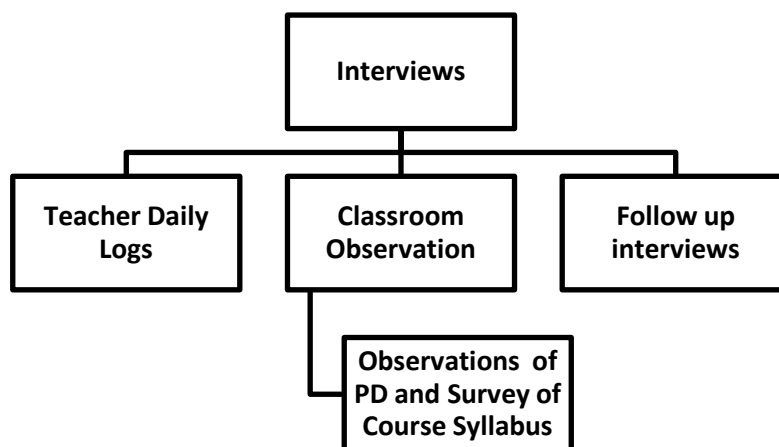


Figure 3.1 Data Sources

Sequence

First, thirty-one teachers who had previously participated in an electronic questionnaire regarding writing practice agreed to participate in semi-structured interviews. This phase of the research design was qualitative. Invitations to continue to the next phase of the study were presented to participants upon completion of the interviews.

In the next phase of the study, twelve practicing teachers, six who participated in the graduate-level writing course and six who did not, volunteered to participate in structured observations of their language arts instruction, follow-up interviews, and to fill out daily logs of their language arts instruction during four data collection periods across the 2011-2012 school year. This data collection occurred concurrently and each piece of data collected contributed both qualitative and quantitative information from both a fine and coarse-grain perspectives.

Last, to better understand the links between the course and teachers' understandings and practice, I conducted four separate observations during the course of the professional development course and surveyed course documents. Figure 3.2 illustrates the opportunities for triangulation these overlapping sources and perspectives provided.

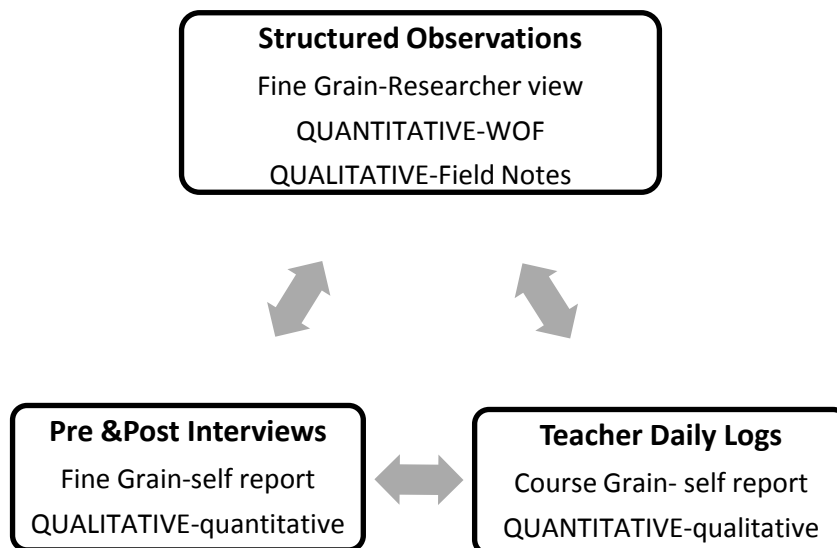


Figure 3.2 Overlapping Data Sources

The inclusion of these multiple perspectives, research paradigms, and examining teacher practice from both an aggregated and individual view demonstrates my complementarity intent (Greene et al., 1989; Rossman & Wilson, 1985) to move beyond the triangulation of data to include overlapping and different facets of this phenomenon. The design rational here is to increase the interpretability and meaningfulness of the results by capitalizing on each method's strengths and counteracting biases (Greene et al., 1989).

Timeline, Frequency, and Quantities

Questionnaires were conducted during the months of August and September 2011 and the semi-structured interviews took place during late September through early October of the same year. Observations, log data collection, and post-interviews, occurred simultaneously as detailed in Table 3.4 for each participant within each data collection window. These windows occurred across the school year to take into account

the variability that occurs in writing instruction regarding (a) time spent developing community and routines; (b) increasing expectations for uninterrupted writing time; (c) length of assignments; (c) and progressive application of previously instructed skills. The last months of school were purposefully eliminated from the observation schedule to avoid end of the year projects and testing preparation, which do not reflect typical classroom writing processes, routines, and instruction.

Weeks of observation were arranged individually with teachers in an effort to accommodate their busy schedules and to group school visits together that were in proximity to each other. Teacher-guided date selection helped to eliminate weeks that impacted instructional time in the school context, such as school concerts, field trips, and state testing windows.

Pre-and post-interviews, observational data, and daily logs were all collected over the 2011-2012 school year from August-April. Initial interviews and classroom observations typically lasted from 30 to 60 minutes, with follow-up interviews lasting 10-15 minutes. Daily logs required teachers to spend 10 minutes a day during each of their four-week windows. Observations of the Professional Development Course in action occurred during the spring semester from January-April 2012 and lasted 75 minutes. Table 3.5 provides a visual of the data collection windows across the 2011-2012 school year.

Table 3.5 Data Collection Time Line and Frequency

Window 1 October -November	Window 2 November-December	Window 3 January- February	Window 4 March-April
Classroom Observation #1 30-60 minutes	Classroom Observation #2 30-60 minutes	Classroom Observation #3 30-60 minutes	Classroom Observation #4 30-60 minutes
Follow up interview 15 minutes directly following the observation	Follow up interview	Follow up interview	Follow up interview
Teacher Daily Logs Week #1 One week periods of data collection which coincided with the observation dates	Teacher Daily Logs Week #2	Teacher Daily Logs Week #3	Teacher Daily Logs Week #4
Observation of PD Course in Progress		Observations 1-2 Collection of Course Documents	Observations 3-4

Data Sources

Initial and Follow-up Interviews

Initial interviews used a response-guided approach in which the researcher started with prepared questions and then spontaneously asked follow-up questions that were meant to either probe deeper or clarify responses. The predetermined questions, which can be found in Appendix A, were developed based on the research questions and a desire to examine more fully individual teacher's understandings and descriptions of how their teacher preparation influenced their dispositions and practice.

All interview data was recorded, except where noted, using a digital voice recorder. Immediately after the interviews, I wrote down or digitally recorded additional notes about the setting and experience. As soon as possible after the interview, I created memos and wrote in my Reflexive Journal. This allowed me to record initial reactions and wonderings, key issues, and recurrent themes while they were fresh in my mind.

Even though initial interviews were conducted using a predetermined set of questions; the questions were open-ended enough to elicit a variety of responses on the same topics. I was able to ask participants to elaborate and or clarify their responses. This sometimes led the interviews in a variety of different directions. Participants were free to express their feelings and dispositions regarding writing, and discussion was stimulated rather than encumbered by the questions.

The follow-up interviews invited participants to clarify and explain what was observed. Additionally, it allowed me to follow-up on hunches (Gibbs & Taylor, 2010; Ryan & Bernard, 2003). These interviews provided participants the opportunity to have their perspectives heard and provided me a chance to member check my observations as I went. I found that allowing the teachers to add their voice to their observations provided both confirming and disconfirming evidence on the spot, while forcing me to check my biases (Miles & Huberman, 1994).

Observations

The classroom observations provided two different data sources. The Writing Observation Framework (Henk, Marinak, Moore, & Mallette, 2004) found in Appendix A.2 yielded quantitative data of the number of effective practices observed, while concurrently descriptive and reflective field notes (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007) recorded a qualitative view of the same event. Teachers' knowledge, skills, and dispositions were documented, analyzed, and compared using a concurrent triangulation approach (Creswell & Plano, 2007)

Observational Field Notes. Observational field notes were used to record teachers' writing practice, as well as the PD instructor's practice, four times during the course of the school year. To improve generalizability and trustworthiness, the observational methodology and structured coding scheme used in this study were modeled after a joint study conducted by Gary Troia and his colleagues (2011). Field note protocols and coding schemes were adapted and can be found in Appendix A.3 and A.4.

The Troia et al. study (2011) examined the practice and beliefs of six elementary writing teachers who had received intensive professional development in writing instruction. The PD curriculum used in this study was congruent with the PD in my study. I was comfortable using the observation methodologies of this study as their purposes aligned with my own.

The structured coding scheme in the Troia et al. study was developed from thirty-nine semi-structured observations using anecdotal field notes. The methods used were consistent with grounded theory and the method of constant comparison (Strauss &

Corbin, 1994). The observer identified and recorded (a) the objective of the lesson and materials; (b) the teacher's explanations, instructions, and comments; (c) specific management tactics; (d) and methods of student engagement. The notes were independently coded by all four authors. Specific elements of the broad categories were recorded for each teacher. Then the authors collectively verified each element for each teacher; discrepancies were resolved through deliberation. Next axial coding was applied to identify and associate broad coding categories and emerging subcategories until saturation was reached. The code book, as they referred to it, was developed with definitions for each category, subcategory, and element. Each author independently reviewed coding decisions and attained consensus for each decision.

This observational method and coding scheme fit well with my intended purposes. However, adaptations and additions to the instrument were made. Each section of the coding scheme was developed independently, so I was able to exclude the section on classroom management, which did not fit with my inquiry.

In order to structure the collection of field notes across observers, I first created an observation protocol, which contained sections for recording key elements, which included: (1) recoding the stated or written objective of the lesson and materials used; (2) teacher's explanations, instructions, and comments; (3) methods of student engagement; (4) and the actions of both the teachers and students. This last section to the protocol was added to encourage observers to go outside the bounds of the protocol and record what was heard, noticed, and seen through their lens of researcher, and also through their experiences as classroom teachers.

All four observers were required to have classroom teaching experience and it was natural that they filtered their observations through their teaching experiences. What can be seen in practice, by those who practice, is more comprehensive across the setting and at the same time more finite. The intentional selection of teacher observers created trust and a level of comfort between the participants and the observers. This required me to be on guard regarding my own bias. I had to beware that I did not make inferences based on my own experiences as a student in the class, or also as a practicing classroom teacher. I had to check and re-check my perceptions in my reflexivity journal (Kleinsasser, 2000) and with my peers. To further check my perceptions of quality practice against current research on effective writing practices, I added a quantitative check off sheet of proven classroom practice to sharpen my observation skills.

The Writing Observation Framework. The Writing Observation Framework or the WOF (Henk et al., 2004) is an instrument that is intended to improve writing instruction by encouraging and facilitating a shared philosophy of the writing process and its instruction, ensure fair teacher writing evaluations, and demonstrate district and teacher accountability in writing instruction. The instrument was developed cooperatively by Henk et al. (2004) by searching and reviewing writing literature and texts, which resulted in 78 potential items. The items were field tested in three school districts of varying size. At the conclusion of the field test, the items were revised. The document was designed as a working document to provide a solid foundation. Its content can be adapted to fit specific purposes and items can be added or deleted.

My observers and I applied this check off sheet of best practices in writing instruction directly after their observations. This forced us to reflect, recall, and record

whether or not practices written on the sheet were enacted during the observation. When another observer was present, post-observation discussion ensued that required collaborative decision making and refinement of definitions regarding the practices and strategies seen. As observations and discussions occurred over time, I had to go back to previous recordings of observations to scrutinize practices checked or not checked and apply new understandings. To check myself, I had several meetings with other observers to validate changes I made post-observation, based on refined understandings.

Coming to Consensus. Before observations begin, two other observers and I practiced using the Observation Protocol and Writing Observational Framework using live enactments of classroom practice to calibrate the use of the tools. Two classroom teachers, who participate in the interviews but did not continue in the study, invited the observation team into their classroom to facilitate calibration. One of the teachers sat down with us during debriefing to further clarify and focus our observations. Consensus discussions and practice observations continued until we reached 90% interrater reliability. Observers who joined the team later in the process practiced during live participant observations through the same process. Their observational notes were excluded until they were able to reach the same level of reliability with the tools. I conducted two to four observations per day, which lasted between 30-60 minutes each. Out of the 58 observations, I was joined by other observers 27% of the time. Interrater reliability on the WOF averaged 90%. Each session ended with consensus discussions until 100% agreement was reached. Any disagreements were settled by consulting literature on writing instruction practice. All conversations and adjustments were recorded in memos, documented, and checked for bias by another researcher.

Teacher Daily Logs

The electronic instructional logs used in this study were adapted from *The Language Arts Teacher Daily Log* developed by researchers in The Study for Instructional Improvement (SII) (Ball & Rowan, 2004). These logs were developed over time by multiple researchers in an effort to examine how content-aligned professional development in language arts instruction influenced teachers instruction. The SII logs have been successfully used to examine 75,689 lessons in 1,945 classrooms. A log validation study (Camburn & Barnes, 2004) was conducted using thirty-one teachers in eight schools and eight researchers. After pilot-testing the logs for 3 months, they found that teachers and observers had different conceptions and definitions for terms. Log developers used this data to revise both the logs and the glossary. Still, developing a clear understanding of instructional terminology between all participants remains a problem especially in cases where fine or complex distinctions are needed (Camburn & Barnes, 2004).

Research done on the validity on teacher reports on daily logs demonstrates they can reliably discriminate between teachers (Rowan, Camburn, & Correnti, 2004) and have a high match with observer data (Camburn & Barnes, 2004) when examining instructional activities that occurred more frequently. For example, activities that occurred daily, like handwriting practice or Daily Oral Language, would have a higher match between teacher and observer than activities that might occur occasionally, like peer revision. Additionally, to ensure the logs were measuring the constructs they proposed to measure, they were created by a panel of literacy researchers to ensure that the logs initially had both content and face validity.

I used one of the three log sections developed by the SII. These sections were developed independently by researchers, allowing me to use only the section on writing instruction. The logs contained 14 questions divided into sections, which asked teachers to record the following information each day of the logging period:

- Amount of class time spent teaching and practicing writing and foundational skills;
- What type of Language and writing skills or concepts were taught that day;
- What instructional strategies teachers used;
- Assessment practices;
- Intervention strategies;
- Collaboration around writing with peers.

Logs were administered using Qualtrics software. A copy of the Daily Instructional logs can be found in Appendix A.5.

Due to the variability in teaching practices across the year, a large numbers of logs were needed to reliably discriminate among teachers in content coverage and teaching practices. Rowan and Correnti (2009) found that 20 logs spaced over the school year reliably discriminated instructional practices in the area of writing across teachers and schools. Data collected from logs proved to have strong construct validity, as shown by the effects of PD from earlier intervention programs on teaching. The collection of twenty log days per teacher strengthened and elaborated the results of the four observations. As you could imagine, twenty in person observations of an individual teacher's practice would rarely, if ever, be possible.

The logs were utilized to provide a big-picture overview. They elicited quantitative information not available during observations, such as frequency and duration of writing instruction and counts of best practices across the week. The logs were limited in their ability to record fine-grained differences in instruction, especially in such a small sample. However, they did provide general data trends and an insider's view, which were triangulated with my other data sources. Items on the log are complementary to the coding scheme and WOF. Additions to the logs included sections on assessment, intervention, and collaboration. These additions were based on the literature in these areas, but were not validated. Therefore, data from these areas were not included in the analysis for this inquiry. Data from the logs was used to gain general information about the classroom practices of the teachers in this study.

Preparation to Use Logs. In the validation studies on instructional logs (Camburn & Barnes, 2004), it was found that there were differences in content knowledge expertise and vocabulary between teachers and researchers, which led to higher agreement between out of context observers than between teachers and observers. After considering these limitations, I attempted to reduce this effect by using experienced classroom teachers as observers. My thinking was that teachers that shared similar characteristics as the teachers in the study (such as Master's degrees in literacy from the same university) would share a common content area vocabulary and be more likely to agree on terms. As the primary researcher, I have the advantage of 14 years of current classroom teaching experience as well as having participated in the professional development being studied.

Next, I adapted the glossary of terms from the SII study and created my own instructional Power Point for using the logs. Each participant was provided a glossary of

terms, hard copies of a week's worth of logs, logging instructions, and the instructional Power Point before their first log date. Copies of the Glossary are provided in Appendix A.6. During each log period, I contacted participants via e-mail to answer questions, clarify directions, and solve technology problems. A few participants needed me to come out to their site and walk them through the first couple of days. Participants used their hard copy to keep track of weekly practices in case of technology difficulties. The first round of participants using the logs (4) uncovered some errors, which were corrected, and made some small suggestions for improvements. Their logs were used as a pilot and removed from the data set. They were assigned an additional week of logging within the first data collection window.

In the end, monitoring of the log data and post-observation interviews revealed there was still a discrepancy in the way participants understood and applied the vocabulary on the log. Those who had taken the professional development shared a common vocabulary with the researchers, who were also familiar with the course, while those who did not take the course had more generalized or erroneous understandings of terms. Clarifying conversations were had with participants when these discrepancies were noticed. While these differences in vocabulary were slight and infrequent, I believe this may have led to some misinterpretation of terminology on the logs, which in turn may have led some over or under reporting of instructional practices by teachers on the logs. Results from the log data will only be used to present generalizations about the teachers in this study.

Course Observations and Survey of Documents

This complex look at teacher's understandings and practice was incomplete without understanding the role the professional development writing course in influencing the findings. I documented the PD instructors practice by using the same observational protocol and procedures that I used with my participants. I took observational notes and memos to document linkages between the course and the practice I was observing in the field. Course documents such as the syllabus and schedules were collected from 2008 to present and surveyed for linkages through the use of data displays.

Data Analysis

Results from participant interviews and teacher daily logs of literacy practice have been combined with structured observation and anecdotal notes to provide a rich field of data. These sources have been examined for (1) similarities and differences in participant's perceptions of outside factors that have influenced their understandings about writing and writing practice; (2) observed and self-reported similarities and variability in teacher practice and student learning opportunities; (3) linkages between research-supported practices experienced in the course and enactments of that practice in the classroom; (4) implications for teacher educators and the design of professional development opportunities that impact practice.

Data Analysis Plan

This data analysis plan followed Onwuegbuzie and Teddlie's (2003) Stage Conceptualization of mixed-methods data analysis process. Data analysis results were considered throughout the study and were considered in a reflective process that guided

and informed the continuing study. The quantitative and qualitative data was analyzed separately and then was integrated, as shown in Figure 3.3. Data was then compared to establish points of convergence and also disagreements. In combination, they have formed a rich, detailed picture of the influences of the professional development. Throughout the data analysis, interpretations emerged that lead to new discoveries and even the addition of an additional research question.

Figure 3.3 Triangulation Design

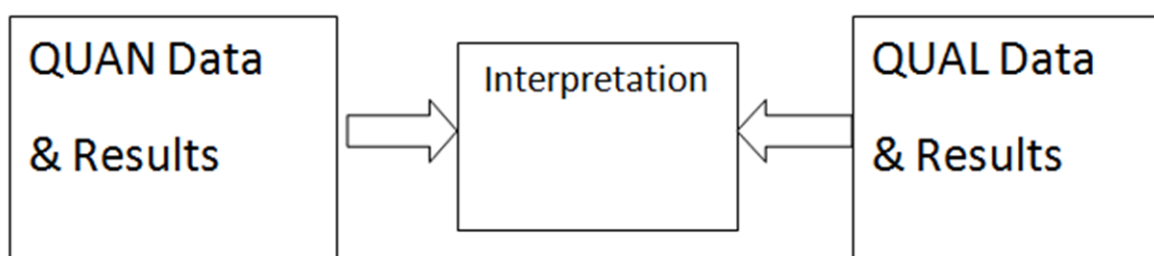


Figure 3.3 Triangulation Design (Creswell & Plano, 2007)

Figure 3.3 Triangulation Design (Creswell & Plano, 2007)

I began by analyzing the quantitative data, first the logs, then the WOF data. This approach would provide a big-picture, generalized view of the inquiry results

Quantitative Data Analysis

Independent samples t-tests were conducted on both the log and WOF data. Both data sources were analyzed using a *think about it strategy* (Conroy, 1988), or reframed in a mixed-methods typology by Teddlie and Tashakkori as a *think aloud process* (2009). This thinking about the data, questioning my actions, and reevaluating decisions was

done over time, in a series of steps to provide logical summaries of the data that compared the frequency and quality of writing instruction over time.

Teacher Daily Logs

I set out to collect 20 logs per participant, five over each of the four data collection windows. Occasionally, however, participants encountered holidays, professional development days, or teacher conference days that shortened their week. These shortened weeks were unavoidable due to the large number of observations to be scheduled. Although I was joined by other observers, I felt it was important as the primary researcher to attend all of the observations. I am confident in using shortened weeks due to the selection of a concurrent triangulation approach. This approach uses congruence of data allowing for fewer observations and log entries. Data was adjusted for number of days in a week during data analysis.

The logs were analyzed in three steps: (1) data cleaning, (2) data reduction, (3) data analysis. To begin the data-cleaning process, a code book was created for each question on the log. Responses for questions were re-coded into more usable numbers. All time-range responses were converted to an average of the range. For example, the time range responses 30-60 minutes was converted to an average of 45 minutes. All conversions are recorded on the instrument available in Appendix B.1. Next, the data had to be checked carefully for accuracy. The logs were checked for missing data and all pilot logs were removed from the data set. When I determined that every participant had a complete set of logs, the data was downloaded into an Excel spreadsheet and checked for alignment with participant identification numbers and window date.

I moved forward into data reduction. First, decisions had to be made about what would be included, how counts would be grouped to represent a construct, and what weight responses would be given. This was done when I engaged in consensus conversations with another researcher in an effort to remove bias from the analysis. Questions were categorized in one of two ways. They were either an average count of behaviors reported or they were average amounts of time in minutes. These codes and groupings were not apparent immediately. I took time to think about how my codes and categories aligned with my understandings of the literature, and experiences in the classroom. The log responses and counting strategies had to be realigned with the changing questions of this inquiry. This resulted in running only planned comparisons on data pertinent to this studies present inquires.

I arranged the data by participants according to their logging window and date sequenced. Excel formulas were constructed and applied to the data, which were matched to either time or quantity. From these queries, individual participant summaries were created.

With four sets of five daily logs from each participant, the data set was quite large. The log contained fourteen multiple response questions to which each participant responded twenty times. I reduced this data into participant summaries by calculating one averaged response for each question per week, per participant. A formula was applied to account for varying length of weeks. Each participant ended up with one averaged response per question, for each of the four logging periods. In other words, four averaged data points for each question.

A summary of the four scores was averaged to create an average of the weekly averages. Final data analysis was performed on this weighted daily average. I decided this representation of the data would take into account the changing expectations for writing across the year, detailed out earlier in this section.

Last, Teacher Daily Logs were analyzed using planned comparisons for differences between the two groups in the daily weighted average for time teaching writing, foundational skills, and time spent in uninterrupted writing as well as for counts of average weekly numbers of best practices with independent sample t-tests on SPSS. I then begin the analysis of the Writing Observational Framework check off sheets.

Writing Observational Framework (WOF)

The Writing Observation Framework data was also analyzed in a series of steps. First the data was transferred from individual protocols to a master Excel spreadsheet. This was done one participant at a time. Simultaneous to the transfer, I created memos and an individual narrative summary. Each participant's counts were analyzed for how many occurrences of each skill could have been expected, depending on the lesson presented, and how many times it actually was observed. Decisions regarding whether or not an element should have been present during the observation were made by the researcher and were based on the literature on best practices. For example, it would be developmentally inappropriate for the first grade teacher in our study to provide written as opposed to verbal feedback to students during revision. So item F, written feedback, was deemed "not applicable" for our first grade teachers. My decisions were recorded and then checked critically by another researcher with expertise in writing instruction. All

decisions were well-documented and rechecked for equitable application across participants.

Next, the WOF protocol counts were triangulated with observational notes to make sure there were not elements missed during the initial observation recordings and those new understandings regarding the expression of those skills were equally applied. Skill counts were then double checked for accuracy. These skill counts were grouped into these nine constructs observed for on the WOF: (1) Climate; (2) Prewriting; (3) Drafting; (4) Conferencing; (5) Revising; (6) Editing and Publishing; (7) Skills and Strategies; (8) Assessment; and (9) Teacher Practice.

