An investigation into the kinds and amounts of writing tasks assigned in some Black South African secondary and high schools

Goodman Thamsanqa Shezi

Iowa State University

Follow this and additional works at: https://lib.dr.iastate.edu/rtd

Part of the Bilingual, Multilingual, and Multicultural Education Commons, English Language and Literature Commons, and the First and Second Language Acquisition Commons

Recommended Citation

https://lib.dr.iastate.edu/rtd/14373

This Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by the Iowa State University Capstones, Theses and Dissertations at Iowa State University Digital Repository. It has been accepted for inclusion in Retrospective Theses and Dissertations by an authorized administrator of Iowa State University Digital Repository. For more information, please contact digirep@iastate.edu.
An investigation into the kinds and amounts of writing tasks assigned in some Black South African secondary and high schools

by

Goodman Thamsanqa Shezi

A Thesis Submitted to the Graduate Faculty in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements of the Degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

Department: English
Major: English (Teaching English as a Second Language)

Signatures have been redacted for privacy

Iowa State University
Ames, Iowa
1991
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS</th>
<th>iv</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Background</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Place of English</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Teaching of Writing</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Statement of Problem</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purpose of the Study</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing and Learning</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Empirical Research</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Analyses of Student Writing Samples and Surveys</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHAPTER 3: RATIONALE FOR THE PRESENT STUDY</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHAPTER 4: METHODS</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subjects</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Procedures</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instrumentation</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHAPTER 5: RESULTS</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Characteristics of Respondents</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing Tasks Assigned</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Views on the Function of Writing</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This study would not have been a success had it not been for the following people who gave their valuable assistance and support.

First, I am greatly indebted to my Major Professor, Roberta Abraham, for her guidance, encouragement and support throughout this study.

Second, my thanks go to the members of my Thesis Committee: Robert Mazur, Dan Douglas and David Russell.

Third, I am greatly indebted to my wife Nompumelelo, who agreed to put her professional career on hold so as to keep me company in the U.S. I can never repay her enough for the sacrifice.

Fourth, my thanks go to my friends Sibusiso and Phuti for their role in administering the questionnaires in South Africa.

Finally, I am greatly indebted to my parents, particularly my father, Israel Vusumuzi Shezi, who never doubted my academic abilities.
CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

This thesis investigates the kinds and amounts of writing tasks assigned in some Black South African schools. It also seeks the views of teachers on the function of writing in content areas, teachers' level of expertise in teaching writing and teachers' exposure to ideas about writing in general and writing to learn in particular.

The thesis proceeds from the following premises:
1. Writing is a powerful learning tool which can benefit learners in all subject areas.
2. Writing instruction should not be confined to the English classroom since all teachers assign writing of one kind or another in the course of their teaching.
3. Different subjects tend to require different forms of writing. Therefore, to expect the English teacher to grapple with all possible forms of writing students might encounter in various subjects is to expect too much.
4. Different types of writing tasks enhance learning differently. Therefore, exposing students to an array of writing tasks would be a great service to the students.
Background

It seems important to discuss a few aspects of the Black education system in South Africa, given that the study outlined is intricately bound with some aspects of Black education in South Africa. Accordingly, this section presents a brief description of Black education, stages within the education system, the place of English in the Black education system and the teaching of writing.

The Black education system in South Africa

I just want to remind the Honorable Members of Parliament that if the native in South Africa is being taught to expect that he will lead his adult life under the policy of equal rights, he is making a big mistake. The native must not be subject to a school system which draws him away from his own community, and misleads him by showing him the green pastures of European society in which he is not allowed to graze. (Quote from Dr. Verwoed's Speech, Christie, 1985:93)

The speech cited above by a man credited with the conceptualization of Bantu education in South Africa, served to introduce to Parliament the Bantu Education Bill which passed in 1953, thus leading to racially segregated schools in South Africa. This quotation from Verwoed's speech spells out quite clearly what Black education is all about. It is about putting Blacks in their "rightful" position: below Whites, in particular, and other races in
general. To ensure that Blacks do not "graze in the green pastures," the government, among other things, provided unequal funding of education systems, with Black education receiving the least. This led to a host of problems, some of which are: lack of facilities such as laboratories, shortage of classrooms, teaching aids, and teachers, imposition of syllabi and curricula and the two "official" languages: English and Afrikaans.

Stages within the education system

The education system in South Africa allows students to pass through three distinct stages: primary school, secondary school and high school.

Primary school

Primary school is a seven-year course which normally begins at the school-going age of seven. It starts with Sub Standard A (SSA) (grade one) and extends to Standard Five (grade 7). Beginning in Sub Standard B (grade 2), English is taught as a subject along with other subjects which are taught in the native languages of the students. However, from Standard Three (grade 5), English appears not only as a subject, but as the medium of instruction.
**Secondary school** Secondary school is a three-year course. Building on the work done in the primary school, this course prepares students for senior secondary school commonly called high school. During this stage, i.e., Standards Six to Eight, students do eight subjects, three of which are languages, i.e., English, Afrikaans and a native language, e.g., Zulu.

**Senior secondary school/high school** Senior secondary is a two-year course (grade 11 & 12) which prepares students for university education or a vocational career. During this stage, students narrow down from eight subjects to six. As in the secondary school stage, taking three languages is compulsory. These languages are always English, Afrikaans and a native language that is predominantly spoken in the area where the school is situated. Both English and Afrikaans parade as "official" languages imposed by the government. The native language to be included in the curriculum is a matter of chance determined by physical location of a particular school. Thus, students have no choice in matters of the languages which are part of the curriculum that determines their failure or success within the education system.
Final examinations for this stage are set and evaluated externally. Teachers, therefore, often find themselves hard pressed to "teach for the exams" which means, among other things, making sure the syllabus is well-covered. Students also tend to panic as this stage introduces a "foreign" element which ultimately decides whether they go to university, vocational school or fail the course (with options to repeat or drop out).

**The Place of English**

As mentioned before, English instruction begins in SSB (grade 2) while English as medium of instruction begins in Std. 3 (grade 5) and continues through high school (grade 12). Therefore, English in South African Black schools occupies a central place in the school curriculum although it is not the first language of the Blacks.

In Brown's (1987) English as Second Language (ESL) and English as Foreign Language (EFL) continuum, English as used in South Africa falls under type (b), which represents a situation "where the second language is an acceptable lingua franca used for education, government or business within the country" (p. 136).

However, Brown's phrase "acceptable lingua franca" needs to be interpreted with caution when viewed in the
context of South Africa. First, the decision to make both English and Afrikaans the official languages of the country was a political one. Given the fact that Blacks in South Africa are not participants in the political decision-making process that governs their lives, one can argue that both English and Afrikaans were imposed rather than agreed upon. However, it seems fair to say that most Blacks prefer English to Afrikaans. The 1976 Soweto riots serve to confirm this view. Thousands of Black children took to the streets in protest when the government of South Africa tried to impose Afrikaans as the medium of instruction in Black schools.

Second, the debate surrounding the status of English in South Africa has not yet been resolved. Ndebele (1987), a South African scholar, calls for a close scrutiny of the politics of the English language before it can be accepted as a lingua franca in South Africa. He states:

I think we should not be critically complacent about the role and future of English in South Africa, for there are many reasons why it cannot be considered an innocent language. The problems of society will also be the problems of the predominant language of the society. It is the carrier of its perceptions, its attitudes, and its goals, for through it the speakers absorb entrenched attitudes. The guilt of English must then be recognized and appreciated before its continued use can be advocated. (quoted in Peirce, 1989:406)

Ndebele's concerns are justifiable when one considers the relationship between language and cultural identity.
English, being a language that Black South Africans inherited from their British colonial masters, cannot avoid scrutiny if Blacks hope to retain their cultural and national identity. Ndebele is not the only scholar to realize the dangers of blindly embracing another language. Ironically, some TESOL (Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages) scholars realize the political implications of their work. Judd (1982) discusses the moral dilemma facing teachers of English to speakers of other languages, who, because of the nature of their work, may be "...contributing to the demise of certain languages or linguistic communities" (p. 267). Judd argues that TESOL is a political act, given that "the roots of education in any society must be congruent with overall political goals of that society. It is the political authorities, for example, who decide what subjects are permitted or promoted in schools" (p. 265).

However, because of the undeniably high status of English as an international language, certain communities find themselves caught in a "love-hate" relationship with English. To resolve the tensions that result from this relationship, some communities have "nativized" English so that it "captures the shades of thought and experience in their communities" (Maposa, p. 43). Obviously, this calls
for a reconceptualization of the language, methods of teaching and content to be taught.

Peirce (1989), for example, argues that "the teaching of English can be reconceptualized as a pedagogy that opens up possibilities for students and teachers of English, not only in terms of materials advancement, but in terms of the way they perceive themselves, their role in society and the potential for change in their society" (pp. 402-3).

The reconceptualization of English advocated by Pierce has already found expression in the recent movement in South Africa: People's English. People's English, among other things, advocates change in both methodology and content of the English syllabi. For example, instead of reading a lot of Shakespeare, students will read local African authors who write in English. Instead of having a teacher-centered classroom, students should learn collaboratively. Seen from this perspective, both the methods of teaching and the syllabi become agents of what Trimbur (1985) calls conscientization:

...the process of cultural action in which the everyday experiences of the oppressed and powerless--experiences devalued by the dominant culture--can be reclaimed and reinterpreted. Conscientization is a method of resistance where learners are no longer passive recipients of knowledge but rather knowing subjects whose learning leads them to a deepening awareness of the social forces and relations of power that shape their immediate experience. The role of
the teacher is not to make "deposits" but to join with students as "critical co-investigators" in a "dialogical" relation. (p. 93)

Clearly, as the arguments above show, the status of English in South Africa is not a settled issue, at least in the eyes of Blacks who still have no political voice. However, recent political developments in South Africa, have resulted in talks about "a new South Africa." It remains to be seen what the new South Africa will approve between the progressive People's English syllabi which throw Shakespeare and other classics out of the window in favor of contemporary progressive literature and the current "government sponsored" English syllabi which tend to be packed with western literary giants. Time will tell. However, it would be naive to assume that there is no alternative or compromise that could be worked out. For example, rather than having students read only western literature (as though western cultural and political experiences are so important that without knowing them one would seize to exist in the face of the earth), students could read both African and western literature.

The Teaching of Writing

As early as SSB (grade 2), students encounter English in its written form. They are taught to spell some English words, e.g., body parts. As they progress through the levels
in the education system, they move beyond mechanical tasks like copying, spelling and dictation to composing in English. Composition teaching generally takes the form of a movement from guided or controlled composition to free or non-controlled composition.

Composition types like argumentation, description and narration are part of the syllabi in English classrooms. In each level, the syllabi specify the number of compositions that a teacher is expected to assign and teach per quarter or semester. Thus, teachers are guided in the preparation of their plans of work. Principals and inspectors of education can "check" if the teacher has taught, assigned and evaluated the correct number of compositions stipulated for that particular class level.

Statement of the Problem

As mentioned above, English teachers at all class levels have syllabi which stipulate both type and frequency of writing tasks to be taught and assigned to the students. English teachers are held responsible for writing instruction within the context of English instruction. However, there seems to be no explicit provision for writing instruction in the syllabi for content subjects. This lack of provision tends to foster a situation which confines writing
instruction within the English classroom although all subjects require students to produce writing of various forms both in daily class work and examinations, e.g., essay-questions.

However, confining writing instruction to the English classrooms may not be in the best interests of students. First, despite the possible transfer of general writing skill from the English class, different subjects require certain forms of writing, and that being the case, there is need for explicit teaching of writing in all subjects. Among others, Herrington (1985) represents this view in her argument that writing in various subject areas differs insofar as each subject area or discipline imposes its own lines of reasoning. This study will reveal general patterns of writing tasks assigned.

Second, writing can play a vital role in enhancing learning in all subjects. Viewed from this perspective, students stand to gain from being taught how to use various forms of writing to maximize learning. After all, all teachers assign some kind of writing to students at some stage. However, not all teachers may be teaching forms of writing peculiar to the subjects they teach. This is a problem.
Assigning writing without teaching forms of writing peculiar to one's subject area may be caused by many reasons: a belief that writing instruction is the responsibility of the English teacher, lack of expertise in the area of writing instruction, lack of awareness of the kinds of writing tasks that could enhance learning and problems associated with relating content area objectives to writing. Since it is not known what Black teachers in South Africa know about writing, this study will serve to bridge that gap.

**Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study is to reveal general patterns of writing tasks assigned in content areas in some Black schools. A questionnaire will be used to obtain data. These data will be useful in discussions of types of writing tasks that promote learning. As the following literature review suggests, different types of writing tasks promote learning differently. For example, mechanical writing tasks like copying are likely to promote learning differently than composing tasks like essay writing. Therefore, it seems important to know what writing tasks teachers normally assign.

Further, teachers' level of expertise in teaching writing and exposure to ideas about writing in general and
writing to learn in particular, are likely to determine teachers' willingness to assign and teach writing in their subjects. Therefore, the study taps this dimension.
CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter will briefly discuss some studies done in the area of writing to learn. The chapter is divided into three sections. The first section discusses the theory behind writing to learn. The second discusses empirical studies that have been conducted to determine how specific writing tasks (e.g., note-taking, study questions, essay writing and expressive journal writing) promote learning. The third discusses surveys that have been conducted to determine the nature of writing tasks teachers assign at schools and universities and writing skills necessary to accomplish those writing tasks.

Writing and Learning

The central claim that writing-to-learn proponents make is that writing promotes learning. This claim calls for a close scrutiny of the relationship between writing and learning. This relationship will be explored in this section.

Among others, Britton (1982) and Emig (1977) have argued that writing enhances learning. Emig (1977) in her article "Writing as a Mode of Learning" argues that "writing represents a unique mode of learning - not merely valuable,
not merely special, but unique" (p. 123). To emphasize this uniqueness, Emig discusses four major characteristics of writing that correspond to learning and, therefore, empower writing to serve learning uniquely.

First, she points out that writing is multi-representational insofar as it involves the eye, hand, and mind, which are all major ways people use in dealing with experience or actuality. Elaborating her position, Emig borrows Jerome Bruner's (1971) and Jean Piaget's (1971) set of categories that relate to the ways in which we "represent and deal with actuality" (p. 124). These are: (1) enactive—we learn "by doing"; (2) iconic—we learn "by depiction in an image" and (3) representational or symbolic—we learn "by restatement in words" (p. 124). Emig notes that the hand dominates in enactive learning, the eye in iconic and the brain in symbolic.

Having established the hand, eye, and brain as three major ways of dealing with actuality, Emig points out that "what is striking about writing as process is that, by its very nature, all three ways of dealing with actuality are simultaneously or almost simultaneously deployed" (p. 124).

Writing is also characterized as integrative. It enjoys the benefit of the involvement of both the right and left hemispheres of the brain. Emig challenges the view that
writing is a "chiefly left-hemisphere activity" simply because "the linear written product is somehow regarded as analogue for the process that created it; and the left hemisphere seems to process material linearly" (p. 124). Rather, writing also involves the right hemisphere. Elaborating this claim, Emig turns to split brain research which suggests that the right hemisphere, "the seat of emotions," plays a major role in the creative process. She explains that the right hemisphere has been characterized as "the source of intuition, of sudden gestalts, of flashes of images, of abstractions occurring as visual or spatial wholes, as the initiating metaphors in the creative process" (p. 125). Thus, the right hemisphere contributes significantly in the writing experience, especially creative writing.