These counts were converted to percentages per participant for each of the nine categories. Percentage summaries were created for individual participants. Then, using the same procedures, comprehensive percentage summaries were calculated first, for teachers who had taken the course, and then for teachers who had not experienced the professional development. This was to allow for comparisons between groups.

Last, planned comparisons were selected based on trends in the Log data, developing research questions, and the literature on best practices. These comparisons were made using independent sample t-tests with SPSS.

Because instructional decisions on what to teach for classroom observations were made by the teacher, there were not equal opportunities to observe all skills. Some skills were observed so infrequently that the data was insufficient to make comparisons. These inequalities resulted in the removal of data analyzed from both the areas of Revising and Assessment.

After the quantitative data analysis was complete, I was left with a set of generalities that needed to be further explored and elaborated on by the intricacies of the qualitative data. The impressions left by these findings could not always be set aside, but instead stood as general impressions ready to be reshaped, clarified, or disconfirmed by the emerging findings of the qualitative data.

Qualitative Data Reduction

I begin my analysis with the observational field notes. This deductive analysis would be guided by the findings of a previous study, using themes that were developed prior to the observations. I would then move to an inductive approach with the interviews, allowing new themes to emerge from the context of this study. The two could then be compared for agreements and disagreements.

Observational Notes

First, field notes were coded using a coding scheme developed by Gary Troia and his colleagues (2011). While applying the code book, new codes emerged and were added. I created extensive memos during the application of these codes. I found I needed to clarify and expand the ideas in the code book to fit in this context. I did my best to push the quantitative data out of my mind and stick to the codes. After coding the first participant, I decided to code all twelve participant observations for Student Autonomy, Motivation, and Social Interaction first. I felt that by coding the first category in isolation the codes were applied more evenly. I coded by grade level to keep aspects of development grouped together. As I noticed grade-level differences, I looked for both confirming and disconfirming evidence to see if codes should be excluded for particular

grade levels. When I finished coding for the area of Student Engagement, I begin to developed more fluidity and expertise in applying the codes. I went back and recoded the twelve to reapply new understandings I lacked at the beginning. I found myself going back to the literature to clarify and deepen my understandings of the codes.

In the first section of Student Engagement, I added additional sections based on the literature and my experiences in the course. Authentic purpose, Audience, and Self-Regulation were both added and coded for (Bruning & Horn, 2000; Boscolo & Gelati, 2007). This same strategy was applied to the next two categories in the codes, Instructional Tactics and Curriculum. I went back and forth in an interactive conversation between myself, coding processes, memos, and the research. Again, new codes emerged in my context. I added two new codes to the Instructional Tactics area: Visual Representations and Group Inquiry and Analysis. The literature supported the inclusion of these tactics and they were included as well in the professional development.

To investigate surfacing hunches, I coded for whether students applied and practiced foundational skills in the context of their own writing or in isolation. I also coded if observed teacher feedback on student writing was connected to their focus lessons. After gaining experience with the codes in each section, I recoded again to make sure codes were applied evenly.

Last, I calculated averages of the frequency counts over the four observations for participants who had the professional development. I created data displays to look for practices the PD teachers shared use as a group and if they had any connections to the class. After that, I did the same for the NPD teachers to see if they shared these similarities in practice or not. Figure 3.4 shows a sample of comparisons made in the

area of Process Approach. From these displays, similarities and differences between groups begin to emerge. This same approach was taken for observational notes taken in the PD.

<p>1.Process approach to writing instruction Includes: a. Targeted strategy instruction b. Consistent vocabulary c. Workshop format</p>	<p>Writing Processes: PD teachers=4.7 NPD Teachers=3.3 Across 4 observations s teachers who have taken the class engaged students in an average of 5 (4.7) out of the 5 writing processes Compared to 3 (3.3) out of the 5 for teachers who have not experienced the class. Process codes: Planning, drafting, revising, editing, and publishing.</p> <p>5 Elements Of Writers Workshop PD=4.7 NPD=3.2 Across 4 observations teachers who have taken the class engaged students in an average of 5 (4.7) out of the 5 elements of writers workshop compared to an average of 3 out of the 5 (3.2) for teachers who have not had the class. Workshop elements coded were: focus lesson, peer conferences, teacher conferences, sustained writing, curriculum integration</p> <p>Shared Vocabulary PD=5 NPD=2.3 Across 4 observations teachers who took the course demonstrated consistent use of writing vocabulary in areas of traits, formatting elements, processes, genres, stylistics devices, and content vocabulary Those who took the class demonstrated an average use of 5 out the 6 vocabulary elements compared to an average of 2.3 of the elements for teachers who have not had the course.</p>
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Figure 3.4 Sample Data Display of Observation Data

Interviews

Data from the interviews were analyzed using the qualitative method for multi-data sources of constant comparison (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Strauss & Corbin, 1994). The interviews were transcribed by myself and a transcriptionist and then read for accuracy by me. As I read the transcriptions, I added to my original notes and listed possible codes in the margin. I looked for evidence that confirmed or contradicted initial hunches. Because this inquiry involved multiple sites and cases and my purpose was to allow new theories to emerge, I took an Analytic Inductive approach when coding the interviews (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007). I utilized peer-debriefing and my reflexivity

journal to help me break away from my initial coding scheme to try and allow new grounded codes (Glaser & Strauss, 1967) to emerge. A separate code book was created to represent new understandings that emerged apart from the observational codes that were developed a priori. As codes were applied, they were both expanded and clarified through peer discussion and the literature. They were funneled down and then all interviews were re-coded a second time. Next, the coding scheme from the observational data was also applied to interviews where they might provide triangulation between the outside observer and the teachers own voice (Mathison, 1988). These code books can be found in Appendix B.3 and B.4.

For both sets of qualitative data, frequency counts, data displays, and individual narrative summaries were created (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Throughout coding, similar responses were grouped and regrouped in a constant comparison (Glaser & Strauss, 1967).

Data analysis included consensus conversations with three other researchers. As a novice researcher, I felt it was important to have my decisions checked by more experienced researchers with either subject matter and or methodological expertise, which would help to challenge and define my themes and codes. In addition, one of the researchers coded 25% of the data and then we compared results. These comparison conversations continued until there was 85% intercoder agreement (Miles & Huberman, 1994). I returned to the remaining data and made sure codes were in alignment with the resolution of any disputes in coding. In addition, I wrote descriptive and analytic memos (Glaser & Strauss, 1967) throughout the analysis processes. The frequency counts of both

qualitative data sources helped create quantitative-qualitative linkages (Miles & Huberman, 1994).

Data Transformation

Using a concurrent triangulation approach, some of the qualitative data was quantified and some of the quantitative data was transformed to qualitative to allow for triangulation of data. For example, narrative summaries were made for the quantitative data and conversely frequency counts were made from the qualitative data to allow for comparisons and triangulation. Chi Square tests were conducted on frequency counts of bivariate responses from the interview data to determine if there were statistically significant differences between groups. After transforming individual sources, I begin the work of consolidating the data.

Data Consolidation

Bringing the Qualitative Data Together

These two qualitative data sets represent two different sources and perspectives. The teacher's perspectives and observed practice had to be transformed and blended. To accomplish, this I first compared my inductive interview codes with the deductive, observation coding scheme using constant comparison (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007; Gibbs & Taylor, 2010). The Constant Comparison Model was designed for multi-data sources (Strauss & Corbin, 1994; Glaser & Strauss, 1967). The reflective, looping-back process fit with the epistemology of pragmatism, which is the guiding philosophy of mixed-method research. This process helped me control the scope of these multiple sources of data. I begin to build a visual data display, which joined the evidence from both

qualitative data sources around surfacing themes to build a case for my emerging findings. I joined participant statements from interviews and statements recorded during observations with the frequency counts. While some findings were strengthened and elaborated on, others were rejected due to lack of depth.

Bringing Together Quantitative Sources

Next, I revisited my quantitative data. Narrative summaries of the numerical data were prepared to facilitate comparison and elaboration with qualitative data in the next step of analysis. While creating narrative summaries, memos, and comparing the numerical data, I noticed that the WOF data followed the trends present in the log data. These similarities were noted.

Data Comparison and Integration

I now moved to integrate the data into a coherent whole to facilitate holistic comparisons and subsequent trends across data sets. I overlaid the quantitative findings with the qualitative data display I created earlier to see where they would strengthen, contradict, elaborate, or extend the emerging findings. Transformed data sources were also compared for agreements or disagreements. This consolidated data refined, reformed, and restructured the initial findings. This data display can be found in Appendix B.5.

Legitimation and Limitations

Researcher Bias

I faced many hurdles regarding bias. First, as a practicing classroom teacher in the district where the study took place, many of the participants viewed me as a peer. While I believe this put me on a level playing field with my participants, I recognize this familiarity with the participants' context may have made them hesitant to reveal all of their dispositions regarding their schools and districts. Additionally, my identity as a teacher may have at times prevented me from taking an objective view at the practice of my peers. In my role as a researcher, I had a vested interest in finding a difference between groups. This could have impacted my objectivity. I hoped to reduce these limitations by including other researchers with no connection to the study's results 27% of the time. These other researchers provided a check on my observational integrity.

Selection Bias

Studies attempting to investigate the effects of professional development on teaching face many hurdles. One such hurdle is selection bias. Studies seeking to compare teachers who voluntarily participate in professional development with those who did not participate must deal with the fact that teachers who volunteer may differ in motivation, prior knowledge, and instructional practice from those who do not. Additionally, we can never assume teachers who receive PD are equivalent in every way with teachers who are not (Wayne, Yoon, Zhu, Cronen, & Garet, 2008). However, quasi-experiments may select a comparison group that is equivalent in important ways to the experimental group, matching them on crucial characteristics. Of course this does not

eliminate selection bias but it does minimize it (Shadish, Cook, & Cambell, 2002). Every attempt within this purposeful sample was made to match participants for experience, education, classroom context, and school setting. Important differences were noted in a previous section.

Sample Integration Legitimation

Another limitation encountered in this study was the small sample size. This particularly affected the analysis of the Log Data and the quantitative generalizability of these results. While participants were a subset of the larger study, matching these teachers for identical characteristics or drawing random samples proved impossible in this limited sample. However, meta-inferences of the whole data set were strengthened by using the same participants for both the qualitative and quantitative data sources, providing sample integration legitimation (Onwuegbuzie & Johnson, 2006). This is a form of legitimation in which agreement between the same participants for both qualitative and quantitative sources triangulate and strengthens each other.

Inside-Out Legitimation

This mixed-methods inquiry has attempted to blend together an outsider's observations with an insider's views to present a balanced perspective. Additional Inside-out Legitimation (Onwuegbuzie & Johnson, 2006) was sought through peer debriefings and member checks during post-observation discussions with both insider participants and multiple outside observers.

Convergence Legitimation

It is recognized that convergence legitimation (Onwuegbuzie & Johnson, 2006) may have been compromised due to an over or underweighting of data when converting data from one form to another. Attempts to control for this effect were made when choosing equal status dominance, weighting all data sources equally to try and counterbalance unequal conversions of quantified observation or interview data with any overgeneralizations made when converting numerical data to narratives.

When convergence, integration, and legitimation of the data were complete, a rich, detailed picture of the influences and effects of the intensive writing professional development had emerged. In Chapters 4 to 6, I will discuss the findings of this analysis as they pertain to answering this study's research questions.

CHAPTER 4: TEACHERS UNDERSTANDINGS OF WRITING AND WRITING
INSTRUCTION

Preface to Findings for Chapter 4, 5, and 6

The findings will be presented in three chapters. Together they will build a case and provide evidence that will be used to answer the studies research questions, which are as follows;

1. What shared understandings of writing, writing instruction, and contexts for teaching writing exist between practicing teachers, grades 1-6, who have taken a university graduate course devoted exclusively to writing? How do these perceptions and viewpoints differ between teachers who have taken the course and those who have not?
2. What shared features of classroom literacy practices and student learning opportunities exist between teachers, grades 1-6, who have taken a course? How do these commonalities in practice compare to the practice of teachers who have not taken a course?
3. How do these similarities in understandings and practice link to the university course in writing?

Chapter 4 will address the findings for question one regarding teacher's understandings about writing. This chapter will present the findings from the initial teacher interview data. Chapter 5 will answer question two, regarding teacher practice

and will present the data from the Daily Logs, Writing Observation Framework, and the observational field notes. Chapter 6 will integrate the findings from all four sources, along with observations from the course to answer question three by providing clear links between teacher understandings, classroom practice, and the university coursework.

Overview to Chapter 4

In this chapter, findings will examine these teachers' perceptions of themselves as writers, the purposes of writing, and how children learn to write. This is important because these perceptions and understandings play an important role in influencing the writing environment and the instructional practice of teachers (Boscolo & Gelati, 2007).

Data from teacher interviews suggest that teachers who took the course had perceptions of writing that differed in important ways from teachers who had not taken the course. There were stark differences in how teachers viewed their preparation to teach writing, their understandings of themselves as writers, and their competencies as teachers of writing. Differences also existed in understandings about what writing is and how children develop as writers. However, the data did find areas where all teachers overwhelming agreed. Teachers shared concerns in their contexts regarding the lack of resources and accountability to teach writing.

Teachers' Perceptions, Perceived Influences, and Understandings about Writing

The initial interviews provided teachers in this study an opportunity to express their individual and collective viewpoints on writing and writing instruction. Four main findings emerged from the data regarding teachers' understandings about writing: (1) teachers' perceived factors in their contexts, such as teacher preparation, a lack of

accountability, and a lack of resources as having influenced their writing practice; (2) teachers' perceptions and understandings about themselves as writers, writing, and writing development differed significantly between PD teachers and NPD teachers; (3) there were significant differences in understandings between the groups regarding a teacher's instructional frameworks, and (4) teachers' expectations for their students writing. The Figure 4.1 details the different elements of these four findings.

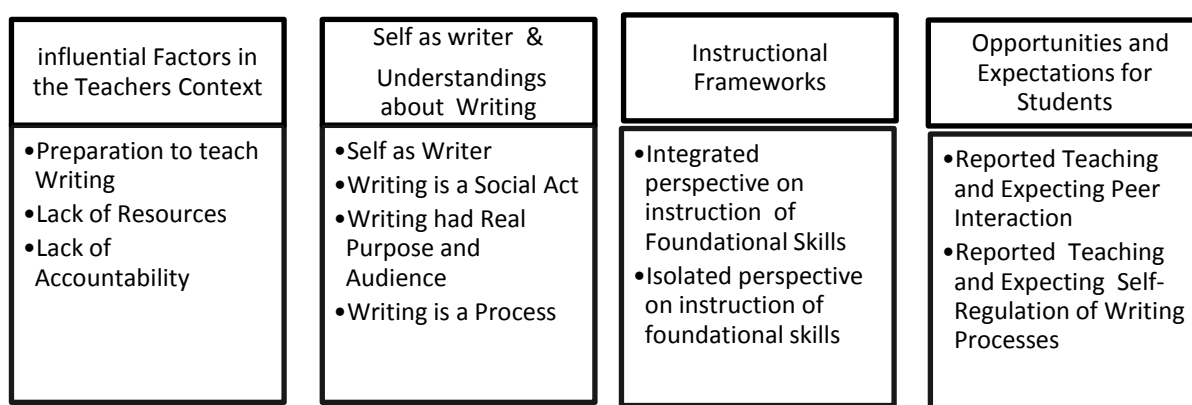


Figure 4.1 Interview Findings

Influential Factors in the Teachers' Context

Teacher practice, and subsequent student learning experiences, are shaped and influenced by many factors outside the teacher's immediate control. The extent to which the teachers discussed these influences in the interviews led to questions and explorations leading to unanticipated findings. Three elements emerged out of our conversations concerning, (1) preparation to become teachers of writing, (2) inservice resources and professional development opportunities, and (3) accountability for writing instruction by their university, state, district, and school

Perceptions of Preparation to Teach Writing

Significant differences existed between PD teachers and NPD teachers in their perceptions of their preparation to teach writing. Teachers had strong opinions about their university preparation to teach writing. All six PD teachers felt they had acquired the necessary content knowledge and confidence to teach writing. Unfortunately, this was true for only two teachers who had not taken the course, $\chi^2(1) = 6.00, p = .02$. Conversely, all six NPD teachers had a desire for more writing professional development while only one PD teacher felt this was necessary, $\chi^2(1) = 8.57, p = .003$.

Outcomes from Teacher Preparation. All participants who experienced the writing professional development felt confident about teaching writing. Dena, like others PD teachers, gained her confidence to teach writing from taking the writing methods course; she explained:

First, I had to realize I can do this, whether it was writing the memoir or the poem, or things which were out of my particular comfort zone, that I can do it. Which means then I can tell my students they can do it too.

Sharon took the course in order to develop her knowledge and skills, which in turn developed her confidence. She talked about the writing skills of teachers in general, “I don’t think teachers know how to teach writing. I think they’re scared of it.” Sharon pursued her own professional development and worked to make writing her “strong point,” but she doubts that other teachers feel comfortable with it. She goes on to explain the complexity of knowledge required to teach writing when she says, “I know a lot of teachers like to use curriculum and have the script in front of them and to deviate

from that, is uncomfortable for them.” But Sharon is confident in her knowledge about writing, “Writing is more...it can be chaotic but it has to be sometimes in order to be successful. There isn’t a script to teach writing you just have to do it.”

Outcomes of No Course on Teacher Preparation. In contrast, the teachers who had not been afforded a writing methods course felt unprepared to teach writing. They had strong opinions about their lack of preparation: “Coming out of my bachelor’s program,” Melissa said, “I don’t feel like I was prepared to teach writing, I don’t.” She went on to say:

There wasn’t really a methods course that really focused on writing. There was a literacy strand, but I just felt like it was so much geared towards primary and so much geared towards phonics and the reading component. So I don’t feel like I was prepared at all to do writing in the classroom, especially upper grade writing.

Teresa exclaimed, “There wasn’t any writing course. It was not talked about. I think a writing course should be mandatory. I can think of many other classes I could have done without. It is not fair to my kids, if I don’t know I can’t tell them.” Teresa was not alone. None of the teachers in the study were required to take a standalone writing methods course. Linda was never required to take a writing course; she revealed,

When I was going through school I really wish that the universities would have a class on the developmental writing processes of children; both writing and spelling and how you teach it. I had none of that. It took eleven years into my career before I even received any information on how to teach writing. So I mean that’s really sad.

Four of the six teachers, who did not take the course as part of their required coursework, felt like they were at a disadvantage and doubted their abilities and all six had a desire for more writing professional development. Tessa shared, “I feel like I’m very much at a loss because I don’t necessarily still even know or feel... I’ve lost my edge, as far as I don’t really have a passion or a belief about how children best learn to write.” Alyssa shared, “I didn’t have a lot of instruction, and so I don’t know how to teach something that I didn’t get taught very formally myself. It would have been cool in retrospect, to have a writing methods class.”

Lack of Writing Resources

Ten of the 12 teachers stated that there was no specific writing curriculum provided to them by their districts except supplementary sections of their Basal reading programs. Amy said, “It doesn’t seem like there’s a defined writing curriculum. I’ve heard some different things from different people, but since I’ve been here we haven’t really had any professional development for writing instruction.” Like Amy, seven of the 12 teachers reported they had little to no professional development in writing instruction and the rest had only received compacted teacher inservice workshops, which have little effect in changing teacher practice.

According to participants, resources to guide instruction were nearly non-existent. Unlike in reading, only one of the teachers reported any school-wide alignment of writing instruction, benchmarks for writing performance, or standardized assessments. Amy feels a lack of guidance:

One thing I feel like we're missing is vertical writing alignment through the grade levels. I think that it would really be valuable for everyone to be on the same page with the way that they teach writing and I think that that's not the case.

Because of this lack of guidance, teachers were very unsure about what kind of performance would constitute grade-level performance and how to set developmentally appropriate writing goals for student growth. Dena said, "I don't think there are any writing benchmarks. It is just looking at the journal to see how they are progressing from short sentences to longer sentences, but that is very subjective since you don't have benchmarks from the district." Even with the advent of Title One resources and Response to Intervention support, only one participant reported any additional personnel support during writing instruction and practice time.

Not one participant reported having enough time to teach writing and 92% of participants felt there was not adequate time allocated for writing instruction. When asked about time to teach writing, Amber said, "It is what is left over after you take care of reading and math." Teresa added her frustration with a lack of time saying, "You have to figure out a way to eke it into your day because there's no writing time regularly scheduled. I wish there was, but I don't know how we'd get it in our day." Only three of the PD teachers and two of the NPD teachers felt they had autonomy over the way they scheduled, and paced their writing instruction. Ninety minute blocks of time dedicated to reading instruction were not seen by most teachers as being inclusive of writing. Time to teach writing had to be extracted out of or borrowed from another required subject.

A Lack of Accountability for Writing Instruction

Teachers in both groups felt there was a lack of accountability to teach writing. With stringent accountability for student performance on standardized tests in reading and math, writing accountability has been nearly non-existent (Calkins, et.al., 2010). Jennings (2007) contended that what gets tested on high stakes tests, influences what gets taught. He went on to argue that Under No Child Left Behind, so much was riding on the reading and math included on state tests, many schools have had to cut back or eliminated time for teaching other important subject areas, which includes writing. The findings of the interview data give credence to these claims. Melissa shared, “I feel like reading, and math are on the ISAT: that really counts. So I think that’s where a lot of my energy and time goes into.” Teresa shared her perceptions, “I mean we’re in a situation now economically and everything else and we’re looking at end results and writing is not one of them”.

Teacher’s Perceptions of State, District, and School Accountability

Ninety-six percent of all teachers in this study reported that the writing performance of their students was not tested or monitored by their state or district. Alyssa helps us to understand the impact this lack of accountability had on teachers and their expectations for students:

Well, we used to have the DWA which when that went away we kind of said “Yeah” for half a second and then realized there was a lot that we don’t know anymore. It is just the unfortunate nature of not being tested on writing, that it is one of the things that you know gets side lined.

The state in which this study took place cancelled its participation in the Direct Writing Assessment (DWA) in 2010. This performance-based assessment served for 19

years as measure of student performance in grades 5, 7, and 9 and provided a means for national and state-wide check points and comparisons. The cancellation of this assessment is projected to save the State Department \$250,000 dollars (2010). But perhaps the greatest savings will come from eliminating the accountability for writing performance all together, which will save financially hard pressed schools from having to commit resources to meet public and state expectations for performance.

The findings of this study highlight the effects of NCLB on narrowing the focus of school curriculum that have squeezed out writing (Ravitch, 2010). Alyssa feels no pressure to get back to a writing assignment she has started, “We could end up not doing anything with it for two maybe three weeks and then we come back to it, so that we have like a monthly writing assignment.” However, PD teachers felt the pressure to teach writing. Dena explains her accountability dilemma,

I think I feel the stress of our state reading test. I am worried about getting them there and making sure that they are meeting all the content area in math and reading and using our Basal Series with fidelity and all those other things were told to do. Therefore, the writing gets squished out because no one is monitoring it.... You get worried about keeping your job or keeping standards. I think it’s unfortunate because somewhere in there, there should be a balance.

Teacher’s Perceptions of University and Teacher Certification Accountability

Few universities require a writing methods course for teacher certification (National Writing Project, 2006). Not surprisingly then, this study found that only 1 NPD teacher felt writing instruction was valued by her university compared to 5 out of 6 PD teachers, $\chi^2(1) = 5.33, p=.02$. This difference in viewpoint is significant and followed through to a

significant difference in the value teachers placed on writing instruction. Three NPD teachers made statements that suggested they did not place writing on an equal footing with other subjects. This viewpoint was never expressed by PD teachers, $\chi^2(1) = 4.00$, $p = .05$. On the contrary, five of the six PD teachers made statements that suggested they valued and made time for writing.

These teacher perceptions of organizational accountability and lack of content knowledge may have impacted the teacher's own sense of accountability for writing. When asked about her accountability to teach writing, Tessa said, "We're spending time teaching things that maybe we don't really need to be teaching or we're not going to be held accountable for and the kids aren't going to be assessed on. I haven't really even paid a lot of attention to the writing components."

How has this lack of attention to writing influenced teacher's perceptions of themselves as writers, understandings about writing, and the role writing should have in the daily curriculum? If learning is shaped by the beliefs, values, and experiences that exist within the larger community context (Norman & Spencer, 2005; Bahktin, 1981; Vygotsky, 1978), then it follows that teachers learning, beliefs, and attitudes about writing should be influenced by their preparation to be teachers of writing and their accountability to in turn prepare their students to become confident and competent writers.

Perceptions about Themselves as Writers and Understandings about Writing

Teacher's perceptions and understandings about themselves as writers, writing, and writing development differed significantly between PD teachers and NPD teachers.

First, PD teachers more often thought of themselves as writers and had positive feelings and confidence in their ability to write than teachers who had not. Second, they viewed writing as a social act. Next, they saw writing as communicative, with a variety of purposes and audiences. Last, they had a process rather than a product view of writing. The findings revealed that these similarities in understandings were not shared with the NPD teachers and differed significantly in three of the four elements.

Self as Writer

PD teachers had positive self-identities as writers. This self-perception differed significantly from the NPD teachers, $\chi^2(1) = 5.33, p=.02$. While no PD teachers explicitly expressed negative feelings about their ability or confidence to writing, four of the NPD did, $\chi^2(1) = 6.00, p=.02$. Amber reflects on her writing ability, “Oh misery (ha ha). I’m a reluctant writer.” She goes on to connect her dispositions to what she experienced as a learner, “I come from the generation of where we actually diagrammed sentences and well, I hated it, but I think it was beneficial in the long run.” Amber holds on to and still values the way she was taught even in the face of her negative views of herself as a writer. This can be contrasted with Kayla, who took the course, she remembers how she was taught, “I loved to write, but I never did well in writing, so it was always a frustration in school because I’d get my paper back and it’d always be marked in red pen.” Despite her negative experience, Kayla was able to develop a positive view of herself as a writer as did others who took the course.

While participating in the course, teachers had an opportunity to expose and explore their dispositions about themselves as writers and rebuild or reconnect with their

self-concept through multiple writing opportunities. This practice has been identified as an effective teacher preparation strategy for uncovering and informing dispositions and is supported by research on preparing teachers of writing. (Norman & Spencer, 2005; Pajares, 1992).

Graham echoes what many of the PD teachers said when he explained how the course helped him reconnect with himself as a writer,

I really love to write, so the class just kind of rekindled my love of writing and I think it was really good because she [The instructor] provided those opportunities to just write for enjoyment or to write different types of writing like memoir and I've had kids write memoirs and we've studied memoirs ever since that class. So I definitely think that for me it was just kind of rekindling the love of writing and I've been able to use some of those pieces that I did in that class and show them as examples for my class, especially the memoir.

In contrast, teachers who had not been exposed to class had very different conceptions of themselves as writers. Linda shared,

I struggled with it. I think partly because in grade school we learned how to handwrite, but didn't learn how to put sentences together into paragraphs to create a story. None of that was ever taught to me. So of course when you go to high school and college anytime you have to write a paper that was an extreme struggle. I mean I got better at it because I had to but it made me very angry as an adult knowing that in grade school, junior high, and high school there was no formal writing taught. So that was a huge weakness for me.

Teachers Who Took the Course Learned Writing Involves Social Interaction

Every teacher who took the course viewed writing as a social act. This differed significantly from the NPD teachers, $\chi^2(1) = 6.00, p=.02$. Sharon saw the value of students modeling and combining their strengths, “Every student I’ve had has such an amazing personality and is so different. If they can work together in a group, they can come up with an amazing piece of writing.” Kayla adds to the idea that peers can work through writing processes together and be models for each other, “Seeing other kids writing, then them working in the group, and then us going through it together, their writing has just become amazing.”

Only two of the six teachers, who did not take the course, mentioned social aspects of writing; Linda said, “I allow them to work on stories together if they want, if that is what is motivating them.” However, this was not observed to be part of the classroom routine. The teacher explained later that this was applied to stories written in their free time.

Authentic Purpose and Audience

All 12 teachers in the study viewed writing as having authentic purposes and 10 mentioned the importance of writing for a real audience. These findings were incongruent with findings from the observations for the control group. While all NPD teachers identified communication as a purpose for writing, they were not observed to enact it during classroom observations. NPD teachers were only observed to provide their students with real purposes for writing and an authentic audience 21% of the time they were observed, compared to 96% of the time for teachers who took the course. One explanation for these inconsistencies may be these veteran NPD teachers possess what

Shulman and Shulman (2004) coined as practical pedagogies, that is they have general knowledge about how teaching and learning should happen, but lack pedagogical content knowledge and pedagogical reasoning to transfer this idea into action when teaching writing.

Although all the teachers in the study talked about authentic purposes for writing, only the PD teachers were able to elaborate in their responses and provide examples from their practice. These examples suggested they understood the pedagogical content knowledge that they experienced in the course. PD teachers thought of writing “as a particular way of using language for a variety of purposes, as a sociocultural practice with intellectual significance” (Moll, 1992). Amy provides an illustration of this difference:

Well we tried to design writing activities to be purposeful so that they feel like there’s a reason for what they’re doing. For example; last week we worked on writing books for a potential pet sitter that would be coming to watch our class pet. So we made little instruction booklets for the pet sitter. So something like that where they see a purpose in it and it’s not just filling in a sentence frame.

Kayla describes providing her students with writing activities that have authentic purposes. This activity mirrors her experience in the PD course which engaged her in writing for her own purposes while simultaneously learning major concepts and principals of the discipline (Bransford et al., 2000). Through cognitive apprenticeship in the course, the social purposes of writing were modeled and thoughts and actions were made

visible. This provides opportunities for Kayla to develop pedagogical reasoning, which allows her to put theory into practice.

Kayla has her fifth grade students start their school year off with a persuasive piece so her students can understand what writing is for. “First we write it to our principal asking for things in the school. ...So I like to introduce it with that because... kind of, I connect it to why it’s important to use your words, that you can persuade someone to do something.” Graham has learned that writing serves multiple purposes both outside and inside the classroom:

Writing is putting ideas into a form that you can share them with others without your voice. It is used to communicate, to share, to reflect, to inform. There are so many different kinds of authentic writing activities that you could do to encourage all of those different purposes.

Graham, Kayla, and Amy all spoke of seeking multiple types of authentic writing purposes and audiences for their students. They were all able to point to rich examples from their practice to make their points. Not so for the NPD teachers.

One NPD teacher stated that writing is, “Communication that is non-verbal between two or more people and it’s a way to express yourself in a non-threatening, emotionally safe way.” But unlike Graham, Kayla, and Amy, she does not offer any examples from her practice and was only observed to provide a real purpose for her writing activities one time out of four classroom observations.

Amy’s use of student writing to communicate how to care for their class pet to the real pet sitter illustrates her intent to provide her students with a real purpose and

audience for written communication. In comparison, Amber's writing task, which asked students to describe a blending of art and writing, created a contrived activity to teach a skill. While the control group participants articulated they believed in communicative purposes of writing, they all appeared to fall short of transferring these ideas into practice. In addition to providing opportunities for students to write for their own purposes to real audiences, PD teacher understood writing to be a process.

Views of Writing

One significant difference between teacher perceptions of writing was whether they took a process or product stance toward writing. The data revealed that five out of six teachers who took the course held a process view of writing compared to only one NPD teacher, $\chi^2(1) = 5.33, p = .02$. Evidence for these viewpoints were differentiated by whether the teacher was focused on the finished written product and its conventions, or whether the teacher was more concerned about teaching and monitoring the writing processes: is the product looked upon as the last step in a long process or journey, or is it the goal to rush to produce a polished product regardless of how the teacher gets students there? Olivia, a PD teacher, feels it is valuable to invest her time in developing her students' processes:

That's why we don't use the writing program, because we couldn't ever complete the writing process. It was always pre-write and draft. Now, we're working on pre-writing and we spent a whole week and a half on that ..., what that looks like, how to brainstorm, and author's purpose. Then the group worked on graphic organizers for pre-write. The class itself is in drafting mostly right now. Some

will slowly go through each process so they see it as we go and then we'll go back.

This teacher's process response is very different from a product or task completion orientation. In this viewpoint, a template or the teacher's step-by-step directions guide everyone through a series of tasks or skills to a suitable product. Lena, who did not take the course, provides a contrasting product orientation:

As we move into more of the middle of the year, that's when we start the more in depth writing, *Step-Up to Writing*, where you have to have an introduction, sentence, a topic sentence, and then a reason/detail/fact sentence to support your topic and then a explain/examples sentence to support the reason/detail/fact which in turn supports the topic. So it's basically that pattern and a six sentence paragraph and then a conclusion which ties into the original topic, so that's where we kind of end up by the end of the year.

The template, instead of process instruction and practice, scaffolds the writing to help students reach a predictable, yet acceptable written product.

These teacher perceptions of their self-identity as writers, the importance of teaching writing and their understandings about the very nature of writing; formed the building blocks that influenced the framework for teachers' understandings about instructional practice. Bruning and Horn (2000) connected teacher's beliefs about practice to what they believe about writing and its importance in the curriculum.

Teachers Instructional Framework: Isolated or Integrated

The findings also revealed that teachers took either an isolated or integrated view of their writing and language arts instruction. Teachers who took an isolated framework described their instruction of foundational skills, such as grammar, spelling, or handwriting, as isolated from student writing. Instead practice of these skills was done on isolated worksheets or in the daily rituals of Daily Oral Language and similar programs. Teachers with an integrated approach saw grammar lessons as a tool for completing a piece of writing. These teachers practiced and assessed foundational skills within the student's written composition.

Integrated Framework

All six of the PD teachers described teaching language arts skills in the context of student writing. This is significantly different when compared to only one of the NPD teachers who had this framework, $\chi^2(1) = 8.57, p = .003$.

Amy is a good example of how the PD teachers integrate foundational skills and composition. She explains, "There's not a lot of time to work in writing I find, but we do take an hour, almost an hour, every day for writing and tie in just other language arts skills that we're working on so that it's not isolated. We can kind of bring things together and spend more time on it that way."

Sharon integrates all her language arts skills in to writing pieces called, *Write Slams*. As she teaches standard-based skills, she keeps track of the skills and her writing rubrics become progressive. Sharon explains her integrations this way;

I'll use my curriculum maps to help me decide what part of the year to add adjectives in there. It's in their pieces, yeah, it's not separate. I don't like to teach grammar separately. I don't like to give a worksheet and say "okay label all the nouns and the verbs" but then you don't do anything with it. It's in their writing. When they show their final piece they'll have to highlight all their adjectives to show the rest of the class. Eventually as we move on to other literary elements they'll do the same.

The purposes of Sharon's integrated writing assignments are for her students to learn a new genre for purposeful communication. To help her students communicate more clearly, Sharon teaches language arts skills as a means for improving their writing. The writing is the primary goal; the skill practice is a tool to accomplish the goal.

This integrated view point is contrasted with an isolated framework. Five of the six teachers who did not take the class described teaching language arts in a way that seemed to align with the types of questions students might see on State Language Arts Assessments. This is not surprising considering the pressure to perform on these high stakes assessments. In addition to accountability for these skills, teachers were supported with a structured language arts curriculum to help their students meet benchmarks. Alyssa reflects on her isolated language arts instruction,

We do our DLP (daily language practice) which we called DOL when we were kids and uhmm... Then you know, unfortunately, as I'm reflecting on it now it seems to be a little bit more worksheet based compared to some of my other subjects that I teach. Because of my passion for the arts, I do try and teach my content through "hands on" ways, but with language, there's probably a disconnect for all us. It is like, "Okay, now we're going to do language..." But my formal instruction really kind of geared toward that fairly rigid like, "this

week this is the skill we're working on" and using the book a lot and correcting sentences, manipulating sentences, so they look the way that skill is supposed to look.

Alyssa recognized the disconnect between her beliefs and practice, but it appears that she cannot overcome her apprenticeship of observation (Lortie, 1975). She lacks the pedagogical content knowledge and pedagogical reasoning and action (Shulman & Shulman, 2004) to move beyond her own experiences learning to write. She defaults to a more structured kind of teaching, which she feels will help her students meet expectations for performance on standardized tests. She still wants her students to be able to produce isolated sentences that look the way they should.

Alyssa was not the only teacher to question the relationship between isolated skill practice and good writing. Tessa reflected, "I don't feel like what we have been doing as far as identifying them in random sentences is really working because there's not a lot of transfer. At least not that I have seen with the work we have done so far, a lot of us are still really fuzzy which surprises me." Her definition of writing practices reveals her view of writing as skill work, instead of writing for purposes of communication.

Teresa, another teacher who did not take the course explains her idea of writing practice:

By writing practice, I mean things like, we do daily language review which is just another version of daily oral language, and we do that every day and then we review that as a class. We're stressing the mechanics at their ability level with

periods and capitals, ending punctuation, looking at some analogies, tenses, plurals, and the whole thing of mechanics. Then with spelling we also are looking for that in their writing? During the week they have it written in their planners. They have spelling lists around them constantly. Sometimes we do it for homework, “write me a story with your spelling words, don’t forget your capitals and periods...etc.”

The purpose for the story she assigns is for language arts practice and not to engage a genre or build capacity as an author. The main goal is to practice spelling and conventions. The writing becomes merely an excuse to practice skills.

These two distinctly different instructional frameworks impacted teacher’s expectations and learning opportunities for their students. Based on teacher reports, student learning under an isolated framework focused on having students identify and fix, pre-planted errors in sentences they did not author, for the purpose of passing formative and summative language arts tests. Student learning in an integrated framework engaged students in the application of new skills in the context of their own compositions for purposes of improving their ability to communicate with an audience. The two frameworks represent very different viewpoints about writing instruction, which if carried into practice would result in very different learning experiences for students.

Conceptions of Opportunities and Expectations for Students

When teachers were asked to describe strategies that contributed to student growth, they discussed a variety of instructional strategies. Teachers who took the course pointed

more often to “coaching” students toward independence as writers. They wanted students to monitor their own processes, topics, and social interactions with each other. In contrast, the NPD teachers felt that student decision-making should be minimal and be guided by prescriptive templates and lockstep procedures. Two significant differences appeared between the groups.

First, all the PD teachers explicitly mentioned teaching or modeling peer interactions in contrast with only one of the NPD teachers, $\chi^2(1) = 8.57, p=.003$. As well all of the PD teachers voiced an expectation for their students to collaborate and use each other as tools to get “unstuck” and move on during writing time compared to none of the NPD teachers, $\chi^2(1) = 12.00, p=.001$. PD teachers spoke about engaging their students in the writing processes within a community of writers. They perceived that their students were capable of providing feedback and guidance to one another and they did not speak of themselves as the only source of feedback. For example, three of the PD teachers mentioned providing physical tools in the environment, such as word walls, post-its, or dictionaries to help students move on with their writing. This was not mentioned by the NPD teachers $\chi^2(1) = 4.00, p=.05$.

Second, PD teachers sought to develop student’s knowledge and use of the writing processes, and then expected them to engage and monitor their own processes more often than their counterparts $\chi^2(1) = 8.57, p=.003$. Conversely, NPD teachers were more focused on teaching templates than PD teachers, $\chi^2(1) = 8.57, p=.003$. These templates were seen by NPD teachers as providing students a formula to independently produce a written product. Additionally, half of NPD teachers spoke of controlling students writing

processes for them by taking their students through a lockstep process to product completion more often than PD teachers, $\chi^2 (1) = 4.00, p=05$.

Peer Interaction to Support the Writing Processes

Rather than describing prescriptive templates to scaffold writing, all of the PD teachers spoke about teaching or modeling peer interactions as part of their writing instruction. They expected students to use each other as scaffolding during writing. Amy, who has taken the course, took the time to teach her students to use material tools in the classroom, such as the word wall. She also taught them how to use each other as living tools. She talked about the growth she has seen in her students:

So just by providing those tools and support as needed as they're writing, it seems to build their confidence. And then they get to kind of take it on more themselves. Using the tools they have been exposed to, to help them spell, instead of always coming and asking, or by helping each other. They use each other as tools more so than the word wall.

Dena, who teaches first grade, discussed with me a few students who have been struggling to learn to write. She does not employ traditional remediation tactics, but invites her students to use their peers as models for success. Dena explained one student's progress, "I think she is starting to use students as mentors." She goes on to discuss the progress of a few others using their peers as models, "They are listening to some of the other ones who are filling in the full page or coming up with the more unique ideas. They aren't yelling that they are copying so that is good, they are sharing."

There was no mention of teaching or providing opportunities for students to interact, collaborate, or use tools to promote independent writing from the teachers who had not taken the course.

Self-Regulated Writing Processes

Five out of the six PD teachers mentioned teaching the writing processes and then releasing scaffolding toward student self-regulation. None mentioned the use of prescriptive templates. Kayla, who works with a diverse group of learners, has the challenge of teaching writing to refugee students from a variety of countries. Kayla has resisted the pressure at her school to provide a template, still believing her students are capable of engaging in their own processes for writing. She teaches and expects them to become independent. Kayla remarks proudly on their growth:

Being independent writers is where I feel like they have grown the most, which has to do with all the things they can do. They can do story structure by themselves, they formed paragraphs, they fix their grammar, and they are spelling more easily. We kind of just help each other. They always get with partners and they have to read it to a partner. Reading it aloud and checking first, to make sure there isn't something they can change. Making them think more about it, and the strategies of modeling the thinking.

Graham and Sharon also describe how they work to turn over processes to their students. Sharon starts small and then slowly removes the scaffolding, "To help with the complexity of writing I like to use certain formats to help kids and then they eventually break out of that." She teaches her students to use graphic organizers as a tool to scaffold their processes. "So right now we're using outlines and graphic organizers to help us start

writing... We've had to start little. Then eventually they'll be able to just make their own." Sharon does not want them to over rely on the organizer so she removes the scaffolding. "Once they get used to that they'll move on from there and they'll have it right in their head where they'll be able to move on without it."

Graham shares his unique technique for teaching students to revise their own writing. He teaches his students to use sticky notes to mark their own papers during drafting and revisions. He shares his process:

Once they go through and they write a first draft, they have little sticky notes. I will say let's go through and look at your story and I would like you to find one spot where you really developed the setting, or a spot where you could develop the setting. So they put the sticky note on the margin in the story next to where they want to revise it, or where it's really good.

Even when Graham describes transcribing for a struggling writer in his class, he is coaching the student toward independence. He mentioned how he recorded the student's thoughts and models out loud a writer's inner dialogue, since he had not yet developed this skill on his own. "They are his ideas," says Graham, "It is not like I told him what to say, I was just keeping track of his thoughts." Graham does not give up and take over. He scaffolds toward the goal of independence. "Eventually, by the end of the year, it would be great if he could do this on his own, if he could have that internal dialogue with himself. But, I will probably have to continue to scaffold which is fine."

In contrast, four of six NPD teachers cited templates as the tool they used to teach writing. Amber felt these templates provided students an avenue to increase fluency and

independence. She describes it this way, “It’s kind of interesting in just a month of school kids are starting to be more cognizant, I think, of what they actually have put on that piece of paper themselves.” She goes on to say, “I can’t take credit for it, it’s a *Step up To Writing*, type of thing. It’s all on one page and all programmed out for them. It is so lockstep and that has been amazing.” Amber does not expect her students to write independently, without a template. “Then we end the year with them writing their own fairytales. We do it on the computer, on a program that steps them through.”

Teresa also uses *Step up to Writing* (Auman, 2008), she feels the structure motivates students, “It’s so structured that kids get it, and that’s the motivation right there.” Research sides with Teresa here as one part of motivation to write comes from feeling a sense of competency (Brophy, 1999; Pajares & Valiante, 2006). But that is only half of the story; students must find the writing meaningful (Bruning & Horn, 2000). Since she does not want her students to have to decide what to write about, she picks what she hopes is a meaningful topic, “I try to pick high interest topics that I’m pretty sure are going to motivate them to write. I think the structure of that writing program that we use, gives them enough guidance that they can do it. There is no expectation on Teresa’s part that her students will be able to choose their own engaging topic or master their own writing processes.

There are unmistakably two different perspectives in the way teachers in this study viewed writing and writing instruction. This resulted in two distinct set of expectations for student leaning. Teachers who took the course expected their students to become competent, self regulated writers, in charge of their own decision making. As well, they expected their students to share their knowledge of writing and the writing

processes with each other by engaging in community discourse around writing.

Conversely, NPD teachers did not expect students to make their own decisions regarding their writing and instead provided templates and strict control features to guide students through the production of a written piece.

The similarities and differences in understandings about writing, between PD teachers and NPD teachers, have been made plain. It is apparent from the interview data that teachers' perceptions of themselves as writers and the nature of what writing is has influenced their confidence to teach writing and the importance they place on writing instruction. Those dispositions in turn have influenced their viewpoints and perspectives of writing instruction and expectations for their students as writers. However, the question still remains: will these dissimilar understandings result in differences in classroom practice between the two groups?

Chapter 5 will present findings that compare and contrast teachers' instructional practices.

CHAPTER 5: CLASSROOM LITERACY PRACTICES AND STUDENT LEARNING
OPPORTUNITIES

**The Influences of Intensive Professional Development in Writing on Teacher
Practice**

Chapter 4 outlined clear differences in teachers' understandings and perceptions between teachers who took a university methods course in writing and those who did not. This chapter presents data that indicates links between what teachers said and what they did. Data from the Observational Notes, Writing Observation Framework, and Teacher Daily logs have been analyzed for similarities and differences in teacher practices, first separately and then integrated.

Not surprisingly, these findings reveal that PD teachers transferred shared understandings about writing to the following four shared instructional practices: (1) more frequent use of research supported practices consistent with a process approach; (2) had their students apply their knowledge of writing and foundational skills in the context of authentic writing in multiple genres for a variety of purposes and audiences; (3) purposeful social interaction and collaboration was modeled, expected, and occurred throughout the writing process within a community of writers; and (4) Self- Regulation and autonomy over decision-making was scaffolded, expected, and occurred throughout the writing processes. These similarities are in sharp contrast to the practices of teachers who did not take the course.

To make clear how all these data sources contribute individually to the integrated findings on teacher practices and student learning opportunities, findings of each data source will be presented separately and then integrated. Figure 5.1 details the different aspects of these differences in teacher practice and students opportunities to learn by data source.

Observational Notes Findings	WOF Findings	Daily Log Trends
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Took a Process Approach •Transferred self regulation to students •Used multiple genres, purposes and audiences •Engaged in social interaction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Taught the writing processes •Used research- supported practices •Integrated skill and strategy instruction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •More time teaching writing •More uninterrupted time to write •More writing skill and strategy instruction •More research supported practices

Figure 5.1 Differences in Teacher Practice and Student Learning Opportunities by Data Source

Observational Notes

Analysis of the observational notes suggest that teachers who took the course had four commonalities in practice that were connected to their understandings about writing: (1) they took a process approach to teaching writing; (2) they worked purposefully to transfer regulation and autonomy over those writing processes to students; (3) they provided frequent opportunities for students to write in multiple genres for a variety of purposes and audiences; and (4) instruction included multiple opportunities throughout the writing process for social interaction and took place within a community of writers.

Process Approach to Writing Instruction

Teachers who took the course took a process approach to writing as defined by Pritchard and Honeycutt (2007; 2006). The process approach is recommended as best practices in writing instruction (National Council for Teachers of English; International Reading Association, 1996; National Writing Project, 2006; Graham, MacArthur, & Fitzgerald, 2007). As well, teaching writing processes leads to higher average writing proficiency among students (Goldstein & Carr, 1996).

Across the four classroom observations, teachers who had taken the class engaged students on average in all five elements of writer's workshop. In comparison teachers who did not take the course used an average of three. These elements were: (a) focus lessons; (b) peer conferencing; (c) teachers conferences; (c) sustained writing; and (d) curriculum integration.

Teachers who took the course explicitly taught the processes of planning, drafting, revising, editing, and publishing. They were observed teaching all five process components in comparison to three of the processes, which varied, for teachers who did not take the course.