Second, she points out that writing provides immediate feedback. Feedback, especially self-provided feedback, is very important in any learning experience. In fact, some researchers in second language learning (e.g., Gattegno, 1972; Stevick, 1980) have argued that successful learning requires feedback to reinforce and monitor progress in learning. As Yinger (1985) puts it, "the act of writing is an unusually powerful instance of both immediate and long-term self-provided feedback. The unique proximity of
process and product in writing provides a closed-loop learning cycle. What has just been written is available immediately for rereading, evaluation, and revision" (p. 22). Thus, writing provides an opportunity for the writer to confirm if indeed the writing conveys the intended message (Odell, 1980; Baker, 1984). Baker (1984) captures the power of writing in providing feedback and, therefore, opportunities for learning:

I am involved in writing, now, to search for and discover what I mean and believe to be true about writing. My thoughts emerge, slowly, onto paper, and then I ponder them to decide if I've said what I really intend. I think my written thoughts over, go away and come back, if necessary, and they are still there, holding my meanings steady. If I want, I can rewrite my thoughts, which is to rethink them, and so, gradually, through writing, discover my meaning, what the truth is, for me. I live through and let go of, my thoughts and feelings as I write; I get to know myself a bit better, I learn and I change. (p. 19)

Third, Emig points out that both learning and writing require deliberate structuring of meaning. Learning, according to Emig, involves making associations and connections. For example, in learning, one has to make connections between previous background knowledge and the knowledge currently presented.

Writing also calls upon the writer to establish what Emig calls "systematic connections and relationships" (p. 126). Establishing such connections and relationships
leads to clear writing which Emig defines as that "writing which signals without ambiguity the nature of conceptual relationships, whether they be coordinate, subordinate, superordinate, causal, or something other" (p. 125). The end result of establishing connections and relationships as one writes is learning. Nostrand (1979) explains the relationship between writing and learning as follows: "Composing consists of joining bits of information into relationships, many of which have never existed until the composer utters them. Simply by writing—that is, by composing information—you become aware of the connections you make, and you thereby know more than you knew before starting to write" (p. 178).

Vygotsky also expresses the view that both writing and learning involve the learner in a process of structuring meaning. For Vygotsky, the writing process helps thinking as one transforms thought through inner speech to written language. Vygotsky contends: "The change from maximally compact inner speech to maximally detailed written speech requires what might be called deliberate semantics—deliberate structuring of the web of meaning" (quoted in Copeland, 1985).

Fourth, Emig points out that writing is active and personal. The act of writing requires personal engagement as
one sets out to create and discover meaning (Zamel, 1982). Given the notion of writing as a dynamic process that involves "the act of dealing with an excessive number of simultaneous demands or constraints" (Flower and Hayes, 1980: 33), active and personal engagement of the writer seems to be a prerequisite. In fact, Flower and Hayes see a writer in the act as a "thinker on a full-time cognitive overload" (p. 33). According to Flower and Hayes, the writer has to juggle constraints during composing. These constraints are: (1) the demand for integrated knowledge, (2) linguistic conventions of written language and (3) the rhetorical problem itself.

Similarly, learning, as conceived from a cognitive perspective, stresses the personal engagement of the learner. Bruner, as cited by Richards and Rodgers (1986), calls this type of learning "discovery learning," and he argues that this type of learning, which is essentially problem-solving and creative in nature, has the following benefits: (a) it increases intellectual potency, (b) it shifts from extrinsic to intrinsic rewards, (c) it encourages the learning of heuristics by discovery, and (d) it aids the conservation of memory (Richards and Rodgers, 1986:100).

Elaborating the issue of personal involvement in learning, Emig cites Polanyi, who contends that "into
every act of knowing there enters a passionate contribution of the person knowing what is being known,...this coefficient is no mere imperfection but a vital component of his knowledge" (quoted in Emig, 1977:126). In other words, knowing involves an attempt to reach out and be personally involved in understanding knowledge.

Britton (1982), who has also written extensively on the connection between writing and learning, shares the notion of learning as an activity that requires personal engagement of the learner. In his discussion of the relationship between learning and writing, Britton introduces the concept of "expressive writing" which he defines as "language close to the self" (p. 123). He sees expressive writing as a form that "favors exploration, discovery, learning" (p. 124). According to Britton, talk also has a role to play in learning,

but (a) writing, as premeditated utterance, may have the effect of sharpening the process of seeking relevance, as well as harvesting for the writer connections first explored in speech, his own and other people's. And (b) writing puts the onus for effort on each member of the class. Hence the hypothesis that expressive writing has an important role to play in the initial stage of grappling with new concepts. (p. 111)

Bereiter and Scardamalia (1987) also provide a compelling argument that writing enhances learning. They explain the relationship between writing and learning in
terms of a model of the composing process: the knowledge-transforming model. Composing through the knowledge-transforming model involves "the interaction between both text processing and knowledge processing" (p. 11). Simply put, as one composes, one engages in processes that end up improving both the quality of the text and one's topic knowledge. The improvement in text quality as a result of writing implies that learning has occurred. As evidence of both text processing and knowledge processing during composing, they cite research in think-aloud protocols (Scardamalia, 1984). In this research, Scardamalia found that graduate students think and say much more than they actually write compared to grade six pupils. In other words, the thinking activity, as revealed by the think-aloud protocols, suggests some kind of text processing and knowledge processing that occurs during composing resulting in better text quality and learning. As Bereiter (1980) puts it: "writing probably always plays an epistemic function in that our knowledge gets modified in the process of being written down" (p. 87).
Summary

In this section the intention was to establish the nature of the relationship between writing and learning, given that the present study operates from the basic assumption that writing promotes learning. Four points were discussed: (1) writing is multi-representational and integrative; (2) writing provides immediate feedback; (3) writing requires deliberate structuring of meaning and (4) writing is active and personal. It was argued that, because of the above characteristics—which also apply to learning—writing can promote learning.

Empirical Research

The following section discusses some research studies that have been conducted to determine how specific writing tasks (e.g., note-taking, study questions, essay writing and expressive journal writing) enhance learning.

Note-taking

Note-taking has received a fair amount of attention in research. Bretzing and Kulhavy (1979) investigated the extent to which four levels of note-taking (summary, paraphrase, verbatim, and letter search) as a learning strategy can aid recall. Using the concept depth of
processing they predicted that subjects who recalled more of the text would be those who had taken summary notes and paraphrase. These subjects would recall more of the text because summary and paraphrase as note-taking strategies require careful attention to analysis of text, which involves relating the text to prior knowledge and encoding the material semantically. In this sense, paraphrase and summary writing become text processing at a deeper level, which allows for meaningful integration of textual material with previous knowledge.

Writing verbatim notes and letter search, on the other hand, would result in text processing at a very shallow level. Subjects would not have to do any semantic encoding to perform these two tasks. As predicted, subjects who did paraphrase and summary writing had significantly higher scores on text recall than subjects who did verbatim notes and letter search. Results of this study indicate that note-taking which requires deeper processing results in superior recall than note-taking which does not.

In another study, Bretzing and Kulhavy (1981) found not only that note-taking (of a deep processing nature) increases chances of retention, but also that "text written in an informal style is better recalled" (p. 248). In this study, they manipulated a text to produce two versions of the same
text: high-formality and low-formality. The high-formality and low-formality text versions resulted in different types of notes. Subjects who were instructed to read the low-formality version and prepare notes for a class that was not familiar with the subject, produced notes of a paraphrase nature. These subjects also recalled more of the text since paraphrase, as a note-taking strategy, had required them to tap their previous knowledge as they tried to make sense of the text.

Subjects who read the high-formality version with instructions to prepare notes for a professional group which knew the subject, produced notes of a verbatim nature. These subjects had poor recall during posttests. Bretzing and Kulhavy argue that these subjects had poor recall because they did not do much semantic encoding, as evidenced by their verbatim notes.

This study does more than show the value of note-taking as a learning strategy; it also shows that text style and purpose of notes play a major role in the type and content of notes an individual might produce.
Essay writing, note-taking and study questions

While some researchers have shown the value of note-taking, others have looked at other types of writing (e.g., essay writing and study questions) which they claim are even more beneficial in learning. Newell (1984) tried to determine how note-taking, study questions and essay writing affected passage recall, passage knowledge organization and concept application in new situations. Results indicated "significant gains in passage-specific knowledge" (p. 265) for subjects who wrote essays. Explaining the results, Newell argued that essay writing required students to integrate information, using their topic knowledge and elements of prose passage. This integration process consolidated understanding of concepts from prose. Consequently, subjects who wrote essays demonstrated better concept clarity than subjects who did study questions and note-taking.

Note-taking and study questions allowed for "planning at the local level rather than global level" (p. 283). As a result, information they generated remained in "isolated bits" without being "integrated into a coherent text, and in turn into the students' own thinking" (p. 283).

Langer (1986) confirmed Newell's (1984) findings that essay writing enhances concept clarity. Langer had subjects
(6 high school juniors) read a selected passage in a history textbook and respond by (1) taking notes, (2) completing study questions and (3) writing an essay. Besides writing as they performed each of the above tasks, subjects were asked to "think-aloud" so that the researcher could determine the reasoning processes as subjects engaged in each task. Analysis of the writing generated in response to each task showed that study questions generated the "least writing," note-taking produced "fragmentary notes" while essay writing produced cohesive writing (p. 402). Like subjects' writing, think-aloud protocols revealed that subjects during essay writing were attempting to integrate, generate, and evaluate ideas so as to arrive at a coherent whole.

Like Newell's (1984) research, Langer's study provides evidence that essay writing tends to enhance concept clarity better when compared to other writing tasks. This finding was later confirmed in a more comprehensive study by Applebee and Langer (1987) in which they conclude that teachers ought to be selective when it comes to the types of writing tasks they assign, given the different ways each writing task enhances learning. For example:

Analytic writing leads to a focus on selective parts of the text, to deeper reasoning about less information. Summary and note-taking, in contrast, lead
to a focus on the whole text in more comprehensive but more superficial ways. Short-answer study questions focus attention on particular information, with little attention to overall relationships. (p. 136)

Marshall (1987) asked subjects to respond to literary texts (short stories) using study questions and essay writing (both personal and formal analytic). He found that essay writing, both personal and formal analytic types, led to more elaborate textual analysis compared to restricted writing in the form of study questions. Subjects' understanding of literary texts improved significantly after extended essay writing. Marshall sums up the advantage of essay writing in enhancing concept clarity as follows:

...when students frame an argument, locate the evidence that will support it, and choose the language that will carry it, they may be constructing both a written product and an intellectual representation of the story—a representation that may stay with them and become for them, finally, the basis for what is remembered and understood about the story over time. (Marshall, 1987:59-60)

In other words, the very process of writing an essay, with its attendant organization, interpretation and argument elements, leads to concept clarity and therefore learning. Viewed from this perspective, essay writing is a "learning activity" which engages students in "constructing meaning" Hounsell (1984:103).

Hounsell (1984) interviewed 17 History students. He
also interviewed History faculty. The objectives of the study were (1) to determine students' conception of essay writing, (2) to determine students' essay writing strategies, and (3) to determine History faculty conception of essay writing and expectations. Besides interviews, students brought recent essays and shared with the researcher their experiences of essay writing in the context of History. What is interesting about Hounsell's (1984) study is that three conceptions of essay writing emerged from interviews and analysis of subjects' essays. These are: (1) essay writing as argument, (2) essay writing as arrangement and (4) essay writing as viewpoint. Faculty opinion tended to favor an argument conception of essay writing while students were sympathetic to all conceptions.

Horton, Fronk and Walton (1985) also provide evidence for the potential of essay writing in enhancing learning. They had 64 Chemistry college students assigned randomly to two groups. One group was to write required assignments and the other group was exempted from this requirement. Results showed that students who wrote assignments scored significantly higher on posttests than subjects who did not write assignments. Using this study, one can reasonably argue that writing can enhance learning in the sciences.
The studies summarized above have established essay writing as best suited to promote concept clarity and learning (as compared to note-taking and study questions), given the cognitive demands associated with thinking and learning that essay writing requires. The following section will briefly discuss studies that deal with expressive journal writing as a tool for learning.

Expressive journal writing

Whereas Marshall (1987), as noted earlier, found that both personal analytic and formal analytic essay writing led to significantly better textual analysis of short stories, Newell, Suszynski & Weingart (1989) found that responding to literary texts through essay writing in a personal mode (reader-based) led to better quality essays than responding in a formal (text-based) mode. They had their subjects read two short stories and respond to questions that were framed such that they either demanded that subjects bring personal experience and feeling into the interpretation (i.e., reader-based mode) or that they rely on the text as the sole source for any inference or conclusion they might reach. According to Newell, Suszynski & Weingart, a writing task that encourages students to "apply personal frames of reference in interpreting literary texts provides opportunity
to elaborate upon meanings they have tentatively created in their reading" (p. 38). In this sense, writing becomes a tool for exploration of personal meaning (Wason- Ellam, 1987; Odell, 1980).

Personal or expressive writing and its potential for learning has received attention in research studies. Most of these studies have investigated the students' use of journals as tools for personal exploration of subjects. Weiss & Walters (1979) hypothesized that (1) more subject-area writing will produce better writing, (2) more subject-area writing will reduce writing apprehension, (3) the frequency and amount of learner-centered writing about a subject will increase learning of that subject, and (4) concepts students write about will be clearer to them than the concepts they do not write about. Using five subject areas: History, Statistics, Psychology, Physical Science and Reading Theory and Practice, Weiss & Walters asked instructors in the experimental group to assign regular learning-centered writing assignments which "could be quite brief, as short as two to three minutes' worth of writing; could be expressive or personal; could be speculative or communicative; could interrupt or close a class or be done out of class; could be preceded or followed by a discussion of their content and/or form; could be kept in a journal;..." (p. 8).
Results supported hypotheses 3 and 4. Expressive learner-centered writing did indeed lead to better concept clarity and subject learning. As Wason-Ellam (1987) puts it: "Expressive writing is best used for exploration and discovery; it has a feeling-thinking aspect to it which may or may not be present in other writing modes. Students can use expressive writing to record or react to what they are learning" (p. 3).

To test the usefulness of expressive journal writing, Wason-Ellam (1987) conducted a study which involved first grade pupils in a Math class. Subjects were asked to record in journals their impressions of what they were learning. Analysis of journal entries showed that subjects used writing for (1) self-questioning, (2) organizing information, (3) assimilating and accommodating information and (4) making inferences.

The results of this study seem to point to the value of expressive journal writing in learning. Learners, given encouragement to reflect on the experience of grappling with concepts (in any subject) end up learning in a very personal way. Learners "acquire personal ownership of ideas" (Connolly, 1989:97) and learn to "give voice to their ideas--a voice that others can share" (Silberman, 1989:xvi).

In another study designed to explore "the role of
exploratory or personal writing to support the learning of Mathematics" (p. 1), Rose (1989) had her subjects use journals extensively to record their impressions of Math. Besides journal writing, her subjects received heavy doses of in-class focussed writing and autobiographical narratives. Results of this study show that journal writing gave subjects an opportunity to express their feelings about Mathematics. Subjects also reported that writing helped them in learning Mathematics.

Selfe and Arbabi (1983) also provide support and proof that journals, as tools for reflection in the form of expressive writing, play a major role in learning. Selfe and Arbabi (1983) asked 35 Engineering students to use journals which were to be collected (3 times a week) and responded to by the instructor. In their journal entries, subjects were at liberty to explain their interest in the course, react to topics discussed in class, comment on the way the course was presented and explore any issue/s relating to the course content or format. Results of this study showed that subjects who used journals benefitted in three important ways. First, they used journals as learning tools. Journals became tools for analyzing important points, questions that arose from readings and lectures, and problems stemming from course presentation. Second, journals helped subjects
communicate with the instructor. Subjects sought clarifications on points that were not clear. Third, the experience of keeping a journal gave subjects a positive attitude towards writing although many had started with a negative attitude.