Another commonality of the course was a shared vocabulary around writing instruction. Across four observations participating teachers demonstrated on-going use of writing vocabulary in the areas of the 6+1 traits of writing (Culham, 2005), formatting elements, writing processes, genres, stylistic devices, and content vocabulary, demonstrating the use of five out of six elements. For example, Graham used both genre and process-specific vocabulary when speaking to students when he asked, "In the books you published you may have written a personal narrative, raise your hand if that is what

you chose?” Kayla used process language when she said, “I want to check your ideas before you start to write....there will be less to revise if the planning is right.” The students did not need further explanation; they shared the same understandings regarding the content-specific vocabulary.

Even primary teachers used content-specific vocabulary with their very young writers. Dena explained a new genre and matched stylistic device to her first grade students. “The teachers here, all wrote a *cinquain* in our writing class, in the poem I wrote, I said, ‘gentle as a rain’, that is called *simile*.” Dena is careful to define her terms and then engage her students in writing cinquain poetry with plenty of practice crafting similes as a whole group.

To highlight this consistency, NPD teachers were observed to use only two of the vocabulary elements when teaching writing. Table 5.1 details the frequency counts for elements of the process approach by broad codes. In addition to taking a process approach to instruction, PD teachers provided multiple opportunities for their students to make important decisions about their own writing.

Table 5.1 Observation Frequency Counts for Process Approach

Process Approach	Possible	PD Teachers	NPD Teachers
P=Possible: Total number of elements		Average # of elements Observed	Average # of elements Observed
Workshop Elements	5	5	3
Process Features	5	5	3
Vocabulary	6	5	2

Teaching and Encouraging Self-Regulation

In concert with the process approach, PD teachers encouraged students to self-regulate their writing and writing processes. Self-regulation is as important to writing as

meta-cognition is to reading (Zimmerman & Risenberg, 1997). Decision making, goal setting, and monitoring text is a crucial skill to coherent writing. Data analysis of the coded observational notes found PD teachers gave students more opportunities to make decisions about their own writing and processes and created environments that scaffolded student independence. Students were responsible for the selection of their own topics, provided space and time to move recursively through the writing processes, and relied on their peers for feedback and suggestions.

Self-Regulated Writers. PD Teachers consistently provided student choice. They permitted students to self-regulate: (a) choice of assignment or topic; (b) choice of work space; (c) choice of collaboration; (d) and self-determined pace at least once during the four observations. NPD Teachers permitted students choice on average, over two elements over the four visits, with one teacher providing no observed autonomy and one teacher demonstrating all four.

Amy, a PD teacher, starts teaching her first graders how to make their own writing choices early. She coaches them with comments like, “Who will tell me what you will choose?” and “Maybe you could start brainstorming which idea you will choose.” Olivia declines decisions regarding her second graders topic in a content area writing project on insects. Her student asks her to choose their topic, “What insect should I choose?” She responds without hesitation with, “I can’t choose your insect.”

PD teachers provided writers with opportunities and practice making critical decisions about their own topic. Likewise, they provided choice about peer collaboration, workspace, and writing materials. Amy reminds her young writers as she moves about during workshop that they have autonomy over these choices: “You will not have to do it

alone; you can do it with a friend,” “Yes, you can choose your coloring tools.” Learning to make choices is the first step in becoming a self-regulated writer.

Environments That Support Self-Regulation. PD Teachers were observed to have self-regulating learning environments on average, four out of the four times observed. In these environments, (a) students were pre-taught procedures to move independently through the writing process; (b) students sought assistance from peers or classroom tools; (c) teachers were free to conference with individual students; and (d) students were given suggestions, but left in charge of their own revision choices. During a focus lesson on revision, one of Graham’s fourth graders explained his revision process. “I can mark with a post-it where I want to revise while I read it. My story is unfolding as I go. We tell our teacher about our changes and he might give suggestions about details or how it goes together.” In Kayla’s fifth grade class a student explained revision to a peer: “She [the teacher] shows us the problem, but we have to make the fixes. She wants us to do the learning.”

This is contrasted with NPD teachers who were never observed running a self-regulated learning environment. Instead, during writing time, students appeared to be over reliant on teacher feedback and direction and depended on the teacher to regulate the writing process during every observation visit. During revision and editing in Alyssa’s fifth grade class, students stood in a line, seven students long, to wait for the teacher to make corrections. There was an abundance of teacher telling and very little problem solving on the students part. The teacher clearly “made the fixes.”

Additional support for this finding was the use of peer conferencing during writer’s workshop by PD teachers. Peer conferencing allowed students to seek help from

each other, leaving the teacher free to conference and goal set with individual students. All PD teachers used peer conferencing during workshop with the exception of one first grade teacher who used sharing. In stark contrast, only one NPD teacher was observed to use peer conferencing during workshop. This is an important finding as the ability of students to use each other as resources leads to more self-regulated classrooms. Table 5.2 details the frequency counts for self-regulation.

Table 5.2 Observation Frequency Counts for Self-Regulation

Self-Regulation		PD Teachers	NPD Teachers
P=Possible: Total number of elements or number of times observed across 4 visits	P	Average # of elements/times Observed	Average # of elements/times Observed
Self-Regulation-Times OBS	4	4	0
Number of autonomy features	4	4	2
Peer Conferencing	4	3	0

Students Write in Multiple Genres for a Variety of Purposes and Audiences

Learning to write for different audiences, contexts, and purposes stretches young writers and leads to student growth (National Writing Project, 2006). PD teachers provided opportunities for students to use writing to communicate to real audiences outside the classroom for authentic purposes. These teachers were observed to have taught on average, four of the five following genres: (a) personal narrative; (b) fiction; (c) poetry; (d) exposition; and (e) persuasive. Unnamed and genres used but not taught were not counted in the codes. This is compared to only one of the genres for teachers who had not taken the class.

PD teachers engaged their students in authentic purposes for writing every time they were observed, compared to one out the four observations for NPD teachers. Teachers were considered to have engaged students in authentic purpose if students were

writing to learn, to think, to inform, or for self-expression. Writing for skill practice or to a prompt alone was not counted. The purpose of the piece had to be made clear to the students.

During observations, it was noted if teachers explicitly stated the audience for students writing and whether the audience was inside or outside the classroom. PD teachers provided a clear audience for writing on average four out of four observations, contrasted with only one lesson out of the four, for NPD teachers. As well, five out of six of the PD teachers provided students an opportunity to write for an outside audience, while only one of the NPD teachers provided that opportunity.

Amy, who took the course, engaged her students in authentic scientific writing. In her first grade science lesson, she taught writing techniques used by scientists; Amy asked the class,

Do you know what real scientists do when they find a new species? They write a description so other people can learn about it. Real scientists always have a photograph or drawing of their species so people can understand your writing better.

She went on to teach her students how to create and insert a diagram into their writing to make their description clear. The students chose an insect to research on their own and then Amy explained that together they would make a documentary to teach other students at the school and adults about insects. The students seemed motivated, knowing their writing would contribute to the knowledge of others. Amy showed her students a short film, which provided a model for their work. “Our movie will be about

insects. We can use books to find out about insects, but we are going to see a video to see how someone else did it.”

Even in first grade, students of PD teachers are provided opportunities and instruction to write in content area genres such as science. In addition, they used their writing to communicate their new knowledge to real audiences for the purpose of informing others. This type of informational writing is stressed in the Common Core State Standards and is expected at every grade. However, these artifacts of student learning were not created in isolation. Both science and writing subject matter knowledge were simultaneously and jointly constructed throughout the writing process.

Table 5.3 Observation Frequency Count Findings for Multiple Genres and Authentic Purposes

Multiple Genres and Purposes		PD Teachers	NPD Teachers
P=Possible: Total number of elements or number of times observed across 4 visits	P	Average # of elements/times Observed	Average # of elements/times Observed
Number of Genres	5	4	1
Authentic Purpose	4	4	1
Audience	4	4	1

Engaging Students in Social Interaction Throughout the Writing Processes

An author, however young, can never be separated from his or her own personal context or tools (Vygotsky, 1978). Writing is co-constructed through social interaction within a community of peers (Bruffee, 1986; Nystrand, 1989). It is a social act involving communication between the author, his context, and an audience. In order for students to gain experience with self-regulating the distinct decisions-making processes surrounding their writing and their audience, they must be engaged both socially and emotionally with

a community of writers (Moffett, 1981). Through this process peers can be both models and provide feedback from the voice of their future audience.

PD teachers engaged their students four out of the four visits in: (1) whole class sharing routines; (2) opportunities to share with peers in small groups; (3) opportunities for students to share with partners, and (4) solicitations for student to share their understandings or problems while engaged in the writing processes, as well as their products. Unfortunately, students whose teachers were not afforded professional development only engaged in an average of two of the four activities.

All PD teachers had expectations for peer collaboration. This can be contrasted with vastly different results for NPD teachers. Peer collaboration was only an expectation for two out of the six teachers and they used on average only .05 of the activities. However, peer interactions alone do not improve writing. Feedback from peers must be guided by specific criteria to be effective (Hillocks, 1986). Findings for teaching, modeling, and guiding peer interactions had to be differentiated by grade level due to the distinctly different developmental expectations for collaboration by age.

All PD teachers, grades four through six, explicitly modeled and taught peer collaboration to the whole class. They provided focus lessons, guided practice, and even some evaluation of peer interactions. This was not observed for any of the NPD upper grade teachers. Graham asked his students to self-assess their collaboration after a focus lesson on being a respectful writing partner. He asks, “What have you learned about working with your writing partner? What would make you a more responsible writing partner?” The students discuss their collaboration and set goals for their next workshop.

The first through third grade teachers, as a whole, had a tendency to model peer interactions, giving feedback as they interacted with pairs or small groups. One lower grade NPD teacher modeled giving oral feedback to students within a whole group setting. For example, Amber gathered her first graders on the carpet to share their writing. She modeled peer interactions in front of the whole class. She held up a piece of student writing and says, “Remember you want your comments to be right to the point.” Then, she modeled, “You have five sentences, Wow, you thought about the details. You have a period after each sentence, how did you do such good spelling?” She then invites a student up to share and the class practices giving pointed feedback as a whole group. Except for this case, lower grade teachers were not observed to teach explicit lessons on peer interactions.

Peer interactions included both sharing and conferencing. All PD teachers used sharing techniques to support writing and five went on to utilize peer conferencing during workshop. During peer conferencing, students go beyond the informal sharing of ideas or products and take on more formalized roles in providing each other targeted feedback before, during, and after writing. This finding was reversed for NPD teachers with only one teacher who was observed to use peer conferencing during workshop. Tessa, who did not take the class, tried to quiet her students down for workshop. She thinks workshop should be quiet. “Settle into your stories so people can think, it should sound like writers workshop.” In classrooms of teachers who did not take the class, writing was done individually, instead of collaboratively. Graham has procedures for respectful collaboration; he tells students, “Work on your own and then signal when you are ready to work with a partner.” This allows for both individual and collaborative writing time.

Table 5.4 Observation Frequency Count Findings for Writing as a Social Act

Writing as a Social Act	P	PD Teachers	NPD Teachers
P= number of elements or Yes/no: did or did not enact at least 1 element			
Number of sharing tactics used	4	4	2
Used Peer Collaboration strategies	Y/N	6	2
Taught Peer interactions	Y/N	3	1
Used Peer Conferencing	Y/N	5	1

In summary, the observational notes provide evidence that four important similarities in teacher practice exist among PD teachers: (1) they took a balanced process approach to teaching writing; (2) they worked purposefully to transfer regulation and autonomy over those writing processes to students; (3) they provided frequent opportunities for students to write in multiple genres for a variety of purposes and audiences; and (4) instruction included multiple opportunities throughout the writing process for social interaction and took place in a community of writers. These practices were not observed in the practices of NPD teachers. Next, teacher practice will be viewed through the lenses of the Writing Observational Framework (Henk et al., 2004).

Writing Observation Framework (WOF)

The WOF findings provided an opportunity to take a quantitative view of teacher practice. These findings quantify well-researched practices used by teachers in this study. Individual participant case summaries were combined to create group percentage summaries to allow for comparisons between the PD teachers and NPD teachers. Individual item summaries within each construct were also conducted and are included in Appendix B.2. Significant differences between the two groups are presented in Table 5.5.

Table 5.5 WOF Percentage of Observed Effective Practices

% of total Observed Effective Practices	PD Teachers	NPD Teachers	t-value
Process Approach			
Pre Writing	97%	69%	4.08*
Drafting	94%	61%	3.53*
Conferencing	98%	73%	7.04*
Editing/Pub	93%	56%	2.92*
Effective Practices/Climate			
Practices	92%	60%	2.97*
Climate	96%	67%	4.93*
Skills/Strategies Instruction			
Skills/Strategies	96%	49%	4.04*

Table 5.5 Note: * indicates significant p-value, less than .05

Findings WOF

These findings revealed significant difference between groups and corroborate the findings of the observation data. They have been grouped for discussion into three areas: (1) PD teachers taught and engaged their students in the writing processes of prewriting, drafting, conferencing, editing, and publishing more often than NPD teachers; (2) teachers who took the course scored significantly higher for use of effective practices within a classroom climate that actively valued and supported student writing; (3) students in classrooms where teachers took the course were exposed to significantly more writing skill and explicit strategy instruction applied in the context of student writing.

Process Approach. PD teachers engaged students in more opportunities to learn and practice the writing processes. Individual elements within this finding that produced the largest disparity between groups, make clearer differences in practice before, during, and after writing.

There were significant differences in teacher practice between groups for prewriting activities ($p=.002$). Before writing, PD teachers communicated aloud the type and purpose of writing students would engage in. In other words, they had clearly articulated writing objectives and models of how to meet their expectations. Also, they reviewed students' prewriting organizers and provided verbal feedback prior to drafting more often than their counterparts.

During drafting, PD teachers had practices that were significantly different than NPD teachers ($p=.011$). During writing, PD teachers more often stressed the importance of getting ideas down on paper without worrying about conventions. This scaffolded cognitive processes and promoted fluid drafting. They consistently reminded their students to be aware of their audience, to use tools for self-regulation, and they circulated from student to student providing more individual feedback. These significant differences between groups were also true during conferencing ($p=.0001$). PD teachers encouraged and used peer conferencing, which freed them up to negotiate writing goals with individual students. These teachers engaged their students in their own problem solving during conferences, while in contrast, NPD teachers simply told or marked what to fix.

For activities that occurred after writing, the differences between PD and NPD teachers were also significant ($p=.019$). PD teachers taught their students more strategies and provided more tools for students to self-regulate their own editing and publishing. They more frequently provided editing check lists, engaged students in peer editing, and held individual editing conferences with students prior to publishing.

Effective Practices and Climates. Creating an environment where writing is valued and actively promoted creates a climate for learning. There were significant differences between PD teachers and NPD teachers in this area ($p=.002$). PD teachers more frequently talked about what good writers do and provided models from mentor texts. As well, they promoted positive and supportive social interaction and participated in learning with their students, by writing collaboratively with them. This environment provided a backdrop for the implementation of effective practices that were used significantly more often by the PD teachers than the NPD teachers ($p=.014$). In PD teacher's classrooms, students were more often permitted choice over their topics, given access to technology, and had their activities differentiated or adapted to meet their needs.

Skills and Strategies Instruction. Teaching writing demands careful scaffolding and creating lessons that traverse the entire writing process (Pritchard & Honeycutt, 2006). PD teachers engaged students in significantly more explicit skill instruction, and taught using instructional strategies that scaffolded students' independent use of the skills in their own writing, ($p=.002$). First, teachers more often provided a clear explanation of the skill or strategy to be learned and its purposes. Next, they modeled the strategy and showed how it would be applied in appropriate situations. Last, they scaffolded the use of the skill by providing multiple opportunities for students to use the skill in meaningful contexts.

These findings replicate and confirm the findings from the observational data, which found that teachers who took the course taught using a process approach, engaged students in social interaction within a community of writers, and engaged students in

writing activities that had authentic purpose. As well, both the observational note findings and the WOF findings are in agreement with the findings on teacher's conceptual understandings of writing and writing instruction. Next, the findings from the Teacher Daily Logs will be presented.

Teacher Daily Logs

The findings from the Teacher Daily Logs provide self-reported data on how teachers in this study allocated their Language Arts instructional time. Independent sample t-tests were run on SPSS 19, looking for differences between groups for the weighted daily averages of time teachers spent teaching: (1) both writing and foundational skills; (2) foundation skills in isolation, such as grammar, spelling, and handwriting; (3) writing instruction in genres, writing process, product features, or vocabulary; (4) uninterrupted time to write.

In addition t-tests were also used to measure the differences between groups for the average weekly number of: (1) writing focus lessons; (2) effective practices; (3) grammar focus lessons; and (4) amount of teacher feedback.

Results were insignificant for differences between groups. I believe the reasons for this are twofold. First, statistical significance is difficult to achieve with such a small number of participants in each group (n=6). Next, as discussed in the Methods section, there were differences in understandings of the vocabulary on the logs between those who had taken the class and those who had not. Those who had taken the class had more sophisticated understandings of the terminology. This could have lead to both under and over reporting (Rowan & Correnti, 2009). Last, participants reported time on task by selecting from a range, for example, 30-60 minutes. I believe these ranges were too wide

and did not provide the level of discrimination that the entry of exact minutes would have.

Looking for Disconfirming Evidence

While these insignificant findings did not confirm differences between groups, trends in the data did not disconfirm or disagree with other findings, themes, or data sources presented in this study. The trends in the data followed with the literature on best practices as well the presentation of findings in this study. In the sections that follow, I will present data from the daily logs related to the use of instructional time on writing and teachers' use of best practices.

Aspects of Time

Research on schools with impressive Language Arts scores on State Assessments found that these schools spent at least 40 minutes a day on writing instruction and practice (Pressley et al., 2007). PD teachers were 98% to that goal with 39 minutes of writing and foundational skills instruction as opposed to 33 minutes for NPD teachers. Additionally, PD teachers tended to spend more of their language arts time teaching writing and providing opportunities for uninterrupted writing practice. Conversely, the NPD teachers focused a greater percentage of their language arts time on teaching foundational skills, such as grammar, spelling, and handwriting. Figure 5.2 provides a chart of the trends in time while Figure 5.3 shows the trends in practice.

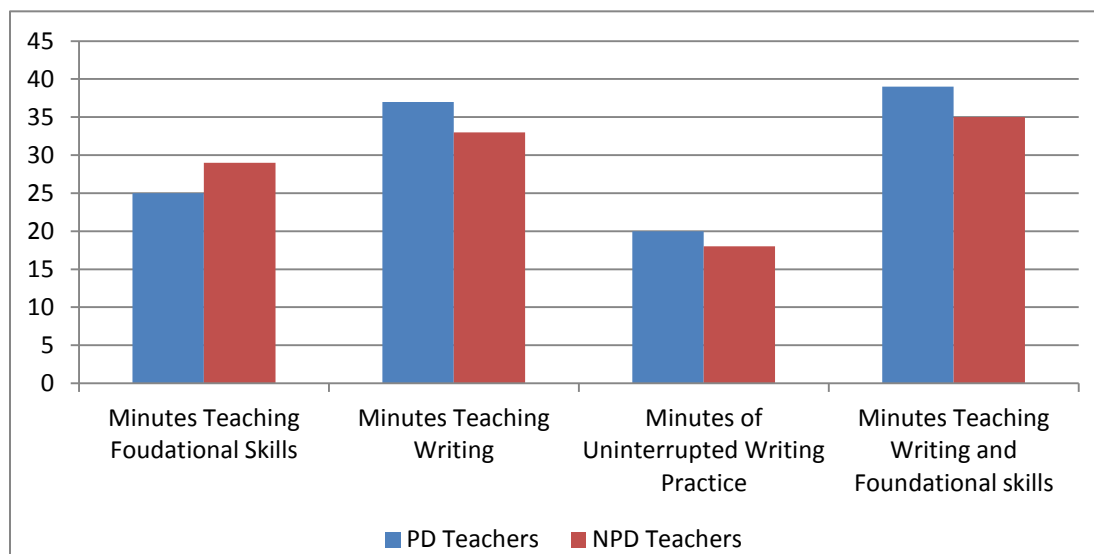


Figure 5.2 Trends in Log Data: Weighted Daily Average of Time

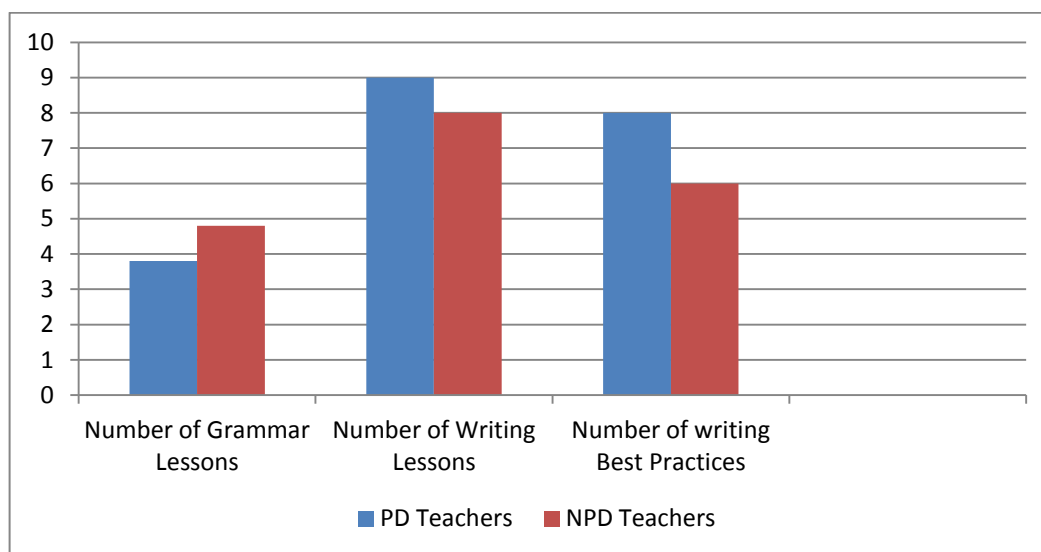


Figure 5.3 Trends in Log Data: Teacher Practice

Trends in Effective Practices. PD teachers self-reported teaching slightly more focus lessons and average number of best practices than NPD teachers. Conversely, NPD teachers reported teaching more grammar lessons than teachers with the course.

The purpose for describing these generalities found in the Daily Logs is to better understand the teachers in this study and to seek any contradictions within the overlapping data sources. These trends when integrated and compared with the other data sources found no disagreement and only supported the findings on both teachers' understandings about writing and teachers writing practice. Next the data are consolidated and integrated in order to strengthen and elaborate on the separate data sources.

Integrated Findings

In this section, findings from all data sources will now be converged, and then integrated. First, the quantitative findings from the daily logs and the WOF on teacher practice are converged. Next, the quantitative findings from the observational notes on teacher practice are compared to the interview data to see if teacher viewpoints and perceptions of writing align with their practice. Last, the qualitative and quantitative findings are integrated.

Converged Quantitative Findings

Both the self-reported log data and the observational WOF data overlap and strengthen findings between sources. Despite insignificant findings in the log data for differences between groups, consistent patterns in the data suggest no disagreements with the WOF data. These patterns provide overlapping evidence between log data trends and significant differences between groups in the observation data occur in the areas of Teacher Practices and Skills and Strategies. These converged data support the contention that PD teachers demonstrated more frequent use of research supported practices.

Additionally, students in those teachers' classrooms were given more frequent opportunities to learn and practice skills and strategies in the context of their own writing.

Converged Qualitative Links between Perceptions and Practice

To allow for comparisons between what teachers said they did and what they were observed to do, the inductive interviews data was coded using the predetermined observational codes. The findings from the interview data was overlaid by major codes and studied for similar trends. When placing the results side by side, the trends surrounding the four main findings of the observational data were similar. This analysis led to an important finding.

Converged Qualitative Finding

Converged findings suggest that teachers' perceptions and understandings of writing influenced their classroom practice and student learning opportunities. PD teachers: (1) had a process view of writing and taught using a balanced process approach; (2) viewed writing as a social act and taught writing as a social act; (3) understood the importance of self-regulation and provided students opportunities to make their own decisions; (4) understood the importance of writing for authentic purpose and had students write in multiple genres for real audiences. These links between understanding and practice provided confirming evidence and strengthened the results of the separate sources. Figures 5.4 through 5.7 compare the findings in the interviews data with that of the observations data for writing as a social act, process approach, self-regulation and multiple genres.