Summary

Some empirical studies that explore how specific writing tasks promote learning have been briefly discussed in this section. These are: Bretzing and Kulhavy (1979; 1981), Newell (1984), Langer (1986), Applebee and Langer (1987), Marshall (1987), Hounsell (1984), Horton, Fronk and Walton (1985), Copeland (1985), Newell, Suszynski and Weingart (1989), Weiss and Walters (1979), Wason-Ellam (1987), Rose (1989) and Selfe and Arbabi (1983). It was suggested that (1) note-taking which encourages deeper processing aids concept clarity more than note-taking which does not; (2) essay writing, through its emphasis on organization, interpretation and argument elements, has a greater chance of enhancing concept clarity and learning than do note-taking and study questions; and (3) expressive journal writing promotes learning by encouraging students to reflect on subject knowledge, thus bringing personal feeling to the learning experience.
Analyses of Student Writing Samples and Surveys

Given research data that support the notion that some writing tasks enhance learning in one way or another, it seems important to investigate the nature of writing tasks universities and schools assign to students. It is also important to find out what writing skills faculty think students need and what writing skills students think they need to perform writing tasks assigned at schools and universities.

The following section, therefore, discusses analyses of student writing samples which are important experiential studies that provide information about writing tasks assigned at school. It also discusses surveys that have been conducted to investigate both the nature of writing tasks at schools and universities and faculty and students' opinion with regards to writing skills. Various methods of research have been employed in these faculty and student surveys, including interviews, questionnaires and observations.

First, writing analyses and surveys directed at secondary (and lower level) schools will be discussed. Second, surveys directed at universities will be discussed.
Secondary (and lower level) school surveys

Britton et al. (1975) examined students' writings from various content areas. The writings were analyzed in terms of a paradigm that recognizes three central functions of writing: expressive, transactional, and poetic. The expressive is the basic mode we use to express personal feelings and emotions. Therefore, the expressive mode is a foundation which can be exploited to encourage personal engagement in learning. The transactional is the mode we use to get things done, for example, persuading, informing, and giving orders. The poetic mode, though associated with literature (stories, poems, etc.), represents general language use which aims at achieving aesthetic effect. Viewed from this perspective, one need not be a serious artist, that is, a poet, playwright, or novelist, to employ the poetic function of language (Britton et al., 1975; Britton, 1970; Britton, 1982).

Britton and his associates considered the expressive function of language very important in serving both learning to write and writing to learn. As "language close to the self" (Britton, 1982:123), it encourages personal, engaged learning (Emig, 1977).

However, Britton et al.'s analysis of content area
writing by 11 to 18-year-olds in British schools revealed
that most school writing is in the transactional mode and
that teachers (as examiners) are usually the main audience.
Britton and associates viewed this state of affairs
negatively, recommending incorporation of more learner-
centered writing and extension of audience for students' writing to include, for example, other students, parents and students themselves.

Other studies which use Britton et al.'s (1975) function categories (expressive, transactional and poetic) have since followed both in Canada (e.g., Whale and Robinson (1978)) and in the U.S. (e.g., Applebee, Auten & Lehr (1981)).

Whale and Robinson (1978) selected three schools in the Saskatchewan area and investigated modes of students' writings in free writing situations. Unlike Britton et al. (1975), they included younger pupils (grade three). Other grades involved were five and eight. Following Britton et al.'s methodology, students' writing samples were analyzed in this study. Students produced writing samples on two occasions. First, participating teachers were asked to prompt students to produce free writing samples. Second, the researchers had their graduate assistant prompt students to produce free writing samples in response to two motivations: film and two short story readings.
Analysis of the 849 writing samples produced by both motivations showed that most students wrote in the transactional mode. A total of 541 (63.7%) of the writing samples were in the transactional mode compared to 118 (13.9%) in the expressive mode and 158 (18.6) in the poetic mode. The remaining 32 (3.7%) were in the mimetic category (an additional category added by the researchers to the "poetic mode to account for the modelling type of writing found among third- and fifth-grade writers" (p. 351). This finding corroborated Britton et al.'s (1975) finding that students in secondary schools tend to write in the transactional mode, especially when the intended audience is the teacher as examiner. Students produced more transactional writing in response to teacher-directed motivations than they did in response to researcher-directed motivations. A breakdown of samples according to source of motivation shows that 71.2% and 74.5% of the two teacher-motivated writings were transactional, while the comparable percentages for researcher motivated writings were 57.2% and 59.3%.

Further, researcher-directed motivations prompted students to produce more expressive writing (16.6% and 24.7%) compared to teacher-directed motivations (8.8% and 4.4%). In accounting for this pattern of distribution, the researchers
point out that the nature of the pre-adolescent student could have inhibited free use of the expressive and poetic modes, and the teachers could have tipped the scale in favor of transactional mode, given the need to prepare students for "the increased demands for informative and reportive writing which is characteristic of secondary-school writing programs" (p. 355).

Applebee, Auten and Lehr (1981) used survey questionnaires and classroom observations to investigate the nature and frequency of writing tasks assigned at American secondary schools. Classroom observations were intended to give the researchers a feel of the context in which writing takes place in schools, both in terms of teacher attitudes and student reaction to writing assigned.

Assuming a very broad range of writing tasks, Applebee and associates categorized their observed writing tasks using a paradigm very similar to the one used in the British project (Britton et al., 1975). Their categories were:

1. Writing without composing (mechanical uses of language).
   E.g., Math calculations, fill-in-the blank exercises and multiple-choice exercises.

2. Informational uses of writing.
E.g., note-taking, reports and analysis. (This category corresponds with Britton et al.'s transactional function of writing).

(3) Personal uses of writing.
E.g., journal writing and personal letters or notes. (This category corresponds with Britton et al.'s expressive function of writing).

(4) Imaginative uses of writing.
E.g., stories, poems and plays. (This category corresponds with Britton et al.'s poetic function of writing).

Applebee and his associates found that writing activities in class were dominated by mechanical and informational uses of writing (24% and 20% of observed time, respectively) with "only 3% of lesson time devoted to longer writing requiring the student to produce at least a paragraph of coherent text" (p. 31). Further, both classroom observations and survey questionnaires showed that there was less expressive and creative writing assigned in secondary schools than mechanical and informational writing. Applebee and his associates viewed these findings negatively, given their firm belief that writing plays a major role in enhancing learning.
In another study, Applebee (1978) surveyed 1977 winners of the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE) Achievement Awards in Writing. He focused on the writing instruction these winners (secondary students) had received. Specifically, he asked these students to comment on (1) how teachers had responded to their writing, (2) types of audiences for whom they wrote, (3) the frequency of writing in English and (4) the range of composition topics they encountered. To contextualize these broad questions, students were asked to consider the last four papers they had written for their English classes.

Results indicated that teachers, in most cases, were involved not only with the product, but with the process as well. Teachers and students discussed 26% of the papers during writing stage and 45% of the papers after writing and submission, and 14% of papers ended up rewritten after these teacher-student discussions. Further, students in this study reported that they usually wrote for a much broader audience than the teacher. Typically, the extended audience involved other students and parents. Thus, these students had practice in other modes of writing rather than being confined to writing for the teacher as audience.

However, since most of these students were in smaller-than-average classes, Applebee advances a logical argument
that class size tends to affect writing instruction: the larger the class, the less time the teacher will have to devote to both process and product of student writing.

Further, although Applebee acknowledges the enthusiasm and dedication of the winning students and their teachers, he observes that other factors beyond teachers and students may have contributed to making this success possible. Alluding to other surveys (Applebee, 1968--intensive study of 168 schools with outstanding programs in English; Applebee, 1978--survey of various samples of schools, including one which had consistently had winners in the Achievement Awards competition), Applebee argues that "...program characteristics in successful schools may reflect the entusiasms of a well-organized professional English department working within a favorable socioeconomic environment, rather than instructional techniques which have led directly to outstanding student achievement" (p. 339).

With regards to the nature of writing tasks frequently assigned, students reported that 54% of their papers were essays on a literary topic. This finding was encouraging, given the thrust of the arguments that writing, and essay writing in particular, contributes significantly both in concept learning and learning in general. This idea has been explored in section two of this chapter.
University Surveys

Kroll (1979) surveyed 55 students, 35 of whom were non-native speakers of English, registered in freshman English classes at the University of Southern California. Kroll gave students a questionnaire with a list of writing tasks. Students were to rate items on a list according to their importance in three specific time frames: present, past, and predicted future.

Results indicated that students did not consider the personal essay important for their present, past and predicted future needs. However, business letters of request and persuasion and reports, both survey and technical, were considered very important. Kroll's conclusion suggests that students may be motivated to write better and therefore learn more effectively if they perceive writing instruction to be ministering to their needs rather than some bureaucratic, regulative needs perceived by institutions and considered as students' needs. Kroll concludes:

...I do not think it is difficult to motivate students to perform writing tasks which they feel have some practical applications to their lives. What has always been difficult has been motivating them to perform writing tasks they consider far removed from the reality of other courses, to say nothing of their outside lives. If Johnny can't write because of the influence of television (as educators are fond of arguing), perhaps Ting-San and Abdul and Jose can't write because no one has pointed out to them how useful they will find the skill of writing. (p. 227)
Clearly, Kroll's argument is informed by thinking within the progressive school of thought in education circles. This school of thought, among other things, emphasizes democratization of pedagogy through consistent needs assessment procedures in which students, the benefactors of education, are involved in deciding what is relevant for their needs.

Like Kroll's (1979) study, Ostler's (1980) survey of academic needs for advanced ESL students takes the view that institutional writing instruction ought to serve the real needs of its clientele: students. In this study, also conducted at the University of Southern California, students were given questionnaires to assess their own academic needs. Prior to this survey, designed to inform the ESL Program, faculty had sensed that the program was not addressing the real needs of students. For example, among other complaints received were (1) irrelevance of reading and writing assignment in terms of students' major fields, (2) unimportance of the research paper, especially to Engineering students and (3) a feeling that students needed no more English training.

On the other hand, students wanted help with writing resumes, research proposals and critiques. Note-taking
skills and exam attack skills were also considered crucial for success at university.

Results of the survey indicated that students considered ability to read (90%), take notes (84%) and ask questions in class (68%) very important. A strong need to be able to read academic papers and journals was also voiced.

Unlike Kroll (1979) and Ostler (1980), Johns (1981), Bridgeman and Carlson (1983) and Horowitz (1986) surveyed faculty. Johns (1981) asked faculty in Business, Engineering, Humanities, Physical and Social Sciences at San Diego State University to rank English skills (reading, listening, speaking and writing) in order of importance. Reading was considered the most important skill at both undergraduate (55%) and graduate (45%) levels. Listening was considered second most important, with a score of 53% at undergraduate and 43% at graduate levels. Writing was rated third, with a score of 19% at undergraduate level and 27% at graduate level. Speaking was rated fourth, with a score of 8% at both levels.

The results of this survey show that surveyed faculty at San Diego State University think receptive skills (listening and reading) are more important than productive skills (writing and speaking). Accordingly, Johns calls for an ESL
curriculum which emphasizes receptive skills, though using an integrated approach in the teaching of all four skills:

Writing, for example, could involve the paraphrase or summary of reading materials or the organization and rewriting of lecture notes. Speaking instruction should include response to readings or lectures rather than the preparation of dialogues or presentations. (p. 57)

However, in Bridgeman and Carlson's (1983) survey of faculty in 190 academic departments at 34 U.S and Canadian Universities with high foreign student enrollment, the writing skill was rated as important. Not only was the writing skill rated important to "success in graduate training, it was consistently rated as even more important to success after graduation" (p. 55).

Clearly, there seems to be lack of agreement on the order of importance of the four skills. In fact, Horowitz (1986) bases one of his criticism of the surveys conducted by (Kroll 1979; Ostler 1980; Johns 1981; Bridgeman and Carlson 1983) on this issue. He argues that by asking faculty or students which skills are most important and which tasks are most common, these surveys assume the existence of an agreed upon classification of academic tasks. However, argues Horowitz, such a classification or description of academic tasks does not exist. Researchers are not in agreement on this issue. Further, Horowitz criticizes the methods of these surveys. He argues that "the
use of questionnaires or interviews leaves open the question of whether the data reflect what the respondents do, what they think they do, or what they want the researcher to think they do" (p. 4).

Horowitz, therefore, proposes a different approach to investigation. In his survey of what writing professors actually require, he examined actual writing assignment handouts and examination questions submitted by faculty at Western Illinois University. Analysis of the writing assignments resulted in the following classification of writing tasks: (1) summary of/reaction to a reading, (2) annotated bibliography, (3) report on a participatory experience, (4) connection of theory and data, (5) case study, (6) synthesis of multiple sources and (7) research project. (p. 6)

Summary

Analyses of writing tasks and faculty and student surveys were discussed in this section. Data from schools showed that transactional and mechanical writing tasks are assigned more frequently than expressive and creative forms of writing tasks. This finding was viewed negatively, given that both expressive and creative forms of writing also have a role to play in learning.
University surveys showed that there is a difference of opinion between students and faculty with regards to students' academic needs, especially the order of importance of the four skills: writing, reading, listening and reading. However, as Kroll has implied in her observations, rather than imposing needs on the students, faculty may have to rely on students when it comes to finding out what they actually need.
CHAPTER 3: RATIONALE FOR THE PRESENT STUDY

The previous section makes the following points relevant to this study. First, writing is a powerful learning tool which can be used successfully in all subjects. Second, different writing tasks enhance learning differently. Both these points have certain far-reaching implications for teachers in all subject disciplines. These will be discussed in the following section, which provides a rationale for the present study.

Writing is a powerful learning tool suitable for all subjects

If writing is a powerful learning tool which can be used successfully in all subjects, then all teachers should assign and teach writing that relates to the subjects they teach. This view contradicts popular myths such as (1) writing instruction is the sole responsibility of the English teacher, (2) "hard" sciences like Math do not need conventional writing since they use symbols, and (3) writing is mainly useful insofar as it allows students to demonstrate to teachers what they have learnt.

This study used a questionnaire to discover whether the myths outlined above exist within the ranks of teachers in
Black South African schools. Accordingly, one research question was:

What do teachers see as the role of writing in their subjects?

Naturally, teachers' perception of the role of writing in their content areas is likely to be strongly influenced by their exposure to ideas about teaching writing and expertise in teaching writing. Therefore, the questions were also designed to investigate the following research questions:

Do teachers of content subjects feel they have the capability to teach writing?

How have teachers been exposed to writing-across-the-curriculum and writing-to-learn ideas?

**Different writing tasks enhance learning differently**

If different writing tasks promote learning differently, then the issue of what specific writing tasks teachers assign in a given situation becomes important. Obviously, for students to benefit from writing, they must be exposed to an array of writing tasks. Logically, teachers need to be selective in the use of writing tasks. Viewed from this perspective, one can reasonably argue that students who are only exposed to mechanical writing tasks like copying have limited opportunities to learn through writing. On the other hand, students who are exposed to a variety of writing tasks like note-taking, essay-writing and
expressive journal writing have more opportunities to learn through writing. Thus, the final research question was:

What kinds and amounts of writing do content and English teachers assign?

To tap this dimension, questionnaire respondents were asked to specify the frequencies with which they assign various kinds of writing.
CHAPTER 4: METHODS

This chapter describes the methods that were used in surveying teachers in South Africa. It discusses subjects, instrumentation and procedures that were followed.

Subjects

Subjects who responded to the survey questionnaire were secondary and senior teachers at some Black schools in South Africa. The schools that were selected represent the wide range of school types in South Africa: poor day-schools in rural areas, not-so-well-equipped urban day-schools, urban well-equipped schools, boarding schools and private schools.

Rather than selecting a specific representative "circuit," (a collection of schools under the same inspectorate for administrative purposes) the writer decided to use a "convenient sample" of teachers who had come from different circuits to attend different in-service courses at the University of Zululand, South Africa. Besides the convenience to the person who administered the questionnaires (the English Co-ordinator attached to the Department of Human Development and Education at the University of Zululand), this arrangement made it possible to capture a wider range of teachers than would otherwise have been possible, given time, geophysical and financial constraints. Teachers surveyed
teach a wide range of subjects, ranging from social sciences (e.g., History) to natural sciences (e.g., Physical Science). Some teach English. They also have different levels of education, different levels of experience in teaching and different types of exposure to ideas about writing instruction in general and writing to learn in particular.

Procedures

Questionnaire design

Since one of the areas of interest in this study is the amount and kinds of writing tasks assigned by teachers, it became necessary to specify a wide range of possible writing tasks which teachers of all subjects might relate to. Applebee, Auten and Lehr (1981) provide such a list. Therefore, specific writing tasks were adapted from their list. However, because of the terminology that Applebee and his associates used, certain items had to be defined in the questionnaire.

Pilot testing

The questionnaire was pilot tested with a few South Africans and Zimbabweans at Iowa State. It was hoped that they would be able to point out what needed clarification
before the questionnaire was sent to South Africa. They did not suggest any changes.

**Administration**

The questionnaires were sent to the English Co-ordinator at the University of Zululand, South Africa. He then distributed them to teachers who had come to attend various in-service courses held at the university. Teachers handed back the questionnaires (in sealed envelopes) to the English Co-ordinator who then sent them to the writer.

**Instrumentation**

**Description of questionnaire**

The questionnaire designed for this study has 48 items which are distributed within 8 main sections (A - H).

Section A (items 1-7) deals with background information such as teacher qualifications, type of school, class size and subjects taught.

Section B (items 8-26) presents a wide range of writing tasks. Items in this section require respondents to indicate on a scale of 1-6 (never - everyday) how frequently they assign each type of writing task.
Section C (items 27-31) requires respondents to indicate their views on the function of writing in their content areas by ranking certain statements about writing. Most statements in this section were adapted from Applebee, Auten and Lehr (1981).

Section D (items 32-39) requires respondents to rank certain techniques which can be used for teaching writing on a scale of 1-8 (most important to least important).

Section E (item 40 a-e) requires teachers who do not assign writing to choose from a list their reasons for not assigning writing.

Section F (item 41) gives respondents a chance to discuss what they perceive as problem(s) in teaching and assigning writing.

Section G (items 42-47) asks respondents to choose from a list their sources of information about writing across the curriculum and writing to learn.

Section H (item 48) asks for comments, in case the questionnaire did not touch some issues the respondents think are important to address.

The complete questionnaire is shown in the Appendix.
CHAPTER 5: RESULTS

This chapter presents findings of the questionnaire sent to South Africa. The sections of the questionnaire are described in the previous chapter.

Characteristics of the Respondents

Of the 49 respondents who returned the questionnaire, 32 teach in a rural day school, 11 teach in a day-school—not so-well-equipped school, 4 teach in an urban-well-equipped school and 2 teach at a boarding school.

Further, teacher-subject distribution shows that of the 49 respondents, 17 teach English, 16 teach natural sciences and 16 teach social sciences. Of those 16 who teach natural sciences, 5 teach Math, 3 teach Physical Science, 5 teach Biology and 3 teach General Science. Of those 16 who teach social sciences, 8 teach History, 4 teach Geography, 1 teaches Business Economics and 3 teach Accountancy.

Writing Tasks Assigned

Table 5.1 shows the percentage distribution of the frequency with which various writing tasks are assigned by (a) all teachers taken together, (b) English teachers, (c) natural science teachers and (d) social science teachers. In
this table, "ne" means "never" and "hi" means the combined categories of "once a week," "2-4 times a week" and "everyday." The intermediate frequencies ("once a quarter" and "once a month," which are shown in the Tables found in the Appendix) are not shown in Table 5.1 below.

Table 5.1: Percentage distribution of frequencies with which writing tasks are assigned

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of writing task</th>
<th>All (N=49)</th>
<th>English (N=17)</th>
<th>Natural (N=16)</th>
<th>Social (N=16)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mechanical</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multiple-choice</td>
<td>28 16</td>
<td>36 18</td>
<td>23 15</td>
<td>31 13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fill in-blank</td>
<td>34 20</td>
<td>42 12</td>
<td>39 23</td>
<td>21 19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Short-answer</td>
<td>69 06</td>
<td>06 06</td>
<td>30 15</td>
<td>51 06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Math Calc.</td>
<td>26 57</td>
<td>00 94</td>
<td>62 23</td>
<td>19 44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Copying</td>
<td>54 18</td>
<td>36 18</td>
<td>23 15</td>
<td>57 19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dictation</td>
<td>20 55</td>
<td>24 29</td>
<td>15 69</td>
<td>12 63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Note-taking</td>
<td>72 08</td>
<td>12 18</td>
<td>39 23</td>
<td>56 06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transactional</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reports</td>
<td>40 31</td>
<td>42 24</td>
<td>46 31</td>
<td>12 44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summary</td>
<td>47 27</td>
<td>42 24</td>
<td>30 39</td>
<td>44 19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Analysis</td>
<td>34 25</td>
<td>12 24</td>
<td>39 23</td>
<td>26 25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Synthesis</td>
<td>31 22</td>
<td>38 35</td>
<td>39 15</td>
<td>70 19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Application</td>
<td>57 20</td>
<td>42 35</td>
<td>30 08</td>
<td>56 19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graph, chart</td>
<td>32 27</td>
<td>12 35</td>
<td>38 08</td>
<td>38 31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Persuasive</td>
<td>28 37</td>
<td>24 41</td>
<td>23 39</td>
<td>32 31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creative</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poem</td>
<td>04 57</td>
<td>00 35</td>
<td>00 85</td>
<td>13 50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Story</td>
<td>28 33</td>
<td>35 00</td>
<td>00 69</td>
<td>19 31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Play script</td>
<td>04 61</td>
<td>06 35</td>
<td>00 85</td>
<td>06 63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expressive</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Journal</td>
<td>22 49</td>
<td>18 59</td>
<td>31 31</td>
<td>19 56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Letters</td>
<td>24 43</td>
<td>30 29</td>
<td>15 54</td>
<td>30 44</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^{a}hi = high \text{ (frequent)} - \text{ once a week, 2-4 times a week and everyday).}

\(^{b}ne = never.\)
Writing tasks in Table 5.1 fall under four major categories: mechanical, transactional, creative and expressive. Mechanical tasks represent the kinds of writing that do not require composing (e.g., multiple-choice exercises, fill in-the-blank exercises, short answer exercises, etc.). Transactional tasks represent the kinds of writing that is aimed at getting people to do something (e.g., informing (as in reports), persuading (as in persuasive writing)), etc. Creative tasks represent the kinds of writing that is aimed at achieving aesthetic effect (e.g., poem, story and play script). Expressive tasks represent the kinds of writing that is personal (as in journals and diary entries).

As stated in Chapter 2 and 3, learning through writing requires that students use a variety of writing tasks. Therefore, all tasks within the categories discussed above are important. However, certain categories (e.g., transactional, creative and expressive) are more important than the mechanical category in terms of enhancing learning through writing. Accordingly, teachers who use writing to learn principles will tend to assign mechanical tasks infrequently. Instead, they would assign more transactional, creative and expressive forms of writing.
However, it must be noted that because of different subject disciplines and the traditional kinds of writing that have come to be associated with those disciplines (e.g., Math calculations in a Math class and poem, story and play script in an English class), some categories (e.g., creative), though useful as learning tools, may be hard to accommodate in certain subject disciplines (e.g., the creative category in the natural sciences).

Table 5.1 shows that all groups of teachers assign mechanical tasks (multiple-choice, fill-in-blank, short answer, Math calculations, copying, dictation and note-taking) quite frequently. Of these writing tasks, dictation is not frequently assigned in any group (hi= 24%, 15% and 12%) for English, natural and social sciences, respectively.

For English teachers, the most frequently assigned tasks are multiple-choice, fill-in blank and copying (hi= 36%, 42% and 36%), respectively. For social sciences, the most frequently assigned tasks are short-answer, copying and note-taking (hi= 51%, 57% and 56%, respectively). For natural sciences, the most frequently assigned tasks are fill-in blank, Math calculations and note-taking (hi= 39%, 62% and 39%, respectively).

Although transactional writing tasks seem to be assigned frequently by all groups of teachers, there are noticeable
differences across groups. For example, frequent assignment of report writing is low (12%) for social science teachers but much higher for both English and natural sciences (hi= 42% and 46%, respectively. Summary writing is high (hi= 42% and 44%, respectively) for both English and social science teachers but low for natural science teachers (30%). Assignment of analysis writing is high for natural sciences (39%) but low for both English and social sciences (hi= 12% and 26%, respectively). Assignment of synthesis writing is high for all groups of teachers, i.e., English, natural and social sciences (hi= 38%, 39% and 70%, respectively). Assignment of writing that requires application is high (hi= 42% and 56%, respectively) for English and social science teachers but low (30%) for science teachers. While English teachers have a low percentage (12%) for frequent assignment of writing to describe and interpret a graph, natural and social sciences teachers have a higher percentage (38%, both). Frequent assignment of persuasive writing is relatively low for English and natural science teachers (hi= 24% and 23%, respectively) but higher for social science teachers (32%).

In contrast, Table 5.1 shows that teachers do not frequently assign writing tasks that require students to use language creatively as in poem, story and play, though
overall, stories are assigned more frequently. When we look at the percentage of "never" responses by the natural science teachers, they stand out with the highest percentages (range 69-85) for "never" assigning writing tasks like stories, poems and plays. This may not be surprising considering that natural sciences tend to operate within a paradigm that encourages objectivity with regards to knowledge and reality. Because of this objective stance, this paradigm insists on precision and correctness in "transcribing" experience (Berlin, 1987). Thus, it leaves little or no room for any creative expression (as in writing a poem, story etc.).

However, social science teachers are not as different as might be expected from the science teachers in assigning creative forms of writing. With regards to the tasks within this category, social science teachers also have the high (50%, 31% 63%) percentages of "never" assigning poems, stories and plays, respectively. English teachers also have high percentages of "never" responses in assigning both poems and plays (35% and 35%, respectively). However, English teachers seem to assign stories frequently, as the (0%) "never" response indicates.

Besides creative forms of writing discussed above, Table 5.1 shows that teachers do not assign expressive forms of writing frequently. When we look at the "never" responses by
all groups, we see that English teachers have 29% and 59% for writing to correspond with others and journals writing, respectively; natural sciences teachers have 54% and 31% for writing to correspond with others (letter) and journal writing, respectively; social sciences teachers have 44% and 56% for writing to correspond with others and journal writing, respectively.

Views on the Function of Writing

Table 5.2 shows a ranking of views on the function of writing in content areas. In ranking the items in this question, respondents used a scale of 1-5, with 1 standing for "most important" and 5 standing for "least important."

As Table 5.2 shows, on average, all groups of teachers ranked "writing helps students remember information," "most important." Second "most important" was "writing helps students synthesize information," except for the social sciences group which gave this item a low ranking of 4. Ranked low were "writing gives students an opportunity to express feelings" (3 for natural and social sciences, 4 for English) and "writing gives students an opportunity to practice mechanics," (5 for English and social sciences, 4 for the natural group.

Groups differed considerably on the item "writing
serves to test learning of content," (3 for English, 5 for natural sciences and 2 for social sciences).

Table 5.2: Ranking of views on the function of writing in content areas

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Writing Function</th>
<th>All (N=49)</th>
<th>English (N=17)</th>
<th>Natural (N=16)</th>
<th>Social (N=16)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Writing helps students remember information.</td>
<td>1.959 1</td>
<td>2.353 1</td>
<td>1.846 1</td>
<td>1.750 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing serves to test learning of content.</td>
<td>3.205 4</td>
<td>3.000 3</td>
<td>3.769 5</td>
<td>2.875 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing helps students synthesize information.</td>
<td>2.857 2</td>
<td>2.588 2</td>
<td>2.308 2</td>
<td>3.563 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing gives students an opportunity to practice mechanics.</td>
<td>3.755 5</td>
<td>3.882 5</td>
<td>3.615 4</td>
<td>3.688 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing gives an opportunity to express feelings.</td>
<td>3.143 3</td>
<td>3.176 4</td>
<td>3.154 3</td>
<td>3.125 3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

^Rank : 1 - 5, with 1 = most important and 5 = least important.

Techniques to Teaching Writing

Table 5.3 shows the ranking of techniques that teachers might use in teaching writing.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Techniques</th>
<th>All (N=41)</th>
<th>English (N=15)</th>
<th>Natural (N=12)</th>
<th>Social (N=14)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assign topic and leave students free to do what they wish with it.</td>
<td>4.286</td>
<td>4.647</td>
<td>4.077</td>
<td>4.438</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discuss topic before students write about it.</td>
<td>2.694</td>
<td>2.647</td>
<td>3.077</td>
<td>2.563</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use examples of good professional writing as models.</td>
<td>3.694</td>
<td>3.706</td>
<td>3.231</td>
<td>3.688</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use examples of good student writing.</td>
<td>4.612</td>
<td>4.176</td>
<td>4.462</td>
<td>5.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Correct every error or problem in student writing.</td>
<td>4.551</td>
<td>4.529</td>
<td>4.846</td>
<td>4.500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comment on the weaknesses in students' writing.</td>
<td>5.633</td>
<td>5.529</td>
<td>6.077</td>
<td>5.188</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comment on drafts of students' writing before they finish the final piece.</td>
<td>4.816</td>
<td>5.000</td>
<td>4.538</td>
<td>4.625</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comment on strength in student writing</td>
<td>5.735</td>
<td>5.882</td>
<td>5.615</td>
<td>6.000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Rank = 1 - 8, with 1 = most important and 8 = least important.

The findings shown in Table 5.3 are only for teachers who assign writing above the paragraph level.

As Table 5.3 shows, there seems to be overall consistency in the ranking of techniques by all groups of teachers. It is important to note that for the statement "Discussing a topic before students write about it," all groups of teachers felt, on average, that this was "most important."

Further, all groups of teachers felt that "Using examples of good professional writing as models to be followed," is second "most important." "Commenting on the strength in students' writing" was considered "least important" by all groups of teachers except natural sciences, for which it was 7th. With regards to "using examples of good student writing as models to be followed," there was variation across groups, with the scale tipped towards "least important," although English teachers ranked this item third "most important."

Why Teachers do not Assign Writing

Eight of the 49 teachers indicated that they do not assign writing beyond the paragraph level. Two of those
teachers teach English; four teach natural sciences and two teach social sciences.

Four reasons for not assigning writing were selected. These are: (a) It is the responsibility of the English teacher, (b) I do not like dealing with writing in the classroom, (c) I don't feel adequately prepared to teach writing in my content area and (d) writing is not relevant in my content area.

Of the four reasons above, both English teachers selected (b). Although no justification was solicited in the questionnaire, both justified their responses by citing large classes as a reason. Other teachers did not give any reason. Natural sciences teachers selected (c) and (d). Three teachers in this group selected (d) and one teacher selected (c). Both social sciences teachers selected (a) and (c).

Sources of Knowledge About Writing to Learn and Writing Across the Curriculum

Table 5.4 shows how teachers got their information about writing across the curriculum and writing to learn. Teachers were asked to respond to all items that applied to them. Of the 49 teachers, 12 did not respond to any item, thus indicating that they have not learnt about writing across the curriculum and writing to learn through any of
the sources provided. These teachers did not indicate any other source.