Qualitative Data Convergence of Interview and Observational Results

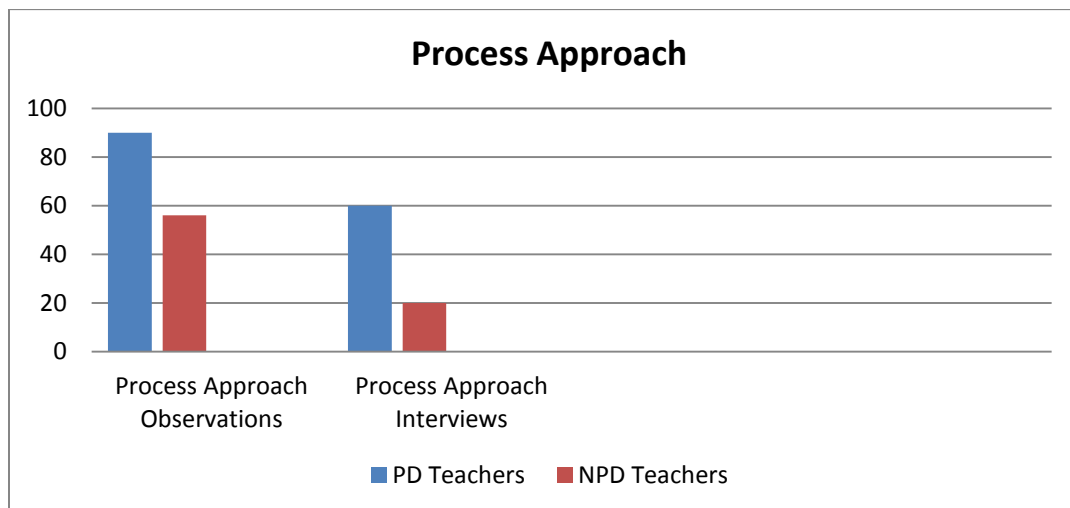


Figure 5.4 Convergences of Interview and Observational Results for Process Approach

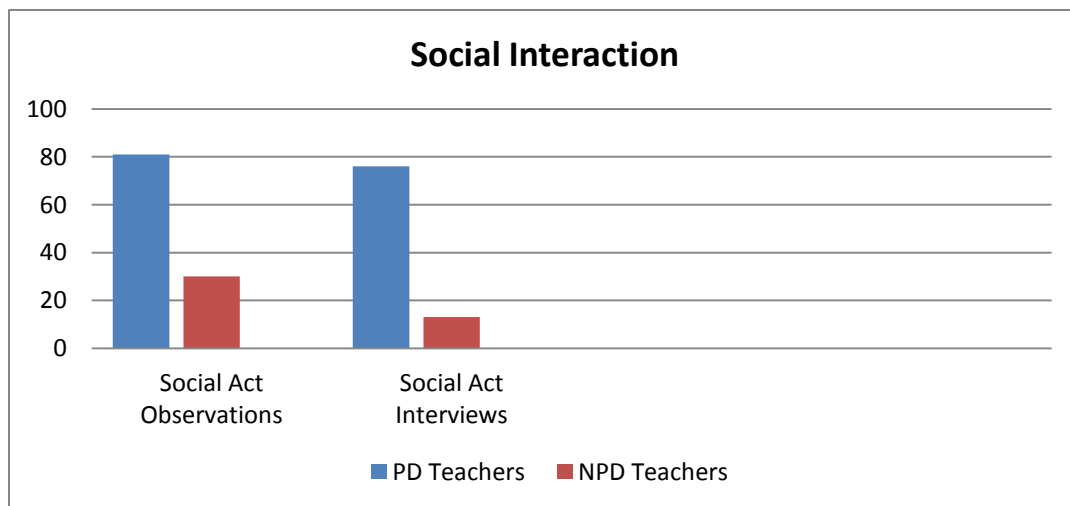


Figure 5.5 Convergences of Interview and Observational Results for Social Interaction

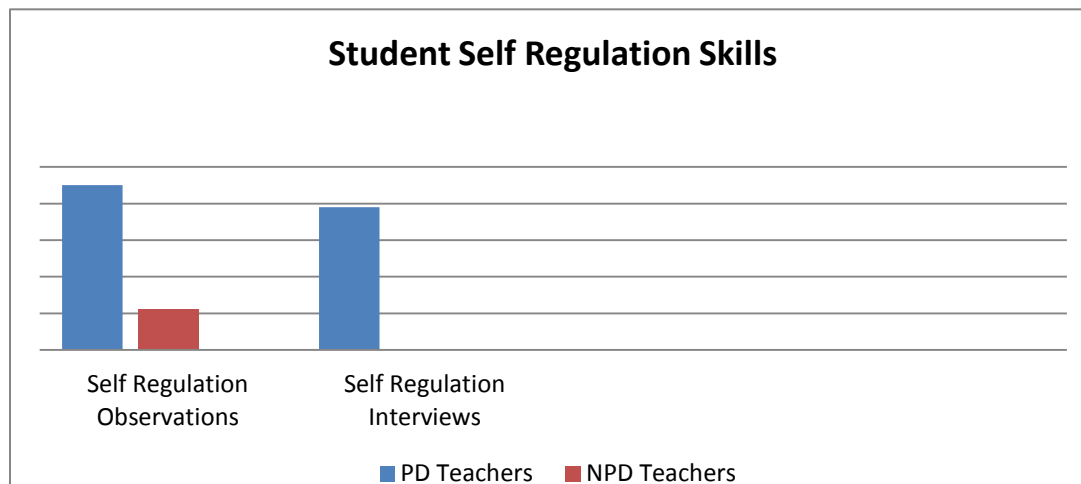


Figure 5.6 Convergences of Interview and Observational Results for Self-Regulation

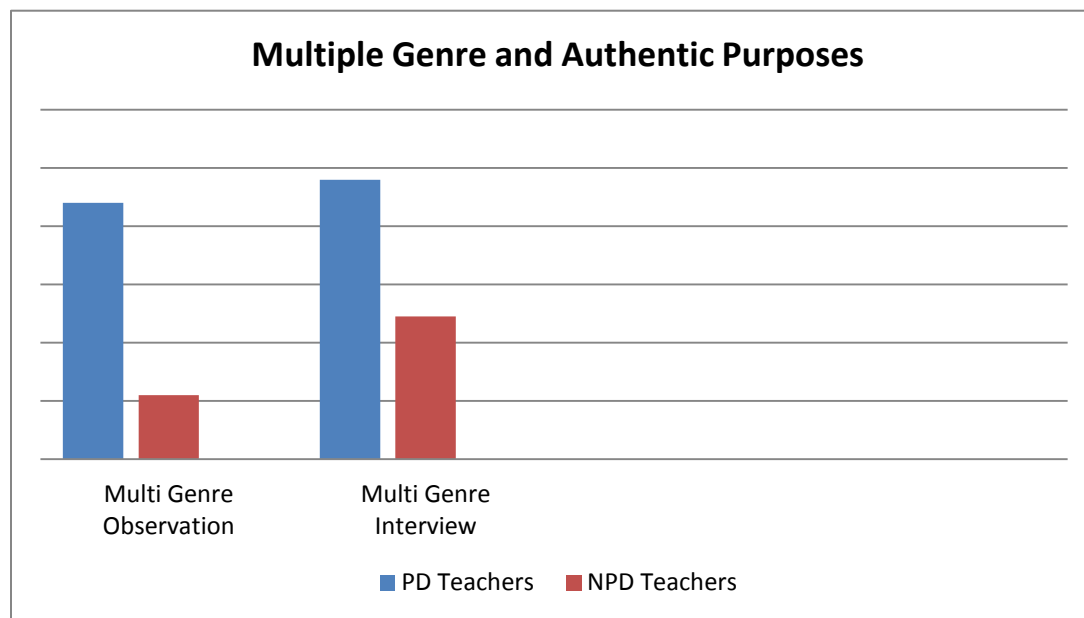


Figure 5.7 Convergences of Interview and Observational Results for Genres and Purposes

These two data sources, although different, converge on the same conclusions. PD teachers viewed writing as a social act and providing more opportunities for their students to collaborate, analyze, and brainstorm with peers. Teachers taught and students learned using a process approach. Students were taught strategies, given tools, and provided opportunities to self-regulate their own writing processes and products. These teachers provided opportunities for students to write in multiple genres for authentic purposes and audiences.

Integration of Data

All data, both quantitative and qualitative, was then integrated to find overlapping agreements between the sources. These agreements not only triangulated the findings, but added multiple definitions and examples of the themes.

Integrated Findings on Practice and Understandings

The four data sources overwhelmingly agreed upon the following commonalities in understandings and practice for teachers who took the course:

- More frequent use of research-supported practices consistent with a process approach that required complex understandings of writing.
- An integrated framework that was reflected in instructional practices that provided opportunities for students to apply their knowledge of skills and strategies in the context of authentic writing with multiple genres, purposes, and audiences.

- Purposeful social interaction and collaboration was believed to be an effective practice and it was modeled, expected, and occurred throughout the writing process within a community of writers.
- Self-regulation and autonomy over decision-making was believed to be an effective practice that was scaffolded, expected, and occurred throughout the writing processes.

It is important to remember that these understandings and practices were not common among the teachers who did not take the class. As well, after analyzing links to the course, it was found that teachers were not only enacting what they learned in the professional development, but how they learned it, by providing opportunities for their students to learn using strategies and methods presented in the course. Chapter 6 will present these links to the course.

CHAPTER 6: LINKS TO THE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Links to the Course

The integrated findings have demonstrated convincing links to the course. First, there existed a common set of shared understandings and practices among PD teachers despite differences in school and district contexts. Second, those understandings and practices were not shared by NPD teachers, suggesting that these commonalities were developed while in the course. However, because it is difficult to establish links between professional development and teacher practice (Darling-Hammond, 2006), additional data sources have been converged that further strengthen links from the major findings on teachers' understandings and practice to the PD course.

Major findings of differences between PD teachers and NPD teachers in this study will be referred to in Chapter 6 by their italicized, abbreviated names as follows: (1) more frequent use of research-supported practices consistent with a *process approach*; (2) use of an *integrated framework* in which teachers provided opportunities for students to apply their knowledge of skills and strategies in the context of authentic writing with multiple genres, purposes, and audiences; (3) *purposeful social interaction* and collaboration was believed to be an effective practice and it was modeled, expected, and occurred throughout the writing process within a community of writers; and (4) *self-regulation* over decision-making was believed to be an effective practice that was scaffolded, expected, and occurred throughout the writing processes. The PD course was

purposefully designed to build capacity for the understandings and practices embedded in the major findings through developing teachers' dispositions, knowledge, and skills surrounding writing and writing instruction. Working backwards from the findings to the course provided additional support for these existing links.

The major findings were linked back to the writing methods course in four ways:

(1) PD teachers were observed by researchers to be enacting what was learned in the course, in their classrooms; (2) PD teachers self-reported direct connections between the course and their practice in the interviews; (3) observations conducted during a section of the writing PD course documented links between pedagogies and practices experienced in the course and those teachers were enacting; and (4) a survey of the course documents linked the course content with the findings on teacher practice. Additionally, there are parallels with these findings and an earlier study conducted on the undergraduate offerings of this course, which has similar course content and pedagogies (Martin & Dismuke, 2011). Figure 6.1 shows the links from the teachers' understandings and practice to the PD course.

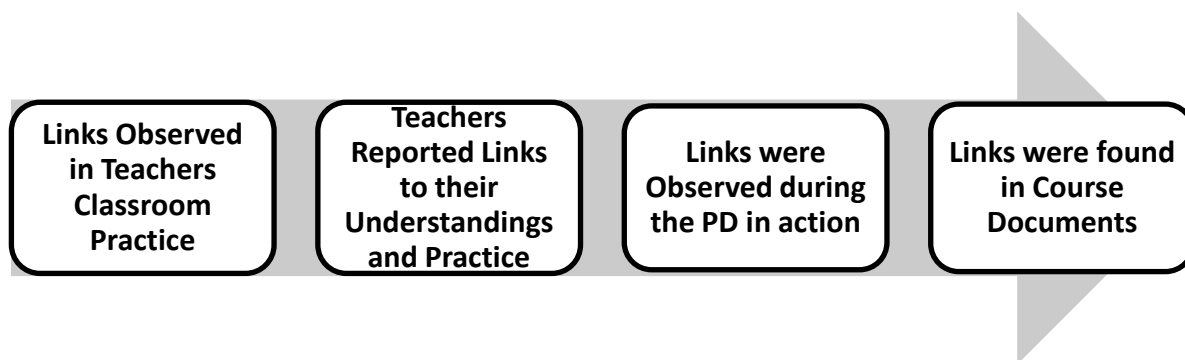


Figure 6.1 Links from Course to Practice

Triangulation of these links from classroom practice to the PD course required an alignment of this study's findings on teachers' dispositions, understandings, and practices with what the PD instructor was observed to say and do, and had stated in her course documents. These course documents explicitly listed course activities, readings and topics, as well as course goals and objectives. These course goals were based on teacher education language arts standards set forth by the National Council of Teacher of English; International Reading Association (1996). Goals had to be adapted for this writing course, as there were no specific standards for writing at the time. Figures 6.2, 6.4, and 6.6 provide the aligned links between sources. These links are organized by: (1) teachers' dispositions, (2) knowledge, and (3) skills. The complete data display can be found in Appendix B.6. The instructor intended for teachers in the course to organize their own learning, as well as their student's learning, within a framework of dispositions knowledge, and skills. This is stated in an overview of course objectives in the PD course syllabus.

Guiding students' development of knowledge, skills, and positive dispositions in the area of literacy will be one of the most essential aspects of your role as an elementary teacher. The goal of this course is to help you develop and deepen knowledge about writing processes, elements of written products, and thoughtful teaching practices that promote successful literacy learning and positive dispositions toward writing in elementary classrooms.

Table 6.1 Dispositions: Links from Classroom to PD Course

Dispositions				
Links to Major Findings	Enacted in PD Teachers Classrooms	Stated as Influential by Teachers	Observed in the PD Course	Listed in PD course Documents
3.Purposeful Social Interaction	Worked to develop their students self-image and confidence as writers through goal-related teacher and peer verbal feedback & sharing and displaying of student writing	100% felt the course added to their self-image and confidence as writers and teachers of writing.	Instructor worked to uncover previous dispositions, provided opportunities to develop a positive self-image as a writer through, freewrites, reflections, group discussions, modeled goal related feedback & sharing and displaying of student writing.	Goal: <i>Teachers display positive dispositions related to writing and the teaching of writing. Teachers view professional development as a career-long effort and responsibility.</i> Feedback Guideline sheet. Course reading 6+1 traits feedback.
3.Purposeful Social Interaction	Taught writing and encouraged sharing within a community of practice. Teachers shared their own writing. Students shared writing with each other.	100% identified sharing their writing in class as influencing their practice and dispositions about their writing.	Developed and shared writing within in a community of practice regularly, interviewed each other, practiced inviting feedback.	Goal: <i>Teachers understand how to establish literate environments that foster reading and writing.</i>

From the Classroom Back to the PD Course: Developing Dispositions

As stated in the course syllabus, one goal of the writing methods course was to develop positive dispositions toward writing and writing instruction and to view professional development as a career-long effort and responsibility (Martin S., 2010).

Dena certainly reflects the dispositions of a lifelong learner when she says, “I am still a work in progress; I am constantly trying to improve.” Figure 6.3 from the course syllabus documents denotes the assessed assignments and activities that met this goal.

Standard	Assessment
<p>Standard 5. Profession Development</p> <p><i>Teachers display positive dispositions related to writing and the teaching of writing. Teachers view professional development as a career-long effort and responsibility.</i></p>	<p>Responses to reading/freewrites</p> <p>Participation in class discussion</p> <p>Classroom application and inquiry</p> <p>Self-selected project</p>

Figure 6.2 Excerpt from Writing Course syllabus, Standard 5. Professional Development

Emma, the course instructor, was observed using what she called *freewrites* to access prior knowledge and dispositions toward writing. She asked students to surface their memories about how they learned to write, how they feel about writing, and how they feel about sharing their writing. She asked the students to share their dispositions about writing in a community building, class discussion. She explained that many teachers have forgotten what it is like to write for their own purposes; in this activity, negative feelings about previous writing experiences have a chance to surface. Students joined together to create class norms that they agreed would provide an environment of safety. Opportunities to construct new dispositions were provided through a series of carefully planned multi-genre writing activities. All of the PD teachers reported that the class added to their self-image and confidence as a writer and as a teacher of writing. Graham said, “You know to be honest it had been a long time since I had done just writing.”

Teachers were observed to share their writing with each other in the class. Emma modeled providing non-threatening feedback and passed out guidelines for giving positive feedback. She showed them how to provide, “words to glow as well as words to

grow.” This helped develop a community of writers. Teachers experienced a nurturing, safe environment designed to support writing growth. Sharon experienced the importance of establishing a community of writers. She said, “What was nice with this class it was more intimate because you were able to share with her [Emma] and share with the people who you felt comfortable with, because you knew the people in the class.” Teachers experienced the power of social interaction in the course as a tool for them as learners, writers, and teachers and were all observed to provide their own students the same powerful pedagogy in their classrooms.

Teachers developed confidence not just in their own writing, but in their ability to teach writing through the application and inquiry assignment. Teachers created lessons based on their new knowledge and came back to class to share with one another. Amy said,

Well, as I was taking the writing course, I started to try that style of writing and lesson in my classroom. I liked it so much, that I did an independent study to do a yearlong writing curriculum. I was so excited about that. I really, really wanted to put something together, adding in what I felt I had learned from that course.

All of the PD teachers reported feeling confident about teaching writing.

Classroom observations on the WOF confirmed these links with all elements of a positive classroom environment present 96% of all classroom observations.

Teachers’ positive dispositions about writing and writing instruction seemed to be transferred to students in the classroom. Olivia explained, “I think because I like writing, the kids get more excited, because I get excited about it. I try to find ways to encourage creative writing and ways to acknowledge when they are writing on their own.” She

continued to explain how her excitement about instruction has impacted one student in particular.

I have a student here, she has this huge journal here that I've just noticed that she's writing everything that happens in the day, and she writes it every day, just writes in this journal. They have their own writing journals but this is a journal that she started all by herself.

Feeling positive about writing opened the door for learning more about the content area domain of writing. There were many connections from the classroom to the course when it came to developing content knowledge. One goal was clear from course documents: the development of content knowledge was not an isolated event. It was clear from course documents that the development of subject matter knowledge was meant to foster teacher decisions-making, leading to writing teachers who could blend knowledge with practice. The following quote (Fenstermacher, 1978) appears in the syllabus:

The goal of teacher education...is not to indoctrinate or train teachers to behave in prescribed ways, but to educate teachers to reason soundly about their teaching as well as to perform skillfully. Sound reasoning requires both a process of thinking about what they are doing and an adequate base of facts, principles, and experience from which to reason. Teachers must learn to use their knowledge base to provide the grounds for choices and actions.

Table 6.2 Knowledge: Links from Classroom to Course

Knowledge				
Links to Major Findings	Enacted in PD Teachers Classrooms	Stated as Influential by Teachers	Observed in the PD Course	Listed in PD course Documents
1.Process Approach	PD teachers were observed to use/make Anchor Charts & Graphic Organizers and Visual representations of processes	100% of teachers identified social construction of knowledge as important to their learning and practice.	Students were engaged in the co-construction of knowledge through social interaction, discourse around readings, book club, making collaborative visual representations, and joint decomposition of the writing processes	Jointly Constructing Knowledge <i>Be fully prepared to participate thoughtfully in the various kinds of activities and discussions that will constitute the ways of learning in this course</i>
1.Process Approach	100% of teachers were observed to teach using a process approach in a workshop format. Used peer collaboration through out	100% of PD teachers reported using a process approach in the interviews 100% mentioned the importance of social interaction	Role of the Writer Experienced writing processes recursively in the role of the writer in a workshop model with social interaction through out Role of the Learner Decomposing the writing processes. Focus lessons on Processes	Process Approach Assignments Portfolio Workshop Focus lessons Decomposing processes/Play Doh Readings
3.Purposeful Social Interaction	OBS and WOF significant for Providing students with opportunities to write in multiple genres for a variety of purposes and audiences	100% reported having an integrated framework	Role of Writer Experienced writing in Multiple Genres in the role of the writer Role of Learner Decomposed Genres/charts Readings on genres	Multiple Genres, purposes & Audiences Assignments Writing across Genres Genre Charts Anchor Charts Portfolio Readings
1.Process Approach	OBS and WOF significant for consistent use of content vocabulary in the classroom with students to discuss writing with a shared vocabulary	100% used consistent content area vocabulary during the interview to discuss their practice	Instructor stresses the use of content vocabulary 6+1 traits book developed and defined vocabulary Multiple opportunities to use vocabulary with peers and instructor	Use of Content Vocabulary Assignments 6+1 traits books Course readings Book club Lecture modeling

From the Course to the Classroom: Developing Content Knowledge

Another goal documented in the course syllabus was for teachers to demonstrate knowledge of psychological, sociological, and linguistic foundations of reading and writing processes and instruction (Martin S. , 2010). This was accomplished in the course through several means. Content Knowledge was taught in the course through the co-construction of knowledge, based on course readings, lectures, and shared decomposition of processes and genres through visual representations. These learning activities were linked to teacher's understandings about the nature of writing and the writing process. These understandings were expressed by teachers in their own classrooms when the interviews and observations agreed that PD teachers took a process approach to instruction with an integrated framework. Additionally, the integrated data was also significant for PD teacher's consistent use of content vocabulary. Figure 6.5 detail activities in the course that meets the subject matter knowledge standard.

Table 6.3 Excerpts from Writing Course, Standard 1: Subject Matter Knowledge

Course standards	Assessment/Activity
<p>Standard 1. Subject matter knowledge</p> <p>Teachers demonstrate knowledge of psychological, sociological, and linguistic foundations of reading and writing processes and instruction.</p>	<p>Responses to reading/freewrites</p> <p>Participation in class discussions</p> <p>Writing portfolios</p> <p>Self-selected project</p> <p>Book club activity</p>

Teachers talked about and were observed to teach content knowledge with similar pedagogical practices experienced in the course such as using visual representations. Many of teachers had class created anchor charts similar to the charts made in the course hanging in their rooms. Teachers were observed using these charts to engage students in the decomposition of writing processes, products, and genres. These charts captured the shared understandings and anchored them to the wall for scaffolding the community of writers along their journey. Many of these charts were rooted in building understandings of the writing processes.

Experiences in the course deepened PD teachers' understandings of the writing processes. Graham, for example, explained how experiencing writing in the course impacted his content knowledge: "It mostly influenced my understanding of the writing process... going all the way through, writing a draft, revising, editing. I think I used to think of it as one process. Like okay you're going to brainstorm and then next you're going to draft, next you revise." The course changed Graham's previous perceptions about the writing process. He goes on to explain the change, "I learned through that class that all those steps are all kind of intermingled and they're all related to one another and you don't just do one thing and another." Course readings played a role in developing these deeper understandings. Kayla talked in the interviews about how the course and course readings influenced her understandings: "My biggest influence was probably my coursework and then it was books. I read a lot of books about how to focus in on their writing." Discourse around readings created opportunities to build a shared content vocabulary.

In the course, Emma was observed to define and use content vocabulary. As well, she engaged the teachers in peer discussions, charts making, and debriefings that required meaningful application of vocabulary in context. Emma was always circulating during discussion to extend or clarify during discussion. She was frequently observed layering and adding meaning during discussion using questioning and thinking aloud strategies.

All of the PD teachers consistently used writing content vocabulary during their interviews. As well, they were all observed to use and transfer that vocabulary to their students. This transfer to students was an exciting finding as shared vocabulary is an important entry into subject matter knowledge and shared understandings about writing. But this transfer of content knowledge to practice was not limited to subject matter knowledge about writing. It also influenced how teachers taught. Figure 6.5 details connections from the classroom to the course in the area of teacher practices and skills.

Table 6.4 Practices and Skills: Links from Classroom to PD Course.