Table 5.4: How teachers have learnt about writing to learn and writing across the curriculum

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Items</th>
<th>All (N=49)</th>
<th>English (N=17)</th>
<th>Natural (N=16)</th>
<th>Social (N=16)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I read about this topic</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I heard a paper at a conference on this topic</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I attended a workshop on this topic</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I had training at college on this topic</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have conducted workshops on this topic</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have heard teachers talk about it informally</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As Table 5.4 shows, percentages indicating exposure through various forms are generally low, thus showing that there is room for a systematic approach to writing-across-the-curriculum, designed to make more teachers aware.

Comparison of Teachers with Different Sources of Knowledge about Writing to Learn

Table 5.5 shows the comparison of percentage of teachers assigning specific writing tasks according to
exposure to writing to learn.

Table 5.5: Comparison of percentage of teachers assigning specific writing tasks according to exposure to writing to learn

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hi[^g]</td>
<td>hi</td>
<td>hi</td>
<td>hi</td>
<td>hi</td>
<td>hi</td>
<td>hi</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Writing tasks</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mechanical</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multiple-choice</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fill-in blank</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Short-answer</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>02</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Math Calc.</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>00</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Copying</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dictation</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Note-taking</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>00</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transactional</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reports</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summary</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Analysis</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Synthesis</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Application</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graph, chart</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Persuasive</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creative</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poem</td>
<td>06</td>
<td>03</td>
<td>00</td>
<td>05</td>
<td>00</td>
<td>05</td>
<td>00</td>
<td>05</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>00</td>
<td>00</td>
<td>08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Story</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Play script</td>
<td>06</td>
<td>03</td>
<td>00</td>
<td>04</td>
<td>00</td>
<td>04</td>
<td>00</td>
<td>04</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>02</td>
<td>04</td>
<td>04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expressive</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Journal</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>00</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Letter</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

[^a]Read-Yes = teachers read about writing to learn; Read-No = teachers did not read about writing to learn.

[^b]Heard-Yes = teachers heard a paper on writing to learn; Heard-No = teachers did not hear a paper on writing to learn.

[^c]Wksp-Yes = teachers attended a workshop on writing to learn; Wksp-No = teachers did not attend any workshop on writing to learn.
In analyzing Table 5.6, one would expect to find the following differences:

(1) Teachers who say they have been exposed to writing to learn differ from teachers who have not been exposed to writing to learn in terms of the writing tasks they assign, i.e., those who claim exposure to writing to learn should assign transactional, creative and expressive writing tasks more frequently and mechanical tasks less frequently than those who don't.

(2) Because of the differences in the sources of knowledge about writing to learn (e.g., informal talk about writing to learn is more "casual" than having to actually conduct a workshop on writing to learn), one would expect teachers who have read an article or paper, heard a paper at a conference and heard (informally) about writing to learn (i.e., Read-Yes, Heard-Yes and Inf-Yes, respectively) to differ from teachers who have attended a workshop, had
training at college and have conducted workshops themselves (Wksp-Yes, Coll-Yes and Cowksp-Yes, respectively).

However, Table 5.6 shows that contrary to expectation, teachers who say they have come to know of writing to learn through reading an article or paper (Read-Yes), hearing a paper at a conference (Heard-Yes) and attending a workshop (Wksp-Yes) assign mechanical tasks more frequently than their counterparts. For example, teachers who say they read a paper on writing to learn (Read-Yes) assign the following tasks more frequently than those who did not (Read-No): short-answer (62% and 02%, respectively) copying (69% and 48%, respectively) and dictation (38% and 12%, respectively).

Teachers who say they heard (Heard-Yes) a paper at a conference also assign the following tasks more frequently than those who did not (Heard-No): fill-in blank (60% and 31%, respectively), dictation (60% and 16% respectively) and note-taking (100% and 67%, respectively).

Teachers who say they attended a workshop (Wksp-Yes) also assign the following writing tasks more frequently than those who did not (Wksp-No): multiple-choice (60% and 31%, respectively), fill-in-blank (80% and 25%, respectively) and note-taking (100% and 69%, respectively).

Table 5.6 also shows that teachers who say they had
college training (Coll-Yes), though relatively not very different from those who say they did not have college training (Coll-No), assign less short-answer exercises (50% and 72%, respectively) and note-taking (50% and 75%, respectively).

Further, Table 5.6 indicates that teachers who say they have conducted workshops (Cowksp-Yes) assign relatively the same amount of mechanical tasks when compared to the teachers who have not conducted workshops (Wksp-No), with a noticeable exception being copying (80% and 53%, respectively).

Teachers who have heard informally about writing to learn (Inf-Yes) also assign relatively the same amount of mechanical writing tasks, with a noticeable exception being short-answer (41% and 60%, respectively) and copying (67% and 44%, respectively).

With regards to tasks in the transactional category, the following observations could be made:

Teachers who read a paper on writing to learn (Read-Yes) assign relatively the same amount of transactional tasks than teachers who did not (Read-No), with noticeable exception of reports (57% and 33%, respectively).

Teachers who heard a paper at a conference (Heard-Yes) assign transactional writing tasks more frequently than
teachers who did not (Heard-No), for example, reports (60% and 38%, respectively), summary (80% and 48%, respectively), application (80% and 55%, respectively) and graph, chart (60% and 29%, respectively).

Teachers who say they have attended a workshop (Wksp-Yes) assign transactional writing tasks more frequently than teachers who say they have not attended a workshop, for example, reports (60% and 38%, respectively), summary (100% and 41%, respectively), application (80% and 55%, respectively) and graph, chart (60% and 30%, respectively).

Teachers who say they had training at college (Coll-Yes) assign relatively the same amount of transactional writing tasks with teachers who do not claim any college training on writing to learn, except for noticeable differences in summary writing (67% and 44%, respectively) and persuasive writing (67% and 27%, respectively).

Teachers who say they have conducted workshops (Cowksp-Yes) assign transactional writing tasks more frequently than teachers who have not (Cowksp-No), for example, reports (80% and 37%, respectively), summary (80% and 43%, respectively), synthesis (60% and 40%, respectively), graph, chart (100% and 25%, respectively).
Teachers who say they have heard informal talk about writing to learn (Inf-Yes) assign relatively the same amount of transactional writing tasks with teachers who say they did not hear any informal talk (Inf-No) about writing to learn.

With regards to the creative category, the following observations can be made: some groups of teachers (e.g., Heard-Yes and Heard-No; Read-Yes and Read-No; Wksp-Yes and Wksp-No and Inf-Yes and Inf-No) do not seem to differ considerably in terms of the frequencies with which they assign tasks in this category, except for Coll-Yes (50%) for story and Coll-No (26%). The low percentages (e.g., 0%, 6%, 3%) in this category indicate that tasks are generally assigned less frequently.

However, teachers who say they conducted a workshop (Cowksp-Yes) assign creative writing tasks more frequently than teachers who did not, for example, poem (40% and 0%, respectively), story (60% and 25%, respectively) and play script (20% and 2%, respectively).

With regards to expressive writing tasks, the following observations can be made: teachers who say they read a paper (Read-Yes), teachers who did not (Read-No), teachers who say they have heard informal talk (Inf-Yes) and teachers who have not (Inf-No) assign relatively the same amount of
creative writing tasks.

However, considerable differences exist between the following groups. First, teachers who say they attended a workshop (Wksp-Yes) assign letter writing more frequently than teachers who did not (60% and 19%, respectively). Second, teachers who say they had college training (Coll-Yes) assign more journal and letter than teachers who did not (Coll-No), for example, journal (50% and 19%, respectively) and letter (67% and 19%, respectively). Third, teachers who say they conducted a workshop (Cowksp-Yes) also assign journal and letter writing more frequently than teachers who have not, for example, journal (60% and 18%, respectively) and letter (60% and 20%, respectively). Fourth, teachers who heard a paper at a conference (Heard-Yes) assign journal writing less frequently than teachers who did not (Heard-No), for example, journal (0% and 24%, respectively).

Table 5.6 shows the comparison of the rankings on the function of writing for teachers who say they have exposure to writing to learn and those who do not claim any exposure.

In ranking the items in this question, respondents used a scale of 1-5, with 1 standing for "most important" and 5 standing for "least important."

In analyzing the results in Table 5.6, one would expect
to find that teachers who say they have exposure to writing to learn to assign a high ranking to the following items:

(1) Writing helps students remember information.
(2) Writing helps students synthesize information.
(3) Writing gives students an opportunity to express feelings.

As Table 5.6 shows, on average, all groups of teachers ranked "writing helps students remember information," "most important." Second "most important" was "writing helps students synthesize information," except for teachers who say they conducted workshops (Cowksp-Yes) and those who say they did not (Cowksp-No). This group ranked this item 3 and 5, respectively. Ranked low were "writing gives students an opportunity to practice mechanics" (5 for all groups except Coll-Yes (4) and Cowksp-Yes (3)).

Groups did not differ considerably on the item "writing serves to test learning of content." Teachers who say they read (Read-Yes) and those who did not (Read-No) gave this item a low ranking of 4 and 3, respectively. Both teachers who say they heard a paper (Heard-Yes) and those who did not hear any paper on writing to learn (Heard-No) gave this item a low ranking of 4. A low ranking of 4 was also assigned to this item by both teachers who say they have heard informal talk about writing to learn (Inf-Yes) and those who did not
Inf-No). Teachers who say they attended a workshop (Wksp-Yes) and those who did not (Wksp-N) gave this item a low ranking of 3 and 4, respectively. A low ranking of 3 and 4 (respectively) was also given to this item by teachers who say they had college training on writing to learn (Coll-Yes) and those who do not claim to have had such training (Coll-No). Teachers who say they conducted workshops (Cowksp-Yes) and those who did not (Cowksp-No) gave this item a ranking of 2 and 4, respectively.

Groups also did not differ considerably on the item "writing gives students an opportunity to express feelings." Both teachers who say they read a paper on writing to learn (Read-Yes) and those who did not (Read-No) gave this item a 3. Teachers who say they heard a paper at a conference (Heard-Yes) and teachers who did not (Heard-No) assigned a ranking of 2 and 3, respectively. Teachers who say they attended a workshop (Wksp-Yes) and teachers who did not (Wksp-No) gave this item 4 and 3, respectively. The 4 and 3 (respectively) ranking was also assigned to this item by both teachers who say they have had college training on writing to learn (Coll-Yes) and those who have not (Coll-No). Both teachers who say they conducted workshops (Cowksp-Yes) and those that did not (Cowksp-No) gave this item a very low ranking of 5 (least important).
Table 5.6: Comparison of rankings on the function of writing for teachers according to exposure to writing to learn

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Writing function</th>
<th>Read^a</th>
<th>Heard^b</th>
<th>Wksp^c</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N 16</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>5 44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing helps students remember information.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Md</td>
<td>M(R)e</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>1.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>(1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing serves to test learning of content.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing helps students synthesize information.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing gives students an opportunity to practice mechanics.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing gives an opportunity to express feelings.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(3)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

^aRead-Yes = teachers read about writing to learn; Read-No = teachers did not read about writing to learn.

^bHeard-Yes = teachers heard a paper on writing to learn; Heard-No = teachers did not hear a paper on writing to learn.

^cWksp-Yes = teachers attended a workshop on writing to learn; Wksp-No = teachers did not attend a workshop.

^dMd = mean

^e(R) = rank (1 - 5, with 1 = most important and 5 = least important).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Writing function</th>
<th>Coll[^f]</th>
<th>Cowksp[^g]</th>
<th>Inf[^h]</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Writing helps</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>students remember information.</td>
<td>Yes: 1.8</td>
<td>No: 1.9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Yes: 1.2</td>
<td>No: 2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Yes: 1.7</td>
<td>No: 2.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(R)</td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>(1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing serves</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to test learning of content.</td>
<td>Yes: 3.0</td>
<td>No: 3.2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Yes: 3.2</td>
<td>No: 3.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Yes: 3.3</td>
<td>No: 3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(3)</td>
<td>(4)</td>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>(4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing helps</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>students synthesize information.</td>
<td>Yes: 2.5</td>
<td>No: 2.9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Yes: 3.4</td>
<td>No: 2.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Yes: 2.6</td>
<td>No: 3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>(3)</td>
<td>(5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing gives</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>students an opportunity to practice mechanics.</td>
<td>Yes: 3.8</td>
<td>No: 3.7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Yes: 3.4</td>
<td>No: 3.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Yes: 4.0</td>
<td>No: 3.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(4)</td>
<td>(5)</td>
<td>(3)</td>
<td>(5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing gives</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>students an opportunity to express feelings.</td>
<td>Yes: 3.8</td>
<td>No: 3.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Yes: 3.8</td>
<td>No: 3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Yes: 3.2</td>
<td>No: 3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(4)</td>
<td>(3)</td>
<td>(5)</td>
<td>(3)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

[^f] Coll-Yes = teachers had training at college on writing to learn; Coll-No teachers did not have college training on writing to learn.

[^g] Cowksp-Yes = teachers have conducted workshops on writing to learn; Cowksp-No = teachers have not conducted workshops.

[^h] Inf-Yes = teachers have heard informally about writing to learn; Inf-No = teachers have not heard informally about writing to learn.

[^i] M = Mean

[^j] (R) = Rank (1 - 5, with 1 = most important and 5 = least important).
Table 5.7 shows the comparison of rankings of techniques for teaching writing for teachers, both those who say they have been exposed to writing to learn and those who do not claim to have been exposed.

In analysing the results in Table 5.7, one would expect to find that teachers who say they have been exposed to writing to learn to assign high rankings to the following techniques:

1. Discuss topic before students write about it.
2. Use examples of good student writing.
3. Comment on drafts of students' writing before they finish the final piece.
4. Comment on strength in student writing.

The techniques cited above seem best suited to promote learning through writing, given that they put the student at the center of the writing experience while the teacher serves as a facilitator who comments on drafts and gives encouragement (through, for example, use of students' own writings). Thus, the teacher does not merely assign writing; rather, he/she joins helps the students learn through writing—a point relevant in study. However, it seems important to note that the techniques cited above are not the only good techniques to teaching writing.
Table 5.7: Comparison of rankings of techniques for teaching writing for teachers according to exposure to writing to learn

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Techniques</th>
<th>Read^a</th>
<th>Heard^b</th>
<th>Wksp^c</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assign topic and leave students free to do what they wish with it.</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>4.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(R)e</td>
<td>(3)</td>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>(2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discuss topic before students write about it.</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>2.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>(1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use examples of good professional writing as models.</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>5.6</td>
<td>3.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>(6)</td>
<td>(3)</td>
<td>(3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use examples of good student writing.</td>
<td>5.3</td>
<td>5.6</td>
<td>4.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(6)</td>
<td>(6)</td>
<td>(4)</td>
<td>(3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Correct every error or problem in student writing.</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>4.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(4)</td>
<td>(3)</td>
<td>(5)</td>
<td>(5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comment on the weaknesses in students' writing.</td>
<td>5.8</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>5.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(7)</td>
<td>(7)</td>
<td>(8)</td>
<td>(8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comment on drafts of students' writing before they finish final draft.</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>4.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(5)</td>
<td>(6)</td>
<td>(4)</td>
<td>(6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comment on strength in student writing.</td>
<td>6.1</td>
<td>5.4</td>
<td>5.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(8)</td>
<td>(8)</td>
<td>(5)</td>
<td>(7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Techniques</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----</td>
<td>----</td>
<td>-----</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assign topic and leave students free to do what they wish with it.</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussed topic before students write about it.</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>4.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use examples of good professional writing as models.</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>2.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use examples of good student writing.</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>3.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Correct every error or problem in student writing.</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>4.7</td>
<td>5.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comment on the weakness in students' writing.</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>4.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comment on drafts of students' writing before they finish the final piece.</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>5.6</td>
<td>6.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comment on strength in student writing.</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>5.6</td>
<td>5.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 5.7 (Continued)

| ^Read-Yes = teachers read about writing to learn; Read-No = teachers did not read about it. |
| ^Heard-Yes = teachers heard a paper on writing to learn; Heard-No = teachers did not hear any paper on this topic. |
| ^Wksp-Yes = teachers attended a workshop on writing to learn; Wksp-No = teachers did not attend any workshop on this topic. |
| ^Coll-Yes = teachers had college training on writing to learn; Coll-No = teachers did not have college training on writing to learn. |
| ^Cowksp-Yes = teachers conducted a workshop on writing to learn; Cowksp-No = teachers did not conduct a workshop. |
| ^Inf-Yes = teachers heard informally about writing to learn; Inf-No = teachers did not hear informally about writing to learn. |

\[ \text{^d}_M = \text{Mean} \]
\[ ^e(R) = \text{Rank (1 - 8, with 1 = most important and 8 = least important).} \]
\[ ^f\text{Coll-Yes = teachers had college training on writing to learn; Coll-No = teachers did not have college training on writing to learn.} \]
\[ ^g\text{Cowksp-Yes = teachers conducted a workshop on writing to learn; Cowksp-No = teachers did not conduct a workshop.} \]
\[ ^h\text{Inf-Yes = teachers heard informally about writing to learn; Inf-No = teachers did not hear informally about writing to learn.} \]
\[ ^i_M = \text{Mean} \]
\[ ^j(R) = \text{Rank (1 - 8, with 1 = most important and 8 = least important).} \]
As Table 5.7 shows, there seems to be overall consistency in the ranking of techniques by all groups of teachers, especially following:

1. Discuss topic before students write about it.
2. Use examples of good professional writing.
3. Comment on the weaknesses in students' writing.
4. Comment on the strength in student writing.

It is important to note that for the item "Discuss topic before students write about it," all groups of teachers, except teachers who said they have not read about writing to learn (Read-No) and those who said they had college training (Coll-Yes), felt on average, that this was "most important." Ranked second "most important" was "Use examples of good professional writing as models." However, certain groups of teachers did not assign the second "most important" ranking to this item: (1) teachers who say they heard a paper at a conference on writing to learn (Heard-Yes) and those that did not hear any paper on writing to learn (Heard-No) gave this item 6 and 3, respectively while (2) teachers who say they had college training (Coll-Yes) assigned a ranking of 1 and (3) teachers who said they heard informal talk about writing to learn assigned a ranking of 3.

Ranked "least important" by all groups (though there
were variations across groups) was the item "Comment on the weaknesses in students' writing." Although the following groups of teachers did not give this item "least important" ranking, they nonetheless gave it a low ranking of 7. These groups are: (1) teachers who say they read a paper on writing to learn (Read-Yes), (2) those who say they did not read any paper (Read-No), (3) those who say they have college training (Coll-Yes), (4) those who say they have no college training (Coll-No) and (5) those who say they have not heard about writing to learn informally.

Also ranked "least important" was the item "Comment on strength in student writing." However, the following groups of teachers assigned a low ranking of 7 to this item. These are: (1) teachers who did not hear any paper on writing to learn (Heard-No), (2) those who say they attended a workshop (Wksp-Yes), (3) those who say they had college training (Coll-Yes), (4) those who say they do not have any college training (Coll-No) and (4) those who say they have not heard about writing to learn informally (Inf-No).

Unlike the items discussed above (where all groups, irrespective of exposure to writing to learn, gave similar or almost similar rankings), the following items received rankings which differ from group to group. These are: (1) Correct every error or problem in student writing.
(2) Comment on drafts of students' writing before they finish the final piece.

(3) Use examples of good student writing.
This chapter presents a discussion of the results that were presented in Chapter 5. It also presents the limitations of this study and the recommendations. It then concludes with a discussion of some problems that could militate against the development and implementation of writing-across-the-curriculum programs in South Africa.

Discussion

Table 5.1 shows that teachers tend to assign more mechanical writing tasks than writing tasks that give students opportunities to use language creatively, as in poems or plays. When we look at the percentage of "never" responses for assigning writing tasks in the creative category by both natural and social sciences teachers, they stand out with high percentages (range 69-85 and 31-63, respectively). Contrary to expectation, English teachers, with a single exception of writing in the form of a story (0%) "never," also have high percentages of "never" responses (35%) for both play and poem. Although, English teachers have high "never" responses, they still stand out as doing more than both social and natural sciences teachers.
This finding suggests that teachers think that English teachers should be the only ones to provide opportunities for students to express themselves creatively. As indicated earlier, natural sciences and (to some extent) social sciences may be limited by the nature of the knowledge paradigm (a paradigm that encourages objectivity) they use. However, this does not rule out experimenting with creative uses of the language.

Table 5.1 also shows that transactional writing tasks seem to be assigned frequently by all groups of teachers, although there are noticeable differences across groups. These differences may be due to the "traditional" types of writing tasks associated with specific subject disciplines. For example, interpretation of graphs and charts is a task that one expects to find in natural and social sciences. As Table 5.1 shows, both natural and social sciences assigned graphs and charts frequently (38%) compared to English (12%). However, contrary to expectation, English teachers did not assign much persuasive writing. Frequent assignment of persuasive writing was low for all groups: English (24%), social sciences (32%) and natural sciences (23%).

Further, Table 5.1 indicates that teachers in all groups do not assign much expressive forms of writing (e.g., journal writing and letters). With regards to this category,
percentages of "never" responses were high (43-49 were the average for all groups). This finding is not very positive, when viewed in the light of the discussion in both Chapter 2 and 3. Chapter 2 established the importance of expressive journal writing as a learning tool that can be exploited meaningfully in all subjects. However, this may not be surprising when viewed in the light of Table 5.4 which clearly shows that almost half of the respondents have not been exposed to writing-across-the-curriculum and writing-to-learn ideas.

However, not being exposed to these ideas does not necessarily make teachers blind to problems. Commenting on some difficulties they experience in using writing, two history teachers had this to say:

Teacher 1: Pupils are less creative and original in their writing because they seldom write from their heads. They should be allowed more writing chances.

Teacher 2: Most pupils expect to copy notes from the board. They do not want to take their own notes when the teacher is talking, i.e., jot down important facts.

The practice of copying notes from the board—a widespread activity in Black South African schools, encouraged by shortage of textbooks, which necessitates that teachers copy summarized notes for students, could be the reason why students "expect" notes, as teacher No.2 says.
Even when textbooks are provided, students who have been "brought up" knowing that their teachers will always summarize and copy notes for them are likely to find it hard to summarize and copy notes for themselves. When we look at the results, we see a relatively high percent of frequent copying assignments, especially in the social sciences (57% high).

Clearly, the above case points to one of the evils of Apartheid education: a system of inferior education resulting in problems like textbook shortages. Finding themselves in the circumstances where, despite textbook shortages, they must cover the syllabus, teachers resort to copying notes for students. They also do not have the luxury of referring students to the libraries. Very few schools have libraries.

Table 5.2 shows rankings of teachers' beliefs about the function of writing. "Writing helps students to practice mechanics" was ranked "least important" by all groups of teachers except natural sciences. A low ranking of the function of writing as the practice of mechanics seems to indicate that all groups of teachers realize that while mechanics are important, they are not everything that students should concern themselves with in writing. Obviously, it would be extremely difficult to encourage and nurture student writing in an environment where teachers
think that mechanics are very, very important. On the other hand, an environment where errors are treated as inevitable by-product of learning, learners are likely to feel free to experiment with all forms of writing, thus learning through writing (Pica, 1982).

However, some individual comments in response to a section in the questionnaire which asked about problems that teachers have encountered in using writing are revealing. One Geography teacher wrote:

When using writing in content subject, I encountered too many grammatical problems in pupils pieces of writing. That, then becomes a burden to me as a marker.

This teacher sees her role as a "marker." As a marker, she found what was most important to her: grammatical problems.

An English teacher wrote:

The problem is language errors and word order which is incorrect. I suggest that teachers do more practice in techniques for correcting errors.

Closely related in terms of ranking were the following functions of writing: "writing helps students remember information," which was ranked "most important" and "writing helps students synthesize information," which was ranked second "most important," except by the social sciences group.
With regards to the function of writing as helping students remember and synthesize information, it seems interesting that these two possible functions of writing can be seen as opposites. Applebee and his associates (1981) have argued that if a teacher sees the writing process as serving transmission of knowledge, he or she may tend to assign tasks that do not require much interpretation. Such a teacher would present knowledge as facts to be remembered, without necessarily being synthesized. However, if a teacher sees writing as a way for the student to explore a subject area and gain understanding of new concepts in the process of writing about them, the teacher may tend to assign tasks that require students to synthesize ideas, and, therefore learn through writing.

Insofar as teachers seem to think that both writing to synthesize and writing to remember information are important, it would seem that they are attempting to reconcile these views (perhaps unconsciously). After all, both views of writing have a role to play in South Africa, given the model of instruction, which in the words of Applebee and Langer, (1987) "... defines learning in terms of knowledge to be transmitted with frequent testing to assess the transmission process" (p. 65).
Indeed, testing occurs quite frequently in South Africa. Some of it is designed to assess if students will be able to pass the external national examinations—a legitimate concern. However, some students think the Department of Education is forcing test after test on them simply to keep them busy—so busy that they forget politics (Christie, 1985:149). Using tests to distract students from the inequalities of Apartheid education would be very naive and impractical. After all, students live politics: their classrooms tell the tale of deprivation more eloquently than any person. Their classrooms are overcrowded, and they lack furniture and other teaching and learning aids such as textbooks. Therefore, it would seem that no amount of testing will ever distract students from the painful realities of the type of education they are receiving.

One would have expected teachers to rank high the item "writing serves to test learning of content," given the high frequency of testing in South Africa, as explained above. However, groups differed considerably on this item (A ranking of 3 for English, 5 for natural sciences and 2 for social sciences). This item is of interest because many researchers (e.g., Applebee et al., 1981; 1987; Crowhurst, 1989; Tschumy, 1982) have argued that writing should not only be used to test learning. Rather, it should be employed in helping
students learn. However, most surveys (e.g., Applebee and Langer, 1987) have found teachers to be using writing mainly to test previous learning. In explaining this finding, the researchers have pointed out that it is so because teachers have to conform to institutional requirements set by educational administrators, e.g., the use of external national examinations in South Africa.

Table 5.3 shows the rankings of writing techniques that teachers might use in teaching writing beyond the paragraph level. As Table 5.3 indicates, all groups of teachers felt, on average, that "discussing a topic before students write about it," was "most important"; however, there seems to be a contradiction between the "most important" ranking assigned to this item and the third "most important" ranking assigned by both natural and social sciences teachers for the item "assigning a topic and leaving students free to do what they wish to do with it." One wonders what to make of this contradiction.

While not all writing tasks require discussion, it would seem that discussing a topic beforehand would be useful where students are in doubt, especially with regards to the nature of the writing assignment. One teacher wrote the following comment:

"Pupils seem to misunderstand the task. They write very little or nothing about the topic."
This comment clearly indicates a need to help students by teaching writing or at least a specific approach to a particular writing task at hand.

Table 5.3 also shows that all groups of teachers ranked "using examples of good professional writing as models to be followed" second "most important." While the use of models of professional writers to emphasize points like paragraphing, sentence construction and grammar rules has its merits, this approach has been attacked for various reasons.

Pica (1982) attacks it on the grounds that it is not in line with current thinking in second language acquisition. Pica argues that this approach tends to insist on accuracy (by presenting fine prose of capable writers) and, therefore, "deny the learner access to error production as a strategy for testing hypothesis about rules and constructions in the target language" (p. 6).

Zamel (1982) attacks the so-called models approach (i.e., using models of professional writers) on the grounds that "it can be misleading because it may give students the impression that the linear straightforward writing they are supposed to imitate is the result of a process that was itself linear. It fails to show students that the thinking and writing that preceded these models may have been chaotic.
and disorganized and that their own attempts to write may involve this same disorder" (p. 206).

Raimes (1983) attacks the models approach on the grounds that "models encourage students to think that form comes first. They (students) tend to see the organizational plan of the model as a predetermined mold (like a cake pan or a dessert mold) into which they pour their content" (pp. 126-7). As Raimes argues, writers first find content and then form to fit their content.

However, Raimes does not dismiss the models approach altogether. She sees it as a "resource rather than an ideal" (p. 127). She argues for the importance of models, particularly in demonstrating ways of organizing ideas within paragraphs. English as a Second Language (ESL) students may need this skill, given that rhetorical thought patterns may be culture specific—a view enhanced by Kaplan's 1967 study which offered the models approach a theoretical base in that it concluded that thought patterns are culture specific (Raimes, 1983; Zamel, 1982). Seen from that perspective, not teaching the English organizational patterns may result in the production of "un-English texts" (Raimes, 1983:116).

Obviously some of the above criticisms of the models approach do not apply in a situation where students are learning in their first language. Such students are not
grappling with the linguistic code; rather, they are
improving their styles. Among others, D'Angelo (1988) and
Weathers (1988) have nothing but praise for the models
approach. D'Angelo argues that "imitation exists for the
sake of variation. The student writer will become more
original as he engages in creative imitation" (p. 199). For
D'Angelo the student writer engages in imitation so as to
cultivate "a mature style through creative imitation...to
nurture his own garden of eloquence" (p. 200).

Weathers sees the teaching of style (through models) as
an important undertaking. Such an undertaking, he argues,
involves three tasks: (1) making the teaching of style
significant and relevant for students, (2) revealing style as
a measurable and viable subject, and (3) making style
believable and real as a result of the (teacher's) stylistic
practices (p. 187). In sum, it seems that using models of
professional writers is a viable technique which seems to
have more praise than blame in the first Language context and
more blame than praise in the second Language context.

"Using examples of good student writing as models to be
followed," on the other hand, was ranked "least important" by
all groups of teachers, with a notable exception of English
teachers, who ranked this item 3rd. As with all techniques,
using students' own writing as models to be followed has both advantages and disadvantages.

On the bright side, this technique can foster a sense of worth in the students, who then see themselves as having something worth emulating. Students might then take responsibility for their learning—an issue which is relevant in this study which sees writing as empowering learners to take charge of their learning.

On the dark side, this technique can easily foster a situation where only the select few "shine" at the expense of the many who cannot write well enough for their writing to be chosen as an ideal model. In this sense, the technique fosters elitist and divisive tendencies—the last thing any teacher wants to see in her class.

Further, all groups of teachers felt that "commenting at length on the strength in students' writing," is "least important." This is disturbing insofar as it goes against the grain of current thinking in language teaching and learning. Current thinking holds that positive input and feedback is very important.

Although only a small percentage of respondents said they do not assign writing beyond the paragraph level, the reasons they gave are disturbing. Reasons such "It is the responsibility of the English teacher" and "Writing is not
relevant in my content area," have been challenged through the arguments presented in this study. Both Chapters 2 and 3 point out that this study is largely informed by the notion that since writing can promote learning in all subjects, it is, therefore, relevant in all subjects and it is the responsibility of all teachers.

Table 5.5 shows the comparison of percentage of teachers assigning specific writing tasks according to exposure to writing to learn.

The findings shown in Table 5.5 indicate that, contrary to expectation, teachers who say they have been exposed to writing to learn through reading a paper or article (Read-Yes), hearing a paper at a conference (Heard-Yes) and attending a workshop (Wksp-Yes) assign mechanical tasks more frequently than their counterparts (i.e., Read-No, Heard-No and Wksp-No). Further, Table 5.5 shows that teachers who say they have been exposed to writing to learn through conducting workshops (Cowksp-Yes) and informal talk about writing to learn (Inf-Yes) assign relatively the same amount of mechanical writing tasks.

Both findings (discussed above) violate expectations. If teachers have indeed been exposed to writing to learn, one would hope that they assign less mechanical tasks since
mechanical tasks are not conducive to learning through writing— a point discussed in Chapters 2 and 3.