Skills				
Links to Major Findings	Enacted in PD Teachers Classrooms	Stated as Influential by Teachers	Observed in the PD Course	Listed in PD course Documents
1.Process Approach Includes using explicit modeling and models	Teachers were observed modeling strategies for their students and provided models through literature, their own writing, or peer writing.	All PD teachers discussed the professors modeling and provision of models as an influential part of the course. Some discussed using their own writing as a model.	Instructor was observed intentionally using Modeling as strategy. She explains out loud what and how she is doing. Provided models of products and written Genres including her own writing.	Goal: <i>Teachers understand a range of instructional practices, approaches, at all differing stages of development, and from differing cultural and linguistic backgrounds.</i> Practice or Approach Modeling Mentor Texts
1.Process Approach 4.Self-Regulation	Students were provided rubrics to guide their writing. Peer feedback was modeled, taught, and guided by the teacher.	100% of teachers discussed rubrics as important to their learning and practice.	Created collaborative rubrics for self-assessment and teacher assessment before writing Lecture on the 3 modes of assessment, assessment mini book 6+1 traits assessment	Goal: <i>Teachers understand, use and interpret formal and informal assessment strategies to evaluate and advance student performance</i> Practice or Approach Use of Rubrics Trait Assessment Guided Feedback

From the Course to the Classroom: Links to Skills and Strategies

The course syllabus was explicit about influencing teacher practice. Goals for teacher practice included the ability to integrate foundational knowledge, developmentally appropriate instructional practices, approaches and methods, curriculum materials, and appropriate use of assessments.

Emma was observed on several occasions talking about strategies and practices to fill teachers instructional “Tool boxes.” She had teachers create a metaphorical paper tool box to list the dispositions, understandings, and strategies they would need to carry out effective writing instruction. Right alongside this, they keep a tool box for their future students where teachers listed what their students would need in their boxes to be effective writers.

Table 6.5 Excerpt from Writing Course, Standard 2: Instructional strategies and curriculum

Course Standard	Assessment /Activity
<p>Standard 2. Instructional strategies and curriculum materials</p> <p>Teachers understand a range of instructional practices, approaches, at all differing stages of development, and from differing cultural and linguistic backgrounds.</p>	<p>Responses to reading</p> <p>Self-selected project</p> <p>Book club activity</p> <p>Classroom application & inquiry</p>
<p>Standard 3 Assessment, diagnosis and evaluation</p> <p>Teachers understand, use and interpret formal and informal assessment strategies to evaluate and advance student performance.</p>	<p>Classroom application & inquiry</p> <p>6-traits assessment activity</p>
<p>Standard 4. Creating a literate environment</p> <p>Teachers understand how to establish literate environments that foster reading and writing through integration of foundational knowledge, use of instructional practices, approaches and methods, curriculum materials, and appropriate use of assessments.</p>	<p>Responses to reading/freewrites</p> <p>Participation in class discussions</p> <p>Classroom application & inquiry</p> <p>Self-selected project</p>

Two instructional strategies teachers listed as key to their learning was teacher modeling and the use of models. Emma modeled in the role of the learner, writer, and teacher simultaneously. Verbally pointing out what she wanted students to notice. For example, Emma showed her students models of “leads” from a selection of interviews.

She used questioning to get her group of teachers to deconstruct the models. She asked, “What do you notice specifically about the ones that grabbed your attention?” After some discussion, she set them back to work drafting in writers workshop. Emma worked on her own piece of writing, then she got up and conferred with several students about their writing, then she stopped the class,

I will stop you now as I am modeling the teacher’s role in workshop. I was working on my piece, but I did not stay there long because I wanted to be actively engaged with you during drafting. Now, we have been working on leads, would anyone like to share one.

She continues probing so the students’ leads become the models: “what did you notice about that, what grabbed you?” During every observation Emma was prepared with models of high-quality examples of the types of writing or products teachers would be asked to do. Additionally, she modeled explicitly the how, when, and why of implementing appropriate practices and strategies.

All of the teachers who took the course discussed teacher modeling as being one of the most influential part of the course. Dena said, “That alone (the modeling), I think really sinks in for me. Someone telling me how to teach is just not as effective. That was what I really appreciated about her class.” Amy made direct connections to Emma’s modeling when she said, “The course really guided the way I teach writing.” When I asked her to explain more fully, she continued, “Well, I think that the way the course was structured was really great because it was basically, you know, it was a teacher teaching the way writing should be taught and I think that that kind of experience just rubs off on you automatically.” Amy felt that it was the individualized guidance that was removed

over time that helped her achieve her confidence and self-regulation: “I think that the scaffolding that Emma provided in that class was great and made me feel confident about writing. You could tell that it made the other people in the class also feel more confident about it, just by the way it was supported.”

All teachers who took the course were observed to use modeling and models as an instructional strategy. Graham who was observed many times decomposing mentor texts with his students shared, “I think they learn a lot from books that have techniques, that have different ways to describe, different word choice, different organizations.”

Another area of instructional practice where there were strong links between course and practice was assessment. Emma provided a variety of assessment tools for surveying a student’s knowledge skills and dispositions. During one of the classroom observation Emma had students jointly construct a whole class rubric they would use for self-assessment and teacher assessment on an assignment. This provided students an opportunity to see assessment from the role of both learner and teacher.

All PD teachers discussed using rubrics and were observed to use teacher-created and jointly-constructed rubric assessment. Graham was observed modeling the use of a rubric with his students. He discussed it saying, “We go over it and grade a story, like what score would this story get and talk about it.” Sharon was observed having her students score peers’ papers using a rubric. The students scored in groups and had to jointly decide if elements on the rubric were present. They had to explain their position. For example, one student was overheard defending his position, “I think this opening should get a score because it grabs my attention with a question.” Another student chimed in, “I don’t get the title, why was it a difficult day?” Students jointly constructed

understandings about good writing as they scored. No mention was ever made of who the writers might be. They focused only on the writing.

Learning about effective practices helped teachers bring their own practice into alignment with effective writing instruction. They discussed how their practice had changed after participating in the PD. Dena said, “What I recall really thinking about in that class was that I needed to do more writing in my room, that it was critical. Prior to that, writing was really just handwriting practice.” Sharon also connected her participation in the professional development with changing her practice:

Emma’s class helped a lot. That was a really good place for me to start. I liked how she brought in props. She made writing fun. I like how she had us dedicate a piece of our writing to somebody. Then I took that, and I was thinking there has to be a way to really engage kids in their writing and then I came up with this write slam idea.

Amy also credited the course with influencing her instruction: “I took a writing course from Emma. That really guided the way I teach writing. ... Seeing how kids respond to different kinds of writing instruction. That has really influenced me. And also their level of engagement, just some writing activities are just not engaging at all and the kids find them very difficult, but when they’re well-structured and scaffolded, they find them easier and more enjoyable.”

Links to Previous Research

The instructor of the writing methods course and I conducted a 3-year study of teacher perceptions of this course (Martin & Dismuke, 2011). The preservice course was

taught by the same instructor with the same pedagogies, and differed only slightly in content. A comparison of the syllabus detected differences in some of the reading and one assignment. However, the subject matter topics covered and course goals remained the same. The courses were delivered in different formats. The preservice course used a week-to-week format, while the graduate course employed a weekend format, however hours of instruction were the same.

While only preservice teachers were included in this survey, it provided insight into what students felt were powerful pedagogies in shaping their knowledge, skills, and dispositions about writing. The three main findings were as follows: (1) Participants in the class overwhelming rated the course as increasing their knowledge and understandings about writing instruction and their confidence to teach it; (2) experiential or active learning in the role of the writer, learner, and teacher was instrumental in adding to their understandings, confidence, and future practice; and (3) social interaction in the class added to their acquisition of subject matter knowledge, comfort in sharing their own writing, and commitment to engaging their own students in social interaction as future teachers. These perceptions preservice teachers had regarding the influences of their writing methods course ran parallel with the PD teachers in this study, providing additional links between the findings and the course.

The preservice teachers all rated the course as influencing their understandings and knowledge. Likewise, so did the PD teachers. As mentioned earlier in the presentation of the interview findings, all PD teachers felt they had acquired the necessary content knowledge and were confident in their ability to teach writing. Like the preservice teachers, the PD teachers in this study also cited experiential learning and

modeling of pedagogies as key to their learning. Last, social interaction was also a significant finding across data sources for teachers who took the class. One hundred percent of PD teachers identified social construction of knowledge as important to their learning and practice. While the participants were not the same, the similarities in findings on teacher perceptions of their own learning are striking. This study of preservice teachers adds a layer of trustworthiness to the teacher self-reports in this study.

Findings Summary

Teachers who had experienced intensive professional development in writing did differ in important ways from teachers who had not. First, PD teachers implemented a process approach and demonstrated complex understandings of writing and writing instruction. Also, they provided opportunities for students to apply their knowledge of skills and strategies in the context of authentic writing with multiple genres, purposes, and audiences. They engaged students in guided social interaction throughout the writing process and scaffolded and expected self-regulation.

These integrated findings from converged data sources agree that those teachers who have been afforded intensive professional development in writing pedagogy: think writing matters; possess a depth of subject matter knowledge; use classroom practices that align with research, and, create supportive environments that support these practices. This was not true for NPD teachers who felt ill prepared to meet the complex demand of writing instruction.

In the following chapter, I will explore these findings in depth and discuss implications for teacher educators, teachers, administrators, and policy makers.

CHAPTER 7: DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS

Introduction

If America's students are to rise to the expectations set forth by the CCSS and become capable college-level writers, then much work lies ahead. The best starting point for reaching that goal is effective teacher preparation and professional development in writing (Correnti, 2007). In this study, differences in teachers' preparation to teach writing played a significant role in shaping their perception and understandings about writing. These viewpoints influenced their daily practice and most importantly their students' learning opportunities. Therefore, teacher professional development and preservice preparation lies in the center of creating effective writing instruction that will prepare our students for the challenges that lie ahead.

While all teachers in this study agreed that there was little accountability, resources, or professional development provided by their districts or state for writing instruction, it was teachers who took the course, who overcame these obstacles and were committed to teaching writing well. They taught by constructing and implementing research-supported curriculum, which engaged their students in consistent writing instruction and guided practice. They credited their methods course with shaping their foundation and filling their tool boxes with effective practices that they enacted in their classrooms, impacting their students' opportunities to learn writing.

All the teachers in this study graciously shared their practice and insights about writing instruction with the hope that their experiences as writing teachers might shed light on our current reality and add to a body of work that can reshape and reform the way teachers are prepared and supported across their careers to be teachers of writing.

Discussion

The overall findings of this study revealed significant differences between PD teachers and NPD teachers as follows: (1) there were significant differences in teachers' perceptions and dispositions about writing; (2) there were significant differences in teachers' understandings and knowledge about writing; and (3) there were significant difference in teachers' classroom practice and skills. However, when it came to teacher perceptions regarding accountability and resources provided for writing, there was overwhelming agreement.

Teachers' Perceptions and Dispositions about Writing

Teachers identified three factors that they believe were influential in shaping their dispositions about writing and writing instruction. They were: issues of accountability and resources, their apprenticeship of practice, and most importantly, their preparation to teach writing.

There was overwhelming agreement between all the participants that writing instruction was not a priority for their state, district, or individual school buildings. Many factors intersected that influenced teacher's perceptions. They pointed to a lack of accountability and resources for teaching writing, which included: district alignment;

performance benchmarks; writing curriculum; dedicated writing time; and professional development.

When teachers compared the emphasis and accountability on them for reading or language arts instruction, they viewed the accountability for writing as taking a back seat. They put their time and energy into teaching “what counts.” Not surprisingly, teachers felt pressure to thoroughly cover aspects of subject matter that were tested on their state tests. The demand for student performance is high, as student scores are directly linked to a school’s public ranking and annual yearly progress, teacher evaluations, and in some cases merit pay. The removal of the State Direct Writing Assessment coupled with a focus on testing isolated language arts skills on state testing has left these teachers in charge of deciding what, if any, writing instruction will “pay off.”

If districts or teachers receive no advancement or credit for teaching writing, then the prioritization of resources like comprehensive writing curricula, intensive professional development over time, and aligned benchmarks for student performance would seem a poor use of time and resources. This explains why teachers in this study overwhelmingly reported a lack of resources and guidance. They were left to manage the complex task of creating and developing their own scope and sequence and curriculum content.

In this study teachers’ writing instruction was *Loosely-Coupled* (Meyer & Rowan, 1992; Rowan, 1990; Weick, 1976) with their districts and state. This means not only were teachers in this study left to decide how much writing to teach, but they were often left to decide what content to teach, what instructional strategies to use, and what constituted proficient writing. Nearly all the teachers in this study were placed in the role of

“curriculum brokers” (Porter, 2002). This lack of curriculum alignment coupled with unequal teacher preparation created inequitable opportunities for students to learn and improve their writing, even within the same school (Rowan & Correnti, 2009).

This systemic problem left these experienced teachers alone in deciding how much instructional time they would spend on writing. Some felt no pressure to block regular time for writing, sometimes not specifically teaching writing for weeks at a time. This attitude toward writing contradicts best practices, which calls for a minimum of 40 minutes of daily writing (Calkins, Ehrenworth, & Lehman, 2010). Accountability for teaching writing was perceived by most teachers to be a choice; one that could have negative consequences. Some of the teachers reported feeling that they had to choose between teaching writing regularly and keeping their jobs. They worried about meeting standards and student achievement scores on subjects for which they were accountable.

Add to this system-wide problem the personal quandary of teacher perceptions of themselves as writers and the traditional, prescriptive methodologies with which some of them were taught. There were marked differences in teachers’ attitudes about themselves as writers. Despite negative perceptions of the way they were taught writing, NPD teachers more often held on to and reproduced (Tyack & Cuban, 1995) old methods of teaching writing, even in the face of their own negative views of themselves as a writer.

This was not true for PD teachers, who were able to overcome their apprenticeships of practice and develop not only positive views of themselves as writers, but new practices as well. Unlike the NPD teachers, none of the PD teachers expressed negative feelings about their ability or confidence to write. This difference in perceptions suggests that professional development that intentionally plans opportunities for

teachers to uncover their dispositions about writing can be influential in surfacing and overcoming negative dispositions toward writing. Running parallel to these differences in teachers' self-identity and confidence were their attitudes regarding their formal preparation to teach writing

Teachers' perceptions of their preparation to be teachers of writing played a critical role in their ability to overcome negative dispositions and a lack of understandings about what writing is. At the time this study was conducted, there were no writing methods courses required for elementary teachers in this state. This left teachers without the course, to rely only on limited professional development provided by their districts. While all the PD teachers felt confident in their ability to teach writing, NPD teachers were vocal about their lack of preparation from their universities and districts. Despite exposure to writing methods in their reading-focused literacy courses, these teachers did not feel they had been formally taught to teach writing and they called for the addition of a dedicated writing methods course.

Teachers in this state and others have been required to take Physical Education, Art, and Music methods as part of their certification. Although these subjects are important, they are often taught by specialist outside of the classroom. Most classroom teachers will not be required to teach them. Despite this fact, they continue to edge out writing in the canon of required courses. Many states simply do not require a writing methods course (National Writing Project, 2006). This study highlights the negative consequences for both teachers and students of that decision. Teachers pointed to their preparation to teach writing in the course as a key factor in influencing their understandings, subject matter knowledge, and practice. This difference in preparation

led to differences in subject matter knowledge and instructional practice between teachers who had and had not taken a course.

Differences in Teachers Understandings about Writing: Subject Matter Knowledge

Differences in understandings about writing and writing instruction were clear between PD and NPD teachers. Those who had taken the course had opportunities to jointly construct deep subject matter knowledge as well as pedagogical content knowledge (Shulman, 1986; Shulman & Shulman, 2004; Elmore, 2008). In other words, these teachers learned not only what needs to be taught, but also how to teach it.

Understandings of the processes by which students learn to write, knowledge of children's writing development, and learning about instructional practices that are unique to writing, prepared teachers to pair what research reveals about how children write with how to best teach them to write. Linda Darling-Hammond (2006) along with others suggested that combining knowledge of students, methods, and subjects is powerful in that it allows teachers to be responsive to an individual student's backgrounds, talents, interests, and abilities (Dewey, 1929). Teachers without the course lacked not only the content knowledge, but also the content specific pedagogical tools to teach it.

Instead, NPD teachers had to scaffold their own teaching and lack of content knowledge with general pedagogies that are successful across domains, such as models. These models took the form of templates that guided their instruction and their students' writing. This lack of knowledge forced teachers into what Glaser (1990) called a *selective mode* of teaching. They possessed a narrow range of instructional strategies, which lead to more formulaic teaching (Darling- Hammond, 2006). Writing instruction that is driven by prescriptive methods is effective at developing lower-level recall and replication

skills, but not higher order skills such as analysis (Darling-Hammond, Wise, & Pease, 1983). Self-regulated writing requires authors to synthesize, evaluate, and make complex decisions regarding their writing. PD teachers had self-regulated classrooms and provided students with tools they needed to make their own decisions. This was not true for teachers whose students relied on templates, formulas, and teacher direction to complete tasks. Unequal teacher preparation resulted in unequal opportunities for students to learn and practice the critical decision-making skills necessary for independent writing.

Differences in Teacher Practice and Student Learning Opportunities

Knowing about writing or being a skilled writer is not enough for teachers to impact student learning. Skilled teachers must be able to decompose the complexities of writing and then effectively teach these skills and processes to students in a way that is accessible to a wide variety of learners. In fact, it is the transferring of subject matter expertise to effective practice that has the most impact on student learning (Ball & Forzani, 2011). PD teachers integrated their knowledge about writing and implemented significantly more effective practices in writing instruction (Graham et al., 2007) than their counterparts, resulting in more effective learning opportunities for their students. PD teachers employed more high-leverage writing practices such as modeling and models, decomposition of processes and genres, and the use of visual representations (Ball & Forzani, 2011; Grossman 2005; Grossman et. al. 2000). Their practices focused on teaching students the processes of writing and filling their tool boxes with the skills they would need to write successfully on their own. Students of PD teachers were asked to integrate and demonstrate proficiency of their writing processes and skills in the context of their own written compositions (Pritchard & Honeycutt, 2007). PD teachers

took a process-centered approach and had expectations for social interaction and self-regulation throughout the writing processes. Students wrote for a variety of purposes and in many genres and formats. These effective practices were not shared by NPD teachers whose students were exposed to fewer effective practices. This variability in practices uncovered yet another inequity in the students' opportunity to learn. Additionally, strategies and student activities found in the PD course often mirrored activities modeled in the writing methods course.

Scaffolding Teachers from Knowledge to Practice

The writing methods course was intentionally designed to scaffold the transfer of knowledge and skills from the course to practice. This was facilitated in the methods course by emphasizing content knowledge learned through the multiple lenses of learner, writer, and teacher. Reflection and application in the participants own context helped bridge theory to practice (Darling-Hammond, 2006; Elmore, 2008). As a contributing author to the Grossman et al., (2000) study, on transitioning from course to practice, the instructor of this writing course also emphasized the role of scaffolding and explicit instruction in teaching writing, including modeling and focus lessons on skills and strategies unique to teaching writing (p. 637). The instructor always made time to debrief all learning experiences from a conceptual and practical point of view. This included discussion on key concepts and ideas and their implications for teaching. This intentionality on the part of the instructor to scaffold teachers from knowledge to practice was built into many aspects of the course.

Scaffolding teachers from the course to practice was important because teachers often found themselves in settings where their emerging practices and zeal for writing

was counter or sometimes new to their school's culture. In many cases, teachers did not have mentors in their school context to coach them in the implementation of these practices. This had an interesting effect. In two different cases, teachers enlisted a grade-level collaborator with whom to implement their new practices. Another has developed her practice to the point where her grade-level colleagues have recognized her expertise and placed their students in her charge for writing instruction. In other cases, teachers from the course implemented process writing instruction quietly, but powerfully. But with or without support, they all implemented what was learned in the course, to fit within the context of their school settings.

Integrated Approach

Another result of weaving knowledge with practice was the PD teacher's ability to integrate language arts skills like grammar and conventions into student writing. These skills were taught when applicable and woven into the fabric of writing composition by making students responsible for their usage in writing rubrics. I believe this is how they found the time to teach writing more frequently and consistently than the NPD teachers. The 30 minute, daily ritual of Daily Oral Language or Mountain language observed in the NPD classrooms was transformed and integrated into daily writing by some of the PD teachers. NPD teachers reported little transfer of skills into writing, but they persisted with this time consuming practice in which students were observed to be disengaged. I would contend that these two parts of writing, composition and foundational skills, should not be considered two separate activities, but exist side by side.

Implications

In this study, teacher education played a critical role in influencing teachers' writing practice and students opportunities to learn writing. The problem is, unfortunately, these opportunities for teachers and students are too far and few between (National Commission on Writing, 2002). In a time when the value of teacher education is in question (Ravitch, 2010), this study provided a valuable comparison and its results provide a clear warning for the narrowing of teacher education courses that focus on developing subject matter and pedagogical knowledge. This study's recommendations for increasing, requiring, and improving teacher education courses in writing are in alignment with the National Commission on Writing (2002). In addition, the success of the PD course in this study strengthens the argument for teacher educations' continuing involvement in partnering with school districts and states to deliver effective professional development in writing. The findings of this study not only have links to teacher education, but have broad implications for state, district, and school policy makers as well as universities and teacher educators. With the rigors of the Common Core State Standards looming in writing, this study suggests changes in policy and practice that may lead teachers and students toward meeting those goals.

Implications for State, District, and School Policy Makers

The findings of this study call for policy makers, state departments of education, and school districts to not only increase accountability for student writing performance, but to partner that pressure with professional development experiences that build positive

teacher dispositions, deep subject matter knowledge, and knowledge of effective practices in writing instruction.

If students are to meet the requirements set forth in the Common Core State Standards in writing, then accountability for teaching writing and measuring student performance must have an equal seat at the table with reading. On the other hand, great care must be taken in choosing accountability measures that will accurately describe the intricacies of student writing and measure growth across time. In the past, indirect assessment of multiple choice items on grammar and spelling have been insufficient in ranking students writing ability and are a fixed measure of foundational skill performance (Cooper, 1984). The CCSS have set a new standard for writing and the high stakes, national test that will follow will provide state-by-state accountability for writing. The exact nature and validity of this new assessment is yet to be seen. However, this macro-picture of student writing performance will provide an increase in accountability as well as coarse-grain data to guide decision making from a federal, state, and district level. Promoting individual student writing growth will require a different type of assessment measure and accountability.

Districts

It is going to be up to individual districts, which have the ability to require writing portfolios across grades, which holds the most promise for informing individual student growth (Sommers, 1982; Yancey, 1999). In this type of portfolio assessment, students write a specified number of times throughout the year in multiple genres. Student pieces are assessed with analytic rubrics (Culham, 2005). These assessments of student writing are not fixed, but are meant to guide and promote *a growth mindset* (Dweck, 2006) across

grade levels and teachers. This type of assessment would require schools to *tighten their coupling* (English & Steffy, 2001) by constructing vertical and horizontal curriculum alignments, grade-level benchmarks, and accountability for student growth across genres. But without adequate funding for deep curriculum alignments (English & Steffy, 2001) and cohesive professional development, which occurs over time, the pressure to meet CCSS will not be enough to improve writing instructional practice.

Schools and Teachers

School improvement teams and professional learning communities need to roll up their sleeves and take a critical look at school-wide writing instructional practices. For example, large blocks of time spent on daily language practice could be used for writing instruction that integrates language skills into the context of student writing. It is time for schools to reconsider the practice of low-level isolated language practice and finds ways to instead bill them as essential tools in the practice of authoring compositions. Foundations skills need to come off the pages of languages arts practice books and instead be active, valuable tools in students' writing tool boxes.

These types of changes in teacher practice will not be possible without writing professional development in conjunction with scaffolded implementation support. Teachers need time with one another to collaborate in conjunction with mentors, such as writing specialist, to construct new understandings about writing practice.

Implications for Teacher Certification Programs

Universities and their accrediting bodies must take writing instruction seriously. They have the collective expertise and potential to develop and require powerful learning

experiences for developing teachers of writing. In this study, unequal learning opportunities for teachers resulted in inequities in student learning opportunities.