With regards to transactional writing tasks, Table 5.5 shows that teachers who say they have heard a paper (Heard-Yes), attended a workshop (Wksp-Yes) and conducted a workshop (Cowksp-Yes) assign more transactional writing tasks than their counterparts (i.e., Heard-No, Wksp-No and Cowksp-No). This is a positive finding insofar as it demonstrates the impact of exposure to writing to learn. As argued in Chapter 2, transactional writing tasks that require students to compose (as one would do in writing a report, summary, analysis, etc.,) promote learning through writing.

However, with regards to the transactional category, Table 5.5 also shows that teachers who say they have read about writing to learn (Read-Yes), had college training on writing to learn (Coll-Yes) and have heard informal talk about writing to learn (Inf-Yes) assign relatively the same amount of transactional writing tasks when compared to their counterparts (Read-No, Coll-No and Inf-No). This finding is positive when viewed in the light that even teachers who say they have not been exposed to writing to learn also assign transactional tasks that could promote learning through writing. However, one is left wondering why the group that
claims to have been exposed to writing to learn does not do better than the other group.

With regards to the creative category, Table 5.5 shows that, except for teachers who say they have conducted workshops, who assign more creative writing tasks than those who have not conducted workshops (Wksp-No), other groups of teachers (Read-Yes and Read-No, Heard-Yes and Heard-No, Wksp-Yes and Wksp-No, Coll-Yes and Coll-No and Inf-Yes and Inf-No) do not differ considerably on the amount of creative writing tasks they assign. As discussed earlier, tasks within this category are problematic because they are "traditionally" associated with the English classroom rather than natural and social sciences. However, the present study has presented arguments that support the use of these creative writing tasks in other classes as well. How this could be done is beyond the scope of this thesis.

With regards to expressive writing tasks, Table 5.5 shows that the following groups of teachers (Heard-Yes, Wksp-Yes, Coll-Yes and Cowksp-Yes) assign expressive writing tasks more frequently than their counterparts. This finding should be viewed positively given the importance of tasks within the expressive category. However, Table 5.5 also indicates that teachers who say they read about writing to learn (Read-Yes) and those who say they heard informal talk
(Inf-Yes) assign relatively the same amount of expressive writing tasks when compared to their counterparts. This seems to indicate that exposure through reading and hearing others talk about writing to learn has had no significant impact with regards to expressive writing tasks.

Table 5.6 shows the comparison of the rankings of views on the function of writing. The results presented in Table 5.6 indicate that the item "writing helps students remember information," was, on average, ranked "most important" by all groups of teachers. Ranked second "most important" was the item "writing helps students synthesize information" (except Cowksp-Yes and Cowksp who ranked it 3 and 5, respectively). As mentioned earlier, these two functions of writing have an important role to play in enhancing writing to learn. However, this finding leaves one puzzled as to why groups who claim to have been exposed (through varied sources) do not differ from those who do not claim exposure in ranking the above items.

Further, Table 5.6 indicates groups of teachers also did not differ in ranking the item "writing gives students an opportunity to practice mechanics," "least important" (5 for all groups except Coll-Yes (4) and for Cowksp (3)). Thus, exposure to writing to learn does not seem to have had an impact with regards to this item: all teachers (except those
mentioned above) agreed that this writing function is not very important in encouraging learning through writing.

Although groups of teachers did not always assign the same rank for other functions of writing, it seems that the differences were not considerable. For example, teachers who say they read a paper (Read-Yes) assigned a ranking of 4 and those who did not read a paper (Read-No) assigned a ranking of 3 to the item "writing serves to test learning of content."

Table 5.7 shows the comparison of rankings of techniques for teaching writing for teachers, both those who say they have been exposed to writing to learn and those who do not claim to have been exposed to writing to learn.

As Table 5.7 indicates, contrary to expectation, there seems to be overall consistency in the ranking of techniques by all groups of teachers, i.e., those who have been exposed and those who have not been exposed. This consistency is clearly shown in the ranking of the following four items: (1) "Discuss topic before students write about it" (ranked "most important" by all groups of teachers except teachers who said they have not read about writing to learn (Read-No) and those who say they had college training on writing to learn (Coll-Yes)).
(2) "Use examples of good professional writing as models" (ranked second "most important" by all groups of teachers except those who say they heard a paper at a conference on writing to learn (Heard-Yes), those who did not (Heard-No), those who say they had college training on writing to learn (Coll-Yes) and those who say they heard informal talk about writing to learn (Inf-Yes)).

(3) "Comment on weaknesses in students' writing" (ranked "least important" by all groups of teachers except those who say they read a paper on writing to learn (Read-No), those who say they did not (Read-No), those who did not attend a workshop (Wksp-No), those who say they did not have college training (Coll-No), those who say they conducted workshops (Cwksp-Yes) and those who say they did not hear any informal talk on writing to learn (Inf-No)).

(4) "Comment on strength in student writing" (also ranked "least important" by all groups of teachers except teachers who say they heard a paper (Heard-Yes), those who did not hear any paper (Heard-No), those who attended a workshop (Wksp-Yes), those who say they had college training (Coll-Yes), those who have no college training (Coll-No) and those who have not heard any informal talk on writing to learn (Inf-No)).
In conclusion, one may point out that the results in Table 5.7 are no different from those in both Tables 5.5 and 5.6 in terms of showing little or no difference between the teachers who say they have been exposed to writing to learn and those who say they have not. Thus, the results shown in these three Tables (i.e., 5.5, 5.6 and 5.7) need to be accounted for. Since no factor analysis was done for this study, one cannot account for the results with any degree of certainty. However, one can still speculate that (1) differences in subject disciplines (given the different "traditional" subject orientations within different disciplines) and (2) different perceptions (between the researcher and teachers surveyed) of what constitutes writing to learn principles accounts for the unexpected results.

Limitations of the Study

There are limitations worth considering in the interpretation of the results of this study. First, it is hard to make generalizations from a sample size as small as 49. Although it was argued that the teachers who participated in this study are representative insofar as they represent most school types within the Black education system, a larger sample would have yielded more reliable results.
Second, the use of the questionnaire in this study had its own limitations. As pointed out in the literature review, survey questionnaires have come under heavy fire because respondents may not say what they actually do, thus giving the researcher a false picture. This seems to be a built-in weakness of a survey questionnaire.

Third, the study relied heavily on the writing tasks classification developed by experienced researchers (Britton et al., 1975; Applebee et al., 1981). Although an attempt was made to explain the categories, respondents may have failed to differentiate between writing tasks.

Fourth, the fact that the respondents were teachers who had come to attend various in-service courses at the University of Zululand, South Africa, makes one wonder about the extent to which the results are representative of the general teacher population in Black education. It can reasonably be argued that teachers who attend in-service courses are likely to be more informed than teachers who do not. Therefore, in using this group of teachers, reliability may have been traded for convenience.

Nevertheless, the results, as presented in Tables and discussed in this Chapter, do point to some recommendations.
Recommenda-tions

Writing-across-the-curriculum workshops

It is common knowledge that any profession, if it is to keep abreast with new knowledge, has to evolve some kind of in-service programs for its members who are already serving "out there." The teaching profession is no exception to this basic requirement for survival. Therefore, teachers in South Africa may benefit greatly from writing-across-the-curriculum and writing-to-learn workshops. As an example of what teachers can share in a writing-across-the-curriculum workshop, the following section will discuss a series of workshops that Fulwiler and his colleagues at Michigan Technological University—one of the schools with a successful writing-across-the-curriculum program in the U.S.--have conducted both in their institution and across the country for high school and college instructors.

These workshops have been conducted so as to "initiate" content-area teachers at all levels to the idea that "writing is every everybody's business" (Terrell as quoted by Russell, 1987:187) and it is a powerful learning tool.
Workshop I.: Exploring In the belief that all teachers experience problems with student writing (although some may not be able to articulate the causes), this workshop exploits this common ground. Participants are asked to write about problems in student writing. They share solutions and strategies for improving student writing. Having discussed "writing problems," ... "teachers begin to understand both the complexity and diversity of the composing process" Fulwiler, 1981:57). Teachers are then asked to summarize ideas that emerged from the discussions.

Workshop II.: Journal writing Obviously, if teachers are to assign expressive journal writing in their classes to aid learning, they themselves must keep journals. Therefore, this workshop requires participants "to record their thoughts, feelings, impressions, insights and ideas as they travel through the workshop" (p. 58). Teachers begin to experience first-hand "the importance of writing to oneself in order to invent, clarify, interpret or reflect" (p. 58). Journals, then, become the teachers' companions throughout the workshop, and hopefully, they end up being part of the teachers' tools of aiding teaching and learning long after the workshop.
Workshop III.: Theory This workshop introduces teachers to Britton's theory of expressive writing—the type of writing found in journals, diaries, and first drafts (Fulwiler, 1981:59). Since participants have had opportunity to write journal entries, they can be subjected to a theoretical discussion of what the concept expressive writing means and how expressive writing can be incorporated as a learning activity in their classrooms.

Workshop IV.: Responding to student writing This workshop explores some strategies of helping students improve the quality of their writing. Some of these strategies are: individual conferencing, peer editing, rewriting, and positive reinforcement. Fulwiler argues that although many teachers know these strategies (and others), they "do not always take the time to practice what they understand" (Fulwiler, 1981: 59).

For this workshop, teachers read and respond to a piece of student writing, noting (1) where it is strong, (2) where weak, and (3) what specific suggestions might help the student writer to improve the paper (Fulwiler, 1981:59). They do this exercise first as individuals and then as groups.

According to Fulwiler, this workshop goes beyond merely
"generating a list of helpful hints for responding to student writing"; it allows teachers to gain confidence in their ability to respond insightfully and creatively to student writing. This confidence is important, given that "teachers in content-areas often feel insecure about responding to and evaluating writing; many remember being penalized by error-conscious English teachers and some retain the view that writing, along with responding to writing, is an arcane craft, the precise practice of which belongs exclusively to teachers of English" (Fulwiler, 1981:60).

Workshop V.: Composing This workshop requires teachers to write something from personal experience, share the piece with others and receive feedback designed to improve the quality of the piece. Thus, teachers experience what they put students through when they assign writing and employ techniques like peer editing. Perhaps what is even more important than this modelling is the awareness of the intricacies attendant to composing. Such an awareness could then prepare teachers for their role as facilitators in the composing process rather than judges of students' finished products.
Introducing writing across the curriculum and writing to learn at teacher-training centers

While in-service workshops can help teachers who are already in the field become familiar and comfortable with using writing to promote learning, making young and energetic teachers-to-be exposed to this topic while still at college may benefit the education system even more. One obvious advantage in working with this group, is that it may be willing to experiment. Experienced teachers, on the other hand, may have been hardened by experience to a point of cynicism and skepticism. Besides, old habits die hard and change is seldom comfortable. Also, it makes sense to sell this idea to student-teachers who will soon be going out to teach various content subjects. For them to assign and teach writing meaningfully (in future), they must have been convinced that writing-across-the curriculum works in a real classroom environment.

The college seems to be a better place to start shaping attitudes toward writing. This could be done in a number of ways, as shown below:

  Requiring student-teachers to write  Requiring prospective teachers to write could help prepare them to appreciate the nature of composing, its demands and joys.
It is self-evident that personal experience with writing is better than a theoretical understanding of what writing can do.

Framing written assignments Teacher-trainers should demonstrate understanding of the composing process. For example, assignments should be framed such that they specify audience (which must be extended from time to time to include others besides teacher), purpose of writing (if writing is to be seen as genuine communication) and the rhetorical situation. Such demonstration may encourage the student-teachers to do the same in their future classes.

Responding to student writing Teacher-trainers should have students try various strategies (such as peer editing, conferencing and positive feedback) of responding to student writing. If students do not learn and practice such strategies at college, they are likely to come out of college ready to assume duties as judges rather than sympathetic facilitators who guide students in achieving their intended meanings in writing. After all, these students have also suffered at the hands of English teachers who, in the words of Fulwiler (1988), "belong to a profession that has become better known for its concern with conventionality and
correctness than for its celebration of joy and risk-taking in writing" (p. 259).

In sum, "teaching as we were taught" is not always beneficial to the students. Therefore, demonstrating to student-teachers that there are ways of helping students write better (even if their own teachers did not use them but chose to "bleed" on their papers) might help dispel negative attitudes (formed K-12) about writing.

**Types of writing tasks assigned** If student-teachers are to come out of college ready to use writing to aid learning, they must have also been exposed to a vast array of writing tasks. They must understand that mechanical writing tasks such as fill in-the-blank, multiple-choice exercises and dictation, to name a few, although important in their own ways, need not dominate in their future classrooms. Other writing tasks (e.g., essay writing, note-taking and expressive journal writing and other creative forms of writing such as poems, stories and plays) have a meaningful role to play in learning—a point argued in this study.

Besides experiencing learning through writing in the form of a variety of writing tasks, student-teachers need to have a sense of how to incorporate writing in the content
subjects they will teach in future. Fulwiler (1988) and Applebee & Langer (1987) have argued that understanding the value of writing in promoting learning may not be enough; rather, one needs to be able to translate that understanding into practice. That is often difficult, given the different subjects and teaching circumstances one finds oneself in.

**Keeping journals** Journals have been presented in this study as tools of learning. Practice with journal writing could therefore equip student-teachers with a powerful tool. This could take many forms. First, teacher-trainers could share their journal entries with student-teachers as a way of demonstrating how journals work. Second, student-teachers could carry their own journals and use them in many ways (reflecting on their subjects, about their teacher(s), about their classmates, etc.). Third, the college curriculum, with built-in practice teaching sessions, provides ample opportunities for student-teachers to try out new ideas. They may, for example, during practice teaching ask pupils to keep journals to reflect on the subject taught--how it is handled, the joys and frustrations with the subject, etc.
Emphasizing the value of writing across the curriculum through school syllabi

In a country with centralized education systems, innovations have to receive a "stamp of approval" from powers that be. In such countries, ready-made syllabi are handed over to teachers, who may or may not have input in their development (teachers don't have input in South Africa). These syllabi stipulate content. To check whether teachers are "covering" the syllabus or teaching something else (e.g., alluding to "illegal" issues like the effects of Apartheid education), the education system provides a tight control in the form of inspectors, subject advisors and principals.

Clearly, with such tight control, the individual teacher cannot hope to explore writing-across-the-curriculum ideas fully if they do not have the approval of the powers that be. For example, if a principal were to demand students' written work (as they do from time to time) and be shown journals, confusion may result, leading to a lot of explaining—if not looking for a new job.

Therefore, if writing-across-the-curriculum is to succeed in schools in South Africa, authorities need to believe in it (what it stands for, its methods and potential to improve the quality of learning in schools) and "prescribe" it (as they prescribe all else, e.g., textbooks). As indicated earlier, South Africa has centralized education
systems and that leaves little room for the success of any innovative idea(s) unless, of course, they are approved.

Problems

Implementing writing-across-the-curriculum may pose more problems than solutions in South Africa. Some of these problems are not necessarily peculiar to South Africa—they have been experienced elsewhere (e.g., in the U.S.) where writing-across-the-curriculum programs exist or have at least been tried. Among others, Applebee and Langer (1987), Fulwiler (1988) and Russell (1987) have written on the problems or challenges facing writing-across-the-curriculum in the U.S.

The following section explores some of these problems, especially those that might apply to South Africa.