It is time for universities to take the lead. If all American students are to be prepared equally to tackle college writing, then American teachers must be equally prepared and confident in their ability to teach writing. Universities could fill the existing gap between what teachers are prepared to teach and what students are being asked to do by requiring dedicated writing methods courses for both preservice certification and graduate work in literacy (National Commission on Writing, 2002). Additionally, tests that measure teacher competencies should hold candidates accountable for demonstrating knowledge of writing subject matter knowledge and pedagogical practices unique to writing with the same rigor required for reading. Many universities require three separate reading courses, but no specific writing course. In the state where this study took place, two of the reading courses are tied to a high-stakes literacy test that is required for teacher certification. No such test exists for writing. With increasing accountability and pressure for teachers to quickly develop new understandings about writing and writing instruction, practicing teachers will need a support system.

Teachers will need partners and mentors to help them implement new practices in their contexts. Universities and agencies providing teacher certification should be urged to develop consulting teachers in writing by providing pathways to certification as writing coaches. Additionally, colleges should develop post-graduate degrees in both elementary and secondary writing. These teacher leaders can return to their districts and schools and provide guidance to their fellow teachers.

Implications for Teacher Educators

Dispositions

Teacher educators must seek out strategies that provide teachers with guided opportunities to write for their own purposes outside of academic writing. In addition, professional development experiences need to include activities that uncover and then explore teachers' dispositions surrounding writing. Preparing teachers to teach writing well requires a professional development model that can override a teacher's apprenticeship of observation (Lortie, 1975) and the negative effects of the *red pen*. This cannot occur in a one-day professional development workshop that provides teachers with little more than a folder full of activities.

Changing dispositions about writing requires meaningful learning with others in a trusted community of practice (Lave & Wenger, 1991). Teachers need the time and opportunity to write in many genres in order to fully understand their own processes (National Writing Project, 2006). In this way, they can begin to feel more confident about themselves as writers. Teachers also need safe spaces to reflect on their current teaching practices and opportunities to lay them alongside the CCSS. Teachers can then begin to self-assess their strengths and needs and create plans with peers for growth over time.

PD teachers in this study sought out their writing professional development based on their own desire to develop their practice. Elmore (2008) reminds us that collaborative professional development requires a desire to "be developed." Workshops that are not engaging and ignore teachers' dispositions about writing, as well as their dispositions to be a contributing participant in the PD, may just compound teachers' negative feelings about teaching writing. Teachers have been subjected to their share of mandated changes

and professional development workshops that seek to change their practice. They must first believe that a change in practice is warranted and then believe they are capable to carry out that change (Elmore, 2008).

Knowledge and Practice

If the goal is to encourage and prepare students to write independently, then what is needed are teachers who can fluently integrate what they know about writing with what they know about their students, and then choose the most effective strategies to meet their needs (Darling-Hammond & Bransford, 2005). Programs must not only balance a mix of theory and practice, but stress teacher decision making (Darling- Hammond, 2006).

It will not be enough to just know about writing. Grossman and her colleagues (2000) followed preservice teachers into their first three years of teaching to observe their use of pedagogical writing tools after taking a writing course. They argued that, “Although conceptual tools are useful for a broader understanding of teaching and learning, they do not necessarily solve the problems of what to do in the classroom.” Teachers need opportunities to practice applying content-specific knowledge and pedagogies through application and inquiry in their own classrooms. They will need chances to collaborate with other educators and engage in decomposing their writing practices through lesson study and student case studies (Lieberman & Miller, 2008).

Ball and Forzani (2009) suggest that one answer to general inequities in student learning opportunities is to place instructional practice at the core of teacher preparation programs. However, it is clearly not enough to introduce practicing teachers to a new set of teaching activities demonstrated in a two-day workshop. Writing instruction is too complex and is inescapably wrapped up in teachers’ dispositions about writing. In this

study, teachers needed time to uncover their own preconceived notions and underlying insecurities surrounding writing before engaging their studies of writing processes and practice.

Professional development programs for teachers must take care to balance subject matter knowledge with pedagogical knowledge about strategies and learners. Teachers need to have the components of a process approach explicitly modeled and then purposefully bridged into practice through actively engaging teachers in problematizing and reforming their own practice over time, with others.

Summary

In the end, it was the participation in the course that accounted for the difference in teachers' dispositions and understandings about writing and writing instructional practice. At the heart of the professional development experienced by teachers in this study was a strategy that placed teachers back in the role of the learner in order to guide teachers toward new dispositions and understandings about themselves as writers and their own writing processes. As well, teachers experienced new pedagogies that were powerful enough to replace their old views of what is to write.

The study revealed marked differences between the groups when it came to their understandings about what writing is. Teachers in their role as a writer and learner experienced writing under the guidance and modeling of an instructor that used a process approach in a workshop model. Teachers experienced firsthand the importance of peer interaction throughout the writing process and the value of carefully placed focus lessons to their own writing. These teachers did not just hear about strategies, or see them modeled, but practiced writing in new genres across the curriculum as a writer. They then

had opportunities to debrief, decompose, and discuss their experiences as a learner with their peers.

Last, teachers were asked to apply these techniques in their own classrooms in the role of the teacher. Through experiencing these new pedagogies and practices from multiple roles, these teachers formed new understandings and dispositions and overcame previous one-dimensional notions about writing.

As a result, teachers who took the course saw themselves as writers and felt confident in their ability to teach writing. These perceptions and viewpoints were quite different from teachers who had not taken the course, who did not self-identify as writers, or feel they had the preparation, confidence, or knowledge of the content pedagogy. Although most teachers discussed their own experiences learning to write as having influenced their practice, teachers who took the course were less likely to repeat the template pedagogies of the past and embrace new understandings about writing. Most importantly, the professional development overcame the lack of accountability and resources and inspired teachers to teach what is not tested. They utilized a greater number of writing best practices more often and for longer periods of time despite the risks.

Based on these results, I would make three suggestions to improve the writing practice of students. First, at the state level, accountability for student writing performance must increase and be equal to that for reading and foundation skills such as grammar and spelling. This will place pressure on local districts to provide time, resources, and accountability for teaching writing well. Second, universities and agencies responsible for certification must make sure teachers are as well prepared to teach writing as they are reading. A dedicated writing methods course needs to be required for teacher

certification. Third, teachers need access to quality professional development in writing, time to co-construct knowledge about writing with their peers, and scaffolded opportunities to implement new practices in their own contexts. This development must happen over time and within a community of practice.

Recommendations for Future Research

This small study took both a close and broad look at the dispositions, understandings, and skills of 12 teachers in one region of one state. To better understand the current reality of writing instruction across the country, I would urge other researchers to join me in looking at both larger contexts across states and smaller more intimate case studies. Both quantitative and qualitative studies, large and small-scaled are needed to elaborate on these findings to provide a more comprehensive and truer picture with which to target and formulate solutions.

Additionally, data collected, but not yet fully analyzed, in this study made me aware of the need to probe past general classroom practice and to examine the writing intervention practices of teachers. Teachers in this study had few writing interventions in their own teacher tool boxes from which to draw and even fewer resources in their schools or districts. Research into effective writing intervention practices and how that intersects with teacher education programs is needed.

There is still much I want to know. My future research in this area has already begun. I am currently engaged in a collaborative inquiry to analyze and report on the full body of data collected during this study. This larger study combines these results on teachers who took the course while in-service with practicing teachers who took the course as part of their preservice. Additionally, a group of six teachers who experienced

other types on intensive professional development, such as the National Writing Project, will be included. Cumulatively, this study will include 30 teachers and provide a broader look at teacher preparation.

Conclusion

When I first begin this inquiry into teacher practice, I was motivated to improve my own instructional practice. I was troubled by my young writers who clutched and gnawed at their pencils during writing instruction and by those who puddled and smeared the ink on the page with their tears. After 13 years of successfully teaching young children to read, I begin to wonder about my effectiveness in teaching them to write. Despite a master's degree in literacy, I realized I lacked both the subject matter knowledge and the pedagogies to teach writing effectively.

This study raises concerns about the preparation of America's teachers to teach writing. It asks readers to consider how the educational community can support teachers in developing the dispositions, knowledge, and skills they will need to teach writing with the rigor and skill necessary to help our students meet the requirements for writing set forth in the Common Core State Standards. I would challenge those who share my concerns to bring forward new inquiries, ideas, and pedagogies that will reverse the poor writing performance of students in our schools today.

If the writing performance of American students is to improve, then the complexities inherent in learning and teaching writing will require highly qualified writing teachers, kindergarten through senior year, regardless of subject matter area

(Calkins, Ehrenworth, & Lehman, 2010). Aided by professional development, mentors such as writing specialist, and the provisions of targeted resources, teachers can begin building new dispositions, understandings, and skills that will in turn hold promise for increasing students' understandings, abilities, and talents as writers.

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APPENDIX A

Appendix A: Data Sources

A1: Interview Protocol

Name _____ date _____

1. Basic info: grade level, how many years at that grade, how many years teaching
2. Please tell me about your background/experiences with writing.
 - Probe for and how influenced understandings and practices:
 - a. Dispositions/attitudes
 - b. Own school experiences
 - c. Coursework
 - d. Professional development
3. What has been the biggest influence on your understandings of writing and writing instruction?
4. Please tell me about your understandings of *what is writing*.
 - a. Probe for: purposes/formats/complexity/perseverance/motivation
 - b. How did your coursework affect these understandings?
5. Please tell me about your school/district in regards to writing instruction.
 - a. What does your school/district have as writing benchmarks?
 - b. What screeners or assessments do you use?
 - c. What curriculum do you use?
 - d. Who do you/can you go to in your school/district for help?
 - e. What other school/district policies affect your instruction?
6. Please tell me about how you teach language arts in your class.

Probes

1. Writing processes?

2. Focus/mini lessons? Explicit instruction
3. Conferences? How? What format? Content?
4. Feedback?
5. Opportunities for sharing?
6. How do you establish a safe environment for learning to write/sharing writing?
7. Writing across subject areas?
8. Authentic writing?
9. Writing processes?
10. Grammar?
11. Motivation?
12. How did your coursework affect your instruction?
13. If you had no constraints, how would you organize for and implement writing instruction?

7. Please tell me about your experiences with teaching children to write/especially struggling learners.

Probe:

- a. Tell me what you think is the most likely reasons that children struggle to write.
- b. Tell me how you go about meeting the needs of struggling writers in your class.
- c. How did you choose that?
- d. What assessments do you use to measure students' growth? Do you feel comfortable with these assessments?
- e. How did your coursework affect your abilities to meet students' needs?

8. Please elaborate on (fill the blank) your response on the survey.

Questions for 345-545 former students only

9. Please tell me more about the influence of ED-LTCY 345/545 on your understandings of writing and writing instruction and/or please elaborate on (fill the blank) your response on the survey.

10. Task- on a scale of 1-10 please rank the coursework pedagogies in terms of their usefulness to your own teaching practices. We will provide a list of coursework pedagogies to participants. This list will include activities such as: student profiles, book club, writing portfolios, etc

A2 Writing Observation Framework

The Writing Observation Framework (continued)

Editing/publishing	O	C	R	N
A. The students used a standardized checklist to edit their work prior to publication.				
B. Students were provided with the opportunity and encouraged to engage in peer-editing prior to publishing their writing.				
C. The teacher held editing conferences with students prior to the publication of their writing.				
D. The students were required to publish their writing in accordance with grade-level standards.				
E. The teacher provided opportunities for students to share their published writing with intended audiences and with one another.				
F.				
G.				
Skill/strategy instruction	O	C	R	N
A. The teacher provided the students with direct instruction in writing skills and strategies as needed.				
B. The teacher provided a clear explanation about the nature of the writing skill or strategy to be learned, describing when and how it could be used.				
C. The teacher modeled the use of the writing skill or strategy so that students were able to see how it would be used in an appropriate situation.				
D. The teacher scaffolded students' independent use of a skill or strategy by providing multiple opportunities for its application in meaningful contexts.				
E.				
F.				
Assessment	O	C	R	N
A. The teacher's planned goals, actual instruction, and assessment practices were aligned.				
B. The teacher maintains a writing folder or portfolio for each student.				
C. Students maintain evidence of their work at all stages of the writing process in their portfolios or writing folders.				
D. The teacher or students use scoring rubrics to evaluate the quality of students' writing.				
E.				
F.				
Teacher practices	O	C	R	N
A. The teacher selected writing tasks appropriate and relevant for students of this ability and grade level.				
B. When appropriate, students were permitted to select their own topics for writing as a way to promote ownership.				
C. The teacher treated the stages of writing as nonlinear and recursive rather than discrete and lockstep.				
D. The pace and flow of the writing instruction represented an effective use of time.				
E. The teacher's writing instruction was sensitive to the diversity of students' experiences and their social, cultural, ethnic, and linguistic needs.				
F. The teacher used the available current technologies to promote and facilitate writing growth.				
G.				
H.				

Key to checklist

O = Observed—This component was observed and was judged to be of satisfactory quality.

C = Commendation—This component was observed and was judged to be of very high quality.

R = Recommendation—This component either was not observed or was judged to be of unsatisfactory quality.

N = Not applicable—This component was not observed because it was not appropriate for the lesson.

A3: Field Note Protocol

Writing Observations

Observer's name _____ date _____ Time: start ___ end

Teacher _____

Site _____

Setting:

Objectives of the Lesson:

Materials:

Instructional Arrangement (small group, whole group, peer groups)

Notes:

Teachers:	Students:	Observers Memos
<p>Explanations, instructions & comments</p>	<p>Actions, reactions & comments</p>	

A4: Coding Scheme

Coding Scheme

Student Engagement Tactics: tactics used by the teacher to ensure student participation

1. Autonomy: methods used to encourage student independence
 - a. choice of assignment: permitting students to select task to be completed
 - b. choice of work space: permitting students to select where they complete task
 - c. choice of collaboration: permitting students to work individually or with a peer or group of peers
 - d. self-determined pace: permitting students to complete task at own pace
2. Sharing: methods used to encourage student sharing of ideas, questions, or work
 - a. whole class routine: structuring time so students can share with entire class
 - b. partner activities: structuring time so students can share with peer
 - c. group activities: structuring time so students can share with small groups
 - d. solicitation: teacher requests for student to make contribution during a structured time for sharing
 - e. video: use of videotape to record sharing activity or routine
3. Checking: methods used to ensure student attention, understanding, and interest
 - a. roaming: moving about room to monitor students
 - b. questions: asking questions to elicit information
 - c. student paraphrasing: rephrasing student contribution to provide clarification
 - d. student reporting: verbal report by student on writing progress
 - e. reiteration: repeating teacher directions, student comments, or other information
 - f. progress indicator: visual display of writing progress
 - g. movement: physical movement by students to illustrate a concept

Instructional Tactics Employed: tactics used by the teacher to teach knowledge, skills, and strategies for writing

1. Modeling:
 - a. teacher writing samples: teacher-generated compositions used to demonstrate a particular skill or process
 - b. student writing samples: student-generated compositions used to demonstrate a particular skill or process

- c. classroom literature: written text taken from a source available in the classroom
 - d. personal experiences: sharing experiences with writing to encourage positive attitudes toward writing and/or to communicate potential writing strategies
 - e. movement experiences: activities designed to deepen students' understanding of a concept through physical movement
 - f. think aloud: verbalizing thought processes or actions while demonstrating a writing activity
 - g. collaboration: demonstrating how to evaluate, provide feedback, or ask questions when working with a partner or group of peers
 - h. material supports: demonstrating how to use one or more material supports
 - i. transactional supports: demonstrating how to use one or more transactional supports
2. Personnel supports:
- a. instructional assistants: uncertified staff
 - b. volunteers: unpaid family or community members, in some cases trained
 - c. program staff: professional development program staff
 - d. guest writers: amateur or professional authors
 - e. other certificated staff: certified staff allocated for writing block
3. Material supports:
- a. writing notebooks: notebooks used to record writing ideas, observations, reflections, personalized spelling and word lists, and drafts
 - b. planning charts: graphics for recording and organizing writing ideas and planning notes, which may be posted or copied for each student
 - c. editing checklists: lists of items to check for while editing for writing conventions, such as capitalization, which may be posted or copied for each student
 - d. revising checklists: lists of items to check for while making text revisions, such as use of precise and vivid vocabulary, which may be posted or copied for each student
 - e. editing exercises: activities designed to give students opportunities to identify and correct errors in writing conventions in sample texts, usually referred to as Daily Oral Language
 - f. posted process: visual display of the stages of the writing process, perhaps accompanied by a brief description of each stage
 - g. posted standards: visual display of writing standards adopted by district and state
 - h. posted convention rules: visual display of rules for writing mechanics such as capitalization, punctuation, and spelling
 - i. posted traits: visual display of six qualities of writing, including ideas, organization, word choice, sentence fluency, voice, and conventions, with or without definitions
 - j. posted instructions: visual displays of steps to take when performing writing tasks

- k. process indicators: visual signs used by students to indicate in what stage of the writing process they are or to request assistance from an adult
 - l. word wall: an organized (usually alphabetical) display of words to promote vocabulary and/or spelling acquisition
 - m. word lists: visual displays of suggested words for student writing, such as transition words or descriptive adjectives and adverbs
 - n. scoring rubrics: papers listing one or more traits accompanied by a rating scale, often with descriptive criteria, for evaluating writing quality
 - o. library resources: source material accessed in the library or taken from the library
 - p. personal dictionaries: student- or teacher-constructed personalized dictionaries
 - q. dictionaries: published dictionaries for classroom use
 - r. computers: classroom-based or lab-based computers used for writing drafts or, more frequently, edited copies of student papers
 - s. video: videotaped recording of sharing activity or routine used to promote discussion regarding presentations of written texts
 - t. Post-Its: squares of gummed paper for adding notes, comments, or revisions to written text
 - u. science journal: a journal to record observations, questions, and data during science instruction
4. Transactional supports:
- a. evaluative statements: expressing judgments about a student's ideas or work
 - b. questioning: asking questions to elicit information, clarification, or reflection about a student's ideas or work
 - c. suggestions: offering advice to students about their ideas or work
 - d. repetition: repeating information such as instructions, definitions, and ideas to facilitate student understanding
 - e. summarizing: wrapping up a lesson by restating learning objectives, key information, and/or rationale for activities
 - f. debriefing: following a task, discussing how information or activity was useful for learning
 - g. branching: referring to prior lesson or subsequent lesson to contextualize current instructional activities
 - h. validation: providing a rationale for a tactic or activity
 - i. increased conferring: spending more individual time with a student during a student-teacher conference
 - j. scribing: recording text dictated by a student, either with an adult or peer scribe
 - k. debate: structured activity for developing opinions and arguments in oral discourse format

Curriculum: instructional content and procedures for reaching instructional goals

1. Workshop elements: typical core components of writing workshop
 - a. mini-lessons: usually 10- to 20-minute lessons designed to teach specific knowledge, skills, or strategies
 - b. peer conferences: students confer with each other about their writing, usually offering praise, comments, suggestions, and questions for reaction
 - c. teacher conferences: teacher confers with students about their writing, offering praise, comments, suggestions, and questions for reaction
 - d. sustained writing: usually 15- to 25-minute time period allocated to independent writing
 - e. curriculum integration: use of content area material during writing activities
2. Genres: particular modes of writing that serve a unique purpose
 - a. personal narrative: an account of one's life or experiences, such as memoir
 - b. fiction: fictional narrative that takes a variety of forms
 - c. poetry: rhythmical, imaginative composition that is recognized as poetic
 - d. exposition: informative writing that takes a variety of forms
 - e. persuasion: persuasive writing that takes a variety of forms
3. Process features: stages of the writing process
 - a. planning: generating ideas for inclusion in a piece of writing, often supported by sub processes such as listing, webbing, and researching
 - b. drafting: preparation of initial copy of a piece of writing, often without much attention to writing conventions
 - c. revising: alterations made to ideas, organization, word choice, or sentence fluency in a piece of writing
 - d. editing: alterations made to writing conventions in a piece of writing, such as spelling, capitalization, punctuation, grammar, and format elements
 - e. publishing: preparation of final copy of a piece of writing, with the intent to share with an audience, often one beyond the classroom
4. Product features: aspects of written products
 - a. text structure: organizational scheme for a particular genre, such as setting, characters, and plot in fiction
 - b. traits: qualities of writing evident in all modes and forms that provide a common vocabulary for evaluation, feedback, and discussion, including ideas, organization, word choice, sentence fluency, voice, and conventions
 - c. format elements: visual qualities of a piece of writing, such as line breaks in poetry or captions for illustrations accompanying an article
5. Vocabulary: words to be understood and/or used by students
 - a. traits: six qualities of writing, including ideas, organization, word choice, sentence fluency, voice, and conventions
 - b. format elements: visual qualities of a piece of writing
 - c. process: stages of the writing process
 - d. genres: modes of writing for unique purposes

- e. stylistic devices: techniques used by authors to enhance writing quality, such as personification, metaphor, and onomatopoeia
 - f. content: words associated with content area information
6. Collaboration: expectations for working with peers
- a. evaluating others' work: expressing judgments about a peer's ideas or work
 - b. providing feedback: offering suggestions to peers regarding their ideas or work
 - c. asking questions: asking questions to elicit information regarding a peer's ideas or work

Troia, G. A., Lin, S. C., Cohen, S., & Monroe, B. W. (2011). A year in the writing workshop: Linking writing instruction practices and teachers' epistemologies and beliefs about writing instruction. *The Elementary School Journal*, *112*(1)155-182.

A5: Daily Logs

DIRECTIONS

Please log in each day, Monday through Friday and record your responses. You will begin on the Monday of the week we have scheduled your observation. I will send you the link on Monday and you will re- enter the log each day to record your practices. On Friday you will submit your log for the week. During your next observation week I will send a new log. If you do not receive it on Monday, or have any questions please e-mail at dismuke.sherry@gmail.com . Remember you must read the guidelines and glossary or view the PowerPoint before you may begin.

Thank you for your participation in daily logs!

Click below affirming you have either read the glossary and guidelines or viewed the Power Point then BEGIN DAY 1

- Yes, I have read the glossary and guidelines
- Yes, I have seen the power point

Please enter the total amount of time your students spent working on both writing and foundational skills.

- 0 minutes: There was no school or no instruction today.
- 0 minutes: There was no time today.
- Less than 30 minutes
- 30-60 minutes
- 60-90 minutes
- 90-120 minutes
- More than 2 hours
- More than 3 hours

>>

Please select the amount of total time your students spent working on foundational skills such as grammar, spelling, and handwriting apart from their own compositions.

- 0 minutes
- 30-60 minutes
- 60-90 minutes
- 90-120 minutes
- more than 2 hours
- more than 3 hours
- 10-15 minutes
- 15-30 minutes

What foundational skills did your students work on today? (Mark all that apply)

	A focus of instruction	touched on briefly	Independent practice
Grammar	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Spelling	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Handwriting	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Please select the amount of total time your students spent on writing activities today as defined in the glossary.

- 0 minutes
- 30-60 minutes
- 60-90 minutes
- 90-120 minutes
- more than 2 hours
- more than 3 hours
- 10-15 minutes
- 15-30 minutes

How much time were students engaged in uninterrupted writing?

- 0 minutes
- 15 minutes

- 30 minutes
- 45 minutes
- 60 minutes
- more than 60 minutes

What areas of writing did your students work on today? (Mark all that apply)

- | | |
|--|--------------------------|
| Generating ideas for writing | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Organizing ideas for writing | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Literary techniques or authors style | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Writing forms or genres e.g. letters, biography, poetry, | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Writing practice | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Revision of writing- elaboration | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Revision of writing- refining or reorganizing | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Editing of their writing- capitals, punctuation, or spelling | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Editing of their writing - word use, grammar, or syntax | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Sharing with each other- authors chair, share-pair, performances | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Other | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Did your writing instruction include any of the following? (Mark all that apply)

- I demonstrated or did a think aloud using my own writing
- I explained how to write, organize ideas, edit, or revise using student writing
- I explained how to write, organize ideas, edit, or revise using a published author's writing
- I lead students in a group (shared) composition.
- I used or had students create a visual representation, model, or graphic organizer
- I provided a quiet environment for students to write that is free from talking
- I encouraged students to talk with each other during the writing process
- Other

Expectations for student writing today were for?

- Letter strings or words (with or without illustrations)
- Separate sentences (with or without illustrations)

- Separate paragraphs
- Connected paragraphs
- Graphic representations only
- Other

When providing students with feedback on their writing today... (Mark all that apply)

- I did not give feedback today
- I commented on what the students wrote (not how)
- I described what the student did well.
- I commented on how the student could improve their writing
- I provided a writing or proofreading guide
- I provided feedback directly related to a students writing goals
- Students provided feedback to each other
- Other

Did you use any of the following assessment strategies today? (Mark all that apply)

- I did not assess today
- I gave a spelling or grammar assessment today
- Administered a writing progress monitor using a prompt
- Collected student composition for an assessment
- Graded students written work and or added written comments
- Used a rubric to assess student's writing conventions e.g. spelling, punctuation, grammar.
- Used a rubric to assess student growth in organization, ideas, voice, or word use.
- Conferenced with individual students about their writing
- Set or reviewed individual writing goals with students
- Choose a piece of writing to add to student portfolios
- Had students self select a piece of writing for a portfolio or assessment.
- Students self-assessed their own writing
- Students engaged in peer editing
- Other

Today I collaborated with peers about writing when we discussed...

- Instructional strategies
- Lesson ideas
- Intervention strategies
- Progress monitoring or assessment
- Grade level or school wide writing data
- Looked at student writing samples together
- A change in our current writing practices
- Referred a student to the school problem solving team for writing difficulties.
- Other

Any additional comments you would like to add about writing today.

Daily Teacher Writing Logs: Adapted from Language Arts Logs (Correnti, 2007; Rowan & Correnti, 2009; Rowan, Camburn, & Correnti, 2004)

A6: Daily Writing Instruction Log

Glossary of Terms and Guidelines for Completing Logs

When to log

Each time we schedule an observation you will record in the electronic log throughout that week, Monday-Friday. If there is a day with no school that week, still answer questions 2-5 for that day. It is important to log at the end of each day and not wait until Friday. Begin logging on Monday (day 1) and reenter the log at the end of each day. Select day 2-5 and enter your data. Submit the log after logging on Friday. If there is no school on Friday, complete Friday's log on Thursday and submit.

What to include when calculating time

These first questions have to do with how much time you and your students spend on writing activities each day. While reading, listening, speaking and writing are interconnected parts of language arts, this log is interested in documenting language arts activities directly related to writing. Time spent on writing may take the shape of lessons or practice on the writing processes, the traits of writing, genres, and includes time writing, publishing, and sharing written products. These activities will be counted under **writing** activities. Your instruction may also include teaching **foundational language arts skills** necessary for writing such as grammar, handwriting, or spelling.

Writing

Writing includes work on written composition of both narratives (including poetry, stories...) and informational text (including letters, directions, reports, persuasive arguments, editorials). It includes written compositions done on a computer as well as those that are handwritten or dictated. Writing includes the wide range of activities that entail generating ideas and sharing them in text, the production of stories, or the organization of information in writing. Writing also includes activities designed to help students prepare information or organize their ideas, and the processes that lead from this prewriting work to final written products. Students may engage in lessons on word choice, developing voice and sentence fluency. It may involve studying the writing style of published authors. Writing may be modeled by the teacher or written collaboratively by the class. In the primary years, writing may be drawing a picture and using a series of letters to represent their ideas. In later years, it might include writing complete sentences, paragraphs, reports, letters, poems, stories, or essays.

Writing time might include small groups of students working for a sustained period of time on a writing project, while other students work on other subject matter. Language arts periods also include times when all students in the class are working on writing. In both of these examples, writing is a central focus.

***Writing does not include activities where the focus is on developing penmanship skills or where the main purpose is to make a copy of words or other text (e.g. copying or practicing spelling words, or copying a math word problem from the blackboard). Do not log penmanship, or lessons on copying words in the writing section.**

Writing in the Content Areas

In many classrooms writing occurs throughout the day. So how will you know what to include in calculating your time. There is one basic criterion that will help determine inclusion. Was the process of writing a focus or partial focus of the activity? Writing in the content area involves teaching students to write in the discipline they are studying. Ask yourself, am I teaching students to write like a scientist, a historian, a citizen, or a journalist during a content area?

Please do not use this log to report on times when writing is done by students, but is not a focus of the lesson. That is, if reading and writing are needed to complete an assignment, but the focus of the instruction is on the science or social studies content being written about rather than on how to write better, do not log this time. However, if the writing processes are a focus of the lesson (e.g., you explain how to use summarization or a content specific genre like biography or you work on how to organize and structure a report), include the time.

Don't use the log to report on science or social studies lessons where students are asked to do some reading or writing, but the processes of writing are not a focus.

Do Report	Do Not Report
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research Strategies • research journals • scientific reports • Graphic Organizers of scientific data • Observational Notes • Writing a biography on a famous American • Keeping a diary of a fictional journey on the Oregon Trail • Poem about the seasons • Compare and contrast the lives of the pilgrim children with today's children • Essay on a content topic 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Answering questions in the back of the science book • Taking notes during a lecture • Work sheets • Copying facts off the board • Penmanship Practice • Copying definitions out of the dictionary • Essay questions on a test

Foundational Skills:

These activities are learned and practiced apart from students original written compositions

Spelling

Standard spelling activities require the target student to learn about or spell words with Standard English spelling (e.g., written or oral practice in standard spelling of words or correctly writing the spelling for common word families).

Grammar

Grammar includes study of the English language in written or spoken form. It includes activities such as recognizing questions, forming questions from statements, subject-verb agreement, and verb tense, recognizing the parts of speech, identifying parts of a sentence, or correcting punctuation of individual sentences (s). For example, when a teacher writes a sentence on the board and asks the target student to edit the spelling, capitalization, and punctuation errors.

These Grammar activities would include Daily Oral Language (DOL), Concept boards, and other daily programs which include daily sentence correction and practice.

Handwriting and Transcription

Learning and practicing letter formation or keyboarding.

If the activity (e.g., correcting punctuation or spelling) occurs within the context of the student's written composition, please record this in the category revision or editing under writing.

Total Time

Please add together the total amount of time students spent engaged in writing activities which you checked off in the writing section such as writing, revising, editing, publication, and sharing and record under writing. Then add up the time students spent learning, practicing and applying the foundational skills of grammar, spelling, and handwriting apart from their written compositions. Then add together both sections to record the total time. Do not count transitions and interruptions such as fire drills or late starts.

Language Arts Focal Topics**What areas did the students work on today?**

These items ask about specific activities that you might have done with students in the course of working on a focal topic. Not all activities will apply to your grade level. Please use the following guidelines in determining a topic's emphasis:

A focus of instruction

Use this category to represent topics if they received sustained attention in today's instruction. By sustained, we mean more than a brief comment or a few brief questions. Instead, the students should have had a significant opportunity to learn about the topic described. For instance, students might have worked on using a graphic organizer to brainstorming ideas or the students might have written a story, or the students might have learned a new poetry format. Each of these topics and activities could be marked "a focus of instruction." There is no specific time criterion for whether a topic is a focus of instruction. Please use your judgment, taking into account the time that the students spent on the topic and the importance of the topic to the day's work.

Touched on briefly

Use this category to represent topics in which students were engaged for a short time. Examples include stopping to discuss a punctuation rule, or explaining the meaning of one to two words when working on how to summarize a story, or pointing out an incorrectly spelled word when working on reorganizing a report. It can also include topics that come up when a student's question leads you to spend a short amount of time on a topic.

What areas of writing did your students work on today?

Please check all the areas within writing that your students worked on today. Please indicate if the area was a focus of instruction or touched on briefly.

Generating ideas for writing

Include work on prewriting activities. Prewriting includes a variety of activities that help the target student to begin writing by developing ideas for writing. Some examples include brainstorming or rapidly collecting a range of ideas (e.g., collecting ideas about topics for writing, doing research for a report, titles for a story, possible settings, characters); drawing pictures; discussing story starters; collecting words around a particular theme or words that evoke certain feelings to be used in a story; or talking with/rehearsing with peers.

If the student was writing a first draft without other idea generation activities, record this as "Writing practice". If you just assign a story prompt or story starter, record this as "Writing practice".

Organizing ideas for writing

Include activities in which you taught or the target student practiced organizational strategies. Organizational strategies provide the target student with a set of steps or a device for organizing ideas into a written form. They include, for example, creating webs, story frames, outlines, cause and effect diagrams, and pro and con charts.

If the student was writing a first draft without specifically organizing information, record this as “Writing practice”.

Literary techniques or author’s style

Include activities during which you examined or adopted an author’s style, or used a set writing structure (e.g. fairy tales, fables), or worked on the use of other literary techniques, such as use of metaphors or similes, using dialogue to develop characters, or using particular words to set a mood. For example, you asked the target student to write their own version of Cinderella set in a different time or place or asked the target student to rewrite a book using the same structure (e.g. rewrite *Brown Bear, Brown Bear* into a new story called *Red Car, Red Car*), or asked a student to write a story that included similes or that had a suspenseful mood.

Writing forms or genres (e.g., letter, drama, editorial, Haiku)

Include work on specific literary forms or genres, for example, business or friendly letters, editorials, poetry, drama, research reports, advertisements, lyrics.

Writing practice

Include time allowed for the students to write in ways not included in the categories “literary techniques, author’ style” or “writing forms or genres.” For example, the teacher may have asked the student to write in their journal about a specific topic, or write a reflection on a quotation, or write a story, or write about a personal experience, or write about a field trip or other learning experience.

Revision of writing – elaboration

Include work on making substantive revisions in the content or tone of an original text composition (target student’s writing, a peer’s writing, or a teacher’s writing). For example, this may include having added more information to support an idea, or explaining more about how the character feels, or adding dialogue, or adding details or information about what led to an event, or adding descriptions, or adding what would happen next.

If the revision occurred in isolation of student or teacher written composition, please record the activity in the “Grammar” section at the beginning of the log.

Revision of writing – refining or reorganizing

Include work on making substantive revisions in the content or organization of an original text composition (target student’s writing, a peer’s writing, or a teacher’s writing). For example, this may include having identified information or sentences that do not belong in a paragraph, or using more exacting or more interesting vocabulary, or reorganizing information into a more meaningful organization, or clarifying what has already been written. This may have included identifying tangents, narrowing a topic to

reasonable size, or identifying unnecessary details. Mark this section for work on word choice and sentence fluency.

If the revision occurred in isolation of student or teacher written composition, please record the activity in the “Grammar” section.

Editing capitals, punctuation, or spelling

Include work on recognizing and correcting errors in punctuation, spelling, or in the use of capitals in the context of original composition (the target student’s writing, a peer’s writing, or a teacher’s writing). **If this occurred in isolation of written composition, please record the activity in the “Grammar” or “Spelling” sections.**

Editing word use, grammar, or syntax

Include work on recognizing and correcting errors in word use (e.g., subject-verb agreements, verb tense, and use of plurals), or in the use of Standard English syntax/grammar in the context of original composition (e.g., student’s writing, a peer’s writing, or a teacher’s writing).

If this occurred in isolation of written composition, please record the activity in the “Grammar” section.

Sharing writing with others (e.g., author’s chair, share-pair, performances)

Include activities in which the student shared their writing with others such as author’s chair, a share-pair, oral presentation of student writing, reading what they have written to another class, etc.

What foundational skills related to writing did your students work on today?

Please check all the areas within foundational skills that your students worked on today. Please indicate if the area was a focus of instruction, touched on briefly in your instruction or practiced independently. Check as many as apply

Did your instruction in writing include any of the following?

I demonstrated or did a think-aloud using my own writing

Include interactions in which you demonstrated how to write, organize ideas, revise, or edit using your own writing. You may also have done a think-aloud explaining to students the thinking and decision making that you did as you wrote or revised.

I explained how to write, organize ideas, revise or edit . . .

Include interactions in which you explained the process or steps in writing, organizing ideas, revising or editing using another person’s writing to illustrate your points.

If you used your own writing, please record this in the category, “I demonstrated or did a think-aloud using my own writing”.

I led the student and his/her peers in a group composition

Include activities in which you led the class or a small group in writing. For example, you may have written the group composition on an overhead or blackboard as the students

dictated. You may have asked questions or made suggestions to stimulate or guide their composition. This activity may have been used to help students learn how to utilize a specific literary technique or just to give them additional writing practice.

Expectations for student writing today were for?

While your class will produce a range of products what did the majority of students produce.

Letter strings or words (with or without illustration)

Includes strings of letters used to represent words, groups of letters with spaces in between to resemble words, picture labeling, individual words, and phrase writing (**not a complete sentence**).

Separate sentence(s) (with or without illustration)

This includes a sentence or sentences that are complete, but are not connected into paragraph form. The sentence or sentences may have been written to describe a picture or pictures or to make a statement about an event or person. The sentences should express complete thoughts.

Separate paragraph(s)

This includes sentences that are connected into a meaningful paragraph of three or more sentences. To be considered a paragraph, the sentences should have a common topic. “Separate paragraph(s)” includes both a single paragraph and a series of paragraphs written on different topics. A poem of a single stanza would be included in this category.

Connected paragraphs

This includes 2 or more connected paragraphs, for example, in a story, an article, an essay, or a report. A poem with multiple stanzas would be included in this category.

Picture or graphic only

This includes visual representations of student’s communication including; pictures, models, graphic representations, cartooning, and story boarding. It may be a brainstorming or idea generating activity or part of a final product.

Did you use any of the following Assessment Strategies in writing today?

Please check all forms of assessment that occurred that day.

This section asks you to record all forms of feedback you provide individual students about their written compositions and foundational skills. It includes assessments, grades, written and verbal communication, rubrics, goal setting, portfolios, and conferences.

When providing students with feedback on their writing today...

This section asks you describe in more detail the content of the feedback you provided to students.

Today I collaborated with peers about writing when we discussed...

If you met with peers to discuss writing today please document any collaboration that took place. This includes informal conversations with peers, parents, or other staff members, as well as formal meeting times. It may also include on-line discussion groups.

If you have questions regarding how to log particular activities please e-mail me at

dismuke.sherry@gmail.com Or call Sherry Dismuke 208 345-3385

Sections of this glossary have been adapted from
The Study of Instructional Improvement
Instructional Log Language Arts Glossary
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APPENDIX B

Appendix B: Data Analysis

B1: Daily Log Conversions Samples

<u>Raw Data</u>	<u>Conversion</u>
• 0 minutes	0 minutes
• <input type="radio"/> 30-60 minutes	45 minutes
• <input type="radio"/> 60-90 minutes	75 minutes
• <input type="radio"/> 90-120 minutes	105 minutes
• <input type="radio"/> more than 2 hours	120 minutes
• <input type="radio"/> more than 3 hours	180 minutes
• <input type="radio"/> 10-15 minutes	12.5 minutes
• <input type="radio"/> 15-30 minutes	22.5 minutes

Q1, Q2, Q4, Q5,: calculated for Daily weighted average of time using the above conversions

Q3: calculated daily weighted average of quantity of foundational skills

Q6, Q,7, Q 8: calculated for daily weighted average for Writing Instruction

Q9, Q10: calculated for weighted daily weighted average for writing assessment practices

B2: Writing Observation Framework Item Summaries

Summary %Totals	Participant %	Control%
Climate	96%	67%
Pre Writing	97%	69%
Drafting	94%	61%
Conferencing	98%	73%
*Revising	100%	54%
Editing/Pub	93%	56%
Skills/Strategies	96%	49%
*Assessment	97%	75%
Practices	92%	60%

Item Summaries	Participant%	Control%
Climate	96%	67%
A	100%	68%
B	100%	89%
C	100%	100%
D	100%	53%
E	74%	53%
F	95%	58%
G	96%	58%
H	100%	84%
I	95%	47%
J	100%	58%
Prewriting	96%	69%
A	100%	54%
B	94%	85%
C	100%	69%
D	100%	69%
E	88%	46%
F	100%	69%
G	94%	92%
Drafting	94%	61%
A	94%	73%
B	100%	40%
C	100%	40%
D	75%	40%

E	94%	73%
F	94%	93%
G	100%	47%
H	94%	60%
I	94%	87%
Conferencing	98%	73%
A	100%	100%
B	100%	100%
C	94%	33%
D	100%	100%
E	100%	83%
F	92%	75%
G	100%	17%
*Revising	100%	54%
A	100%	33%
B	100%	33%
C	100%	100%
D	100%	33%
E	100%	33%
F	100%	67%
G	100%	33%
H	100%	100%
Editing	93%	56%
A	78%	40%
B	89%	20%
C	100%	60%
D	100%	80%
E	100%	80%
Skill and Strategy	96%	49%
A	100%	77%
B	95%	50%
C	100%	41%
D	90%	27%
*Assessment	97%	75%
A	100%	100%
B	100%	67%
C	89%	67%
D	100%	67%

Teacher Practice	92%	60%
A	100%	89%
B	94%	57%
C	65%	28%
D	96%	83%
E	100%	50%
F	100%	50%

***These items were removed from analysis for unequal opportunities to observe between groups**

B3: Interview Codes

Self as writer

- a. Participant identifies themselves as a writer
- b. Positive feelings or expresses confidence in their writing
- c. not a writer
- d. negative Feelings about their ability or confidence to write

Resources

- a. No district curriculum
 - b. Yes district curriculum
 - c. No /little Professional development or support ½ day or less
 - d. 1-2 day workshop on particular curriculum such as step up/Lucy Calkins less than 25 hours
 - e. Intensive professional development & district support- more than 25 hours
 - f. Extra personal support during writing time
 - g. No -School wide/district alignment
 - h. Yes- school wide alignment
 - i. Grade level alignment
 - j. Yes-Benchmarks, standardized assessment, and data collection
 - k. No -Benchmarks, standardized assessment, and data collection
 - l. Enough Time
 - m. Not enough time
 - n. Resources from the 545 class
-
- 1. Accountability
 - a. not valued/required by College
 - b. Not valued/required by district or State
 - c. Not valued by teacher
 - d. Not tested
 - e. Valued/required by College
 - f. Not valued by district or State
 - g. Not valued by teacher
 - h. tested

2. Teacher Agency-does the teacher have agency or autonomy over

- a. Time/Pacing
- b. Curriculum

3. What is writing?

- a. Writing as a Social Act
- b. Teacher views or provides Authentic Purposes for writing
- c. Teacher provides an Audience for writing
- d. Teacher has a process oriented view of writing
- e. Task completion/product orientation

4. Peer Collaboration around writing-

- a. Teacher collaborates with peers about writing instruction or student writing**

5. Integration

- a. Skill instruction-LA
- b. Content Area Knowledge/Genre

Struggling writers: Reasons

- a. Ideas
- b. Transcription
- c. encoding
- d. Planning
- e. Poor reading skills
- f. ELL
- g. Vocabulary
- h. Sentence fluency
- i. Lack of school wide/classroom practice and instruction
- j. Perseverance

Struggling Writers: Intervention

- k. Interventions linked to problems
- l. Classroom support by teacher
- m. not available

- n. Teacher not responsible
- o. Dictation
- p. Motivation/interest
- q. Graphic Organizer
- r. Pull out support-provided by someone other than teacher

Self Regulation-

- a. Teaching a skill to help students be more independent**
- b. Teaching or modeling peer interactions**
- c. Tools available in the classroom to promote self regulation and independence**
- d. Using peers as tools**
- e. Turnover of processes to students**
- f. Coaches processes instead of controlling products**
- g. Coaches/template for completion of product instead of processes**
- h. Lockstep control**

Tools-specific mention of “tools”

Learning to write is...

- a. Learning to write is developmental
- b. Requires guidance
- c. Situated in context
- d. Active

Feedback

- a. Linked to objective
- b. Linked to individual goals
- c. Develops confidence/ID as writer
- d. Leaves student in charge of changes
- e. Audience/purpose
- f. Focused on conventions

Assessment

- a. Observation
- b. Rubric/tools
- c. Portfolio
- d. Anecdotal notes/written goals

- e. Self assessment

Links to course

- a. Content Knowledge
- b. Skills/Tools
- c. Writing in multiple Genres/teaching multiple genres
- d. Dispositions
- e. Experiential learning
- f. Modeling
- g. Models
- h. Authentic purpose/audience
- i. Community/ Social Interaction

Observed Student Growth

- a. Knowledge
- b. Skills/tools
- c. Dispositions/emotions
- d. Self regulation
- e. Conventions
- f. Fluency
- g. collaboration

Teacher expectations for growth

- a. Knowledge
- b. Skills/tools
- c. Dispositions
- d. Self regulation
- e Conventions
- f. fluency
- g. collaboration

Preparation to teach writing

- a. confidant
- b. no writing methods course
- c. desire for more writing instruction coursework
- d. Lack of content knowledge/not confident

B4: Convergence of Qualitative Data

Observations or Interviews	Obs	Interv	Obs	Interv
Feature: Observed or Mentioned	O	M	O	M
Group	PD	PD	NPD	NPD
Process Approach				
Workshop Elements	93%	50%	63%	0%
Process Features	93%	73%	67%	17%
Vocabulary	83%	56%	39%	22%
	90%	60%	56%	20%
Self Regulation/Autonomy				
Self Regulation	88%	100%	0%	0%
number of autonomy features	100%	50%	50%	0%
Workshop B: Peer Conferencing	83%	83%	17%	0%
	90%	78%	22%	0%
Multiple Genres and Purposes				
number of Genres	77%	87%	23%	30%
Authentic Purpose	92%	100%	21%	100%
Audience	96%	100%	21%	17%
Writing as a Social Act				
Number of sharing tactics	100%	38%	50%	0%
Peer Collaboration strategies	100%	83%	33%	50%
Modeling G:Taught Peer interactions	50%	100%	17%	0%
Workshop B: Peer Conferencing	83%	83%	17%	0%

B5: Integration of Data

WOF-Significant at $p > .05$	LOGS -Not significant alone	Integration- Quant Data
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engaged students in more of the writing Processes • Used more research supported practices • More writing skills and strategy instruction • Applied writing skills in meaningful Context • positive and supportive social interaction during writing & opportunities for students to discuss their writing in partner or small groups • Selection of own topics and recursive rather lock step instruction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More writing focus lessons • more time spent on daily writing instruction • more time in uninterrupted writing • Less time on isolated foundational skills and grammar. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More frequent use of research supported practices consistent with a balanced process approach • writing for multiple purposes in meaningful contexts • support and opportunities for social interaction
<p>Integration:</p> <p>WOF & Observations</p>	<p>Integration:</p> <p>Logs & Interviews</p>	<p>Integration of All Sources</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Balanced writing approach and use of research supported practices • Knowledge of writing tools and foundational skills applied to authentic writing in multiple genres for a variety of purposes and audiences • Participated in community of writing & social interaction throughout the writing process • Recursive instruction which taught and encouraged self regulation over writing processes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Taught writing focus lessons • Daily writing as a best practice • More time on writing less on skill instruction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More frequent use of research supported practices consistent with a balanced process approach • Knowledge of writing tools and foundational skills applied to authentic writing in multiple genres for a variety of purposes and audiences • Purposeful social interaction is taught occurs and is expected throughout the writing process within a community of writers. • Self Regulation and autonomy over decision making is scaffolded, occurs, and is expected throughout the writing processes

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teachers have put into practice that which they have learned in the professional development and provide opportunities for their students to learn in a similar manner.
OBSERVATIONS	INTERVIEWS	Integration–Qual Data
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> They took a balanced process approach to teaching writing They provided frequent opportunities for students to write in multiple Genres for a variety of purposes and audiences Social interaction modeled, taught, and encouraged throughout the writing processes. Community of writers These teachers worked purposefully to transfer regulation and autonomy over those writing processes to students 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Value process over product Integration of foundational skills and content knowledge into writing Audience and relevant purposes for writing Writing viewed as a social act teacher’s expectations for self regulation, use of tools, and peer interactions Little accountability, Curriculum, alignment or professional development Despite this, Teachers Who took the course felt prepared to teach writing Teachers link their classroom practices and dispositions to the course 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Balanced process approach to writing Knowledge of writing tools and foundational skills applied to authentic writing in multiple genres for a variety of purposes and audiences Purposeful social interaction occurs throughout the writing process within a community of writers. Self Regulation and autonomy over decision making occurs throughout the writing processes Teachers are observed enacting their self reported links to the course. Teachers teach and utilize more frequent best practices explicitly taught in the course