Institutional problems

As mentioned earlier, South Africa has centralized education systems which were "tailor-made" for specific racial groups. Funding for these education systems is not equal since racial groups themselves are not equal (at least in the eyes of the racist White government in South Africa). Since Blacks in South Africa are ranked 4th (#1 Whites, #2 Indians, #3 Colored--offspring of Black and White--and #4
Blacks) their education system receives "4th class" funding. For example, while the government in 1982-3 spent 1211 rands (per year) on a White child, it spent 711 rands, 496 rands and 146 rands for an Indian, Coloured and Black child, respectively (Christie, 1985:98). Obviously, "4th class" status creates a host of problems which could militate against attempts to implement writing-across-the-curriculum programs.

Discussed below are some of the institutional problems which stem from the very nature of Black education.

**Overcrowded classrooms** Writing-across-the-curriculum proponents advocate the use of writing to enhance learning in all disciplines. However, the reality is that writing as an activity always presents problems in overcrowded classrooms. Some schools in South Africa have 100 students in a class, especially in rural areas. Christie (1985), using statistics provided by the South African Institute of Race Relations, puts the teacher-pupil ratio in 1983 at 1:43 and 1:18 for Blacks and Whites, respectively). Unlike class talk which evaporates in the classroom, writing remains for the teacher to respond to, long after the students have written and gone.

Therefore, teachers might resist assigning more extended forms of writing—the types that enhance learning, (as argued
in this study) even with arguments that strategies of handling writing in large classes exist. Overcrowded classrooms are demoralizing to both students and teachers.

**Textbooks and other materials**

Central control of education in South Africa means, among other things, receiving a "prescription" of textbooks and other materials recommended (for a number of reasons, some obviously more political than educational) by the central White minority government.

As with any outside "prescription," the disease may not be cured. In other words, prescribed textbooks and other materials may not be promoting the kinds of writing that enhance learning. Thus, textbooks and other materials may be working at cross purposes with what enlightened teachers are trying to accomplish. Clearly, in a situation where teachers are at liberty to use what they deem fit, without the pressure to use what is prescribed (which is also what will be examined in the national examinations), they may change textbooks and materials. South African Black teachers do not have that luxury of choice. How can they have choice of textbooks if they are not even part of the decision-making process that decides on larger issues like what is to be taught in their schools, by whom, how?
Testing and examinations

As mentioned earlier, students in South Africa are made to write many tests in various subjects. Test-writing has gone to a point where some students and teachers feel that the government, through the education departments, is forcing these tests on students to keep them out of politics (Christie, 1985). Besides the political agenda in test-writing espoused in Christie above, some test-writing in South Africa is designed to assess students' performance in the light of the yearly national examinations. Both teachers and students are understandably anxious to see if they will "cut it" in the national examinations. This is a legitimate concern.

However, frequent use of writing to test perpetuates the practice of assigning writing mainly when the purpose is to test learning. Thus, writing merely serves to "demonstrate" rather than "facilitate" learning (Crowhurst, 1989). In an environment were writing means testing, students can never enjoy writing if their writing experiences revolve only around writing the weekly and monthly tests. These tests may emphasize "breadth of coverage rather than depth of understanding," and tend to come in "easily scored, multiple-choice formats." (Applebee and Langer, 1987:144).

In sum, the South African testing and examinations structure may militate against writing-across-the-curriculum
ideas insofar as it encourages a very narrow use of writing: writing mainly to assess previous learning (Applebee, 1981; 1984).

Funding priorities In the section on recommendations, it was suggested that in-service workshops have a major role to play in the implementation of writing-across-the-curriculum programs in South Africa. Unfortunately, workshops cost money. Given the scarce resources allocated to Black education, which is in real shambles, such workshops may have to compete with other top priority issues, e.g., the unqualified and under-qualified teacher phenomenon in Black education. Responding to a 1979 survey by the South African Institute of Race Relations on Black teacher qualifications (2.3% had university degrees, 15.5% had Std. 10, and 82.2% had below Std. 10 qualifications), the 1981 De Lange Commission—a commission appointed by the government to report on the state of education in South Africa, stated:

The position with regards to Black teachers gives most cause for concern. To reduce the teacher-pupil ratio from present 1:48 to 1:30, the number of teachers will have to increase from 95 501 in 1980 to 239 943 in the year 2000. These figures also include the needs of the independent Black states. In view of the above, the present rate at which teachers are being trained for primary and secondary schools is totally inadequate. The quality of the teachers
in the Black educational system in particular is also a problem. (quoted in Christie, 1985:117)

In sum, even if Departments of Education believe in writing-across-the-curriculum ideas, financial resources may dictate a priority ranking which might not favor the writing-across-the-curriculum workshops.

Problems discussed in this section relate to issues that mainly result from the problems within the education system itself and thus beyond the scope of teachers. They are in the province of educationists and (unfortunately) politicians. However, there are also problems about which teachers can do something. The following section discusses some of these problems which are potential hurdles on the way of the implementation of writing-across-the-curriculum programs.

Teacher-related problems

Resistance Writing across the curriculum advocates, among other things, student initiative and responsibility in learning through writing. Thus, it encourages student-centered classrooms through strategies like peer editing and writing tasks like expressive journal writing. Seen from this perspective, focus falls on learning rather than teaching. Clearly this shift of emphasis, from the traditional paradigm of teaching and learning--a paradigm
where the teacher plays a leading role with students "safely" following—to a paradigm that puts the student at the center, is not without its tensions for students, teachers and parents, in some cases.

Students have to learn their new role as active participants in the learning experience. However, asking students to assume responsibility in student-centered classrooms can be a "risky business" because these classrooms "violate the expectations of students who have been nourished on a strict lecture diet" Harris (1988:21).

Teachers have to resist the urge to lead. Asking teachers to take "the back seat" so as to encourage student learning is to ask them to change their fundamental beliefs about teaching and learning. Obviously, some teachers may resist anything that comes with approaches, methods and techniques that are at odds with their fundamental pedagogical beliefs.

Parents, who send their children to school to be "taught" (presumably by qualified teachers), may not understand why their children have to "waste time" helping one another while the person paid to do the job "strolls around the classroom." Thus, parents can resist school practices which are at odds with their pedagogical beliefs.
Turf Cross-disciplinary writing brings to the fore questions like: "Whose business is writing, anyway?" Answers to this question vary. Some would answer, "It is the responsibility of the English teacher." Some would say, "It is everybody's business" (Russell, 1987).

The first answer implies that writing is a generalizable skill which should be acquired in the English classes and be transferred to other classes (Russell, 1991). Thus, the English teacher is seen as a "service person" out to fix writing problems so that students can write better in other subjects. In the words of Peter Abbs, as quoted by Protherough (1983), the English teacher is "a man carrying a bag of tools but with only other peoples' jobs to do" (p. 31). Therefore, if English teachers also believe that writing is indeed the sole preserve of the English Department, they may actually challenge the expertise of other teachers. In other words, they may assert their claim to a territory they believe is rightfully theirs, thus challenging the second answer, which suggests sharing of responsibility for students' writing. In short, turf battles can seriously undermine writing-across-the-curriculum efforts (Fulwiler, 1988; Russell, 1987).

Thus far, problems that might militate against establishing writing-across-the-curriculum programs in South
Africa have been discussed. It was argued that the Black education system does not offer a very fertile ground for nurturing curricular changes, given its numerous problems (e.g., overcrowded classrooms, lack of facilities, teaching and learning aids, to name a few). Given the fact that the Black education system is what it is because White politicians in South Africa planned it that way, it was argued that there is not much teachers can do (although this does not imply that Black teacher organizations that lobby the government for educational change do not have an impact) since this is more of a political matter than educational—one that requires a new political dispensation for South Africa.

It was further argued that some problems are pedagogical in nature. They stem from what individual teachers within institutions think of the role of writing in their content subjects and the role of the English subject within the school curriculum. Although pedagogical problems seem "negotiable," they nonetheless pose a serious threat to any writing-across-the-curriculum venture, given that they stem from entrenched attitudes which may be hard to banish (e.g., seeing writing as the responsibility of the English teacher—an attitude that may have been formed as a result of
seeing English teachers at war with errors while content teachers by-pass errors).

Conclusion

The success of writing-across-the-curriculum programs in South Africa depends on the solutions of both political and teacher-related problems. A new political dispensation, could mean more funding for Black education (if such a thing continues to exist). Better still, it could mean ONE EDUCATION SYSTEM for all citizens of South Africa instead of systems of education formed along racial lines. Fortunately, there is reason to hope for such a new political dispensation in South Africa. Recently, the government has openly committed itself to creating a "new South Africa." To demonstrate its willingness to change South Africa, it has released some political prisoners (e.g., the famous Dr. Nelson Mandela), unbanned political organizations (e.g. AZAPO and ANC) and has called for "talks" with all political organizations.

What the government has done may not be enough. However, it does inspire hope (however, dim it may be). Therefore, educational enterprises like writing-across-the-curriculum may have a chance they would not have had in the "old South Africa."
Teacher-related problems cannot be banished overnight. People choose to change depending on the soundness of the argument for change. Therefore, an on-going dialogue about the virtues of writing-across-the-curriculum programs need to be sustained.

To conclude, both political and teacher-related problems may be difficult to solve but not impossible, given commitment and dedication. After all, the rewards are worth the effort: learners stand to benefit through increased writing opportunities in all disciplines, and teachers themselves, through constant consultations in the process of planning cross-curricular writing activities, stand to gain the revival of the collegial spirit which is so vital in any academic institution.
BIBLIOGRAPHY


APPENDIX
Dear Colleague:

We are working on a study on how best we can use writing to promote learning in South Africa. Besides being a tool for assessment of learning, writing can serve learning in all content areas. We intend to investigate how we can use writing to promote learning in all subjects. As a teacher of a content subject, you possess the knowledge and insights which we need to explore the use of writing to promote learning in all subjects.

The questionnaire has been constructed to obtain the following data:

(a) the types and amounts of writing tasks you assign in your content area;
(b) your views on the function of writing in your content area;
(c) your exposure to some ideas about writing and
d) your views on some techniques which might be used in teaching writing.

The success of this study depends on your willingness to complete this questionnaire. Your name will NOT be mentioned in any discussion of the questionnaire results. You do not need to put your name on this questionnaire. Further, we wish to assure you that participation is voluntary and that the information you give will be confidential.

We have estimated that you will be able to complete the questionnaire in 25-30 minutes. Please complete the questionnaire and submit it to Sibusiso Chonco, English Co-ordinator (University of Zululand) in a sealed envelope. He will then mail your questionnaire. If you need a copy of the results, write a letter to us at the above address.

We hope you will find it convenient to complete this questionnaire by February 30, 1991.

Thank you for your time and help.

Sincerely

Goodman Thamsanga Shezi
Post-Graduate Student (TESL)

Dr. Roberta Abraham
Associate Professor, Advisor.
A. QUESTIONNAIRE

A Survey on the Kinds and Amounts of Writing Tasks Assigned in Some Black High Schools

A. Background Information

Please circle the appropriate number or fill in the blanks.

1. Year of birth: 19—

2. Sex: 1 Male 2 Female


(Academic) 1 Std. 10 2 B.A. 3 B.Paed. 4 B.A (Hons) 5 M.A. 6 Ph.D

4. Where do you teach 1 day-school--rural 2 day-school--urban not-so-well-equipped 3 an urban well equipped school 4 a boarding school 5 a private school

5. Average class size 1 20-29 2 30-34 3 35-39 4 40-49 5 50-

6. How many years of full-time classroom teaching experience you have had (including this current year)? ——year(s)
7.A. Look at the following subject list and do the following:
   a. Circle the subjects that you teach.
   b. Indicate the class level in which you teach that subject or subjects.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subjects</th>
<th>Class Level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Biology</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>History</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mathematics</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Home Economics</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical Science</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geography</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business Economics</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accountancy</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (specify)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

B. The following section assumes a broad view of writing. You will therefore find a variety of writing tasks. Please follow these guidelines in responding to this section:
   a. Choose one subject (even if you teach more than one subjects) in which you are most qualified and are most comfortable teaching.
   b. Underline the subject you chose in "a."
   c. Choose one level (even if you teach several levels of the subject you chose in "a").
   d. Respond to each item in this section by circling the number of times you assign each indicated aspect of writing in the subject and level you chose in "a" and "c" above.

   1 = never
   2 = once a quarter
   3 = once a month
   4 = once a week
   5 = two to four times a week
   6 = everyday

8. Multiple-choice exercises 1 2 3 4 5 6
9. Fill in-the-blank exercises 1 2 3 4 5 6
10. Short answer exercises
   (no more than two lines)
   1 2 3 4 5 6

11. Math(s) Calculations
    1 2 3 4 5 6

12. Copying
    (copying notes on the
     chalkboard)
    1 2 3 4 5 6

13. Dictation
    (writing down all the
     teacher says)
    1 2 3 4 5 6

14. Note-taking
    (Writing only main points
     from text or teacher talk)
    1 2 3 4 5 6

15. Reports
    (could be lab reports/
     History reports etc.)
    1 2 3 4 5 6

16. Summary Writing
    (writing a paragraph including
     only the main ideas of a longer
     passage)
    1 2 3 4 5 6

17. Writing requiring analysis
    (close examination of ideas
     presented in a passage)
    1 2 3 4 5 6

18. Writing requiring synthesis
    (combining diverse ideas
     into a coherent whole)
    1 2 3 4 5 6

19. Writing requiring application
    (applying theory to support
     practice)
    1 2 3 4 5 6

20. Writing to describe and
    interpret a graph, chart etc.
    1 2 3 4 5 6

21. Writing that is persuasive
    (Writing that defends a
     point of view)
    1 2 3 4 5 6

22. Writing in the form of a poem
    1 2 3 4 5 6
1 = never
2 = once a quarter
3 = once a month
4 = once a week
5 = two to four times a week
6 = everyday

23. Writing in the form of a story

24. Writing in the form of a play script

25. Writing for oneself (lists, journals, diaries)

26. Writing to correspond with others besides the teacher (letters, diaries, journals)

C. Indicate your views on the function of writing in content area by RANKING the following statements on a scale of 1-5. USE EACH NUMBER ONCE AND ONLY ONCE.

1 = most important
2
3
4
5 = least important

27. Writing helps students remember information. (Students who write about what they have learnt have greater chances of remembering.)

28. Writing serves to test learning of content. (Writing is mainly useful for test purposes.)

29. Writing helps students synthesize information. (Writing helps students discover how ideas from various academic sources fit together.)
30. Writing gives students an opportunity to practice mechanics.  
(Students should write mainly to practice mechanics like punctuation, spelling etc.)

31. Writing gives students an opportunity to express feelings.  
(Students should use writing to write about what they feel--this could be feelings about the subjects, the teacher, themselves, classmates etc.)

D. Items 32-39 indicate techniques which might be used in teaching writing beyond the paragraph level to your students. Using a scale of 1-8, RANK these techniques according to their importance.

USE EACH NUMBER ONCE AND ONLY ONCE.

I = most important  
2  
3  
4  
5  
6  
7  
8 = least important

32. Assigning a topic and leaving students free to do what they wish to do with it.

33. Discussing the topic before students write about it.

34. Using examples of good professional writing as models to be followed.

35. Using examples of good student writing as models to be followed.

36. Correcting every error or problem in students' writing.

37. Commenting at length on the weaknesses in students' writing.
38.——Commenting on drafts of students' writing before they finish the final piece.

39.——Commenting at length on the strengths in students' writing.

E. Answer this question ONLY if you do not assign writing beyond the paragraph level.

Circle the numbers which best explain your reason. You may circle more than one number.

40. I do not assign writing because:
   a. I do not like dealing with writing in the classroom
   b. It is the responsibility of the English teacher
   c. Writing is not relevant in my content area
   d. I don't feel adequately prepared to teach writing in my content area
   e. Other (please specify)

F.

41. This section gives you the opportunity to share with me problems you might have had in using writing in your content area.

   In the spaces provided, briefly explain your problem(s) and suggest what solution(s) you think might help.

G. The following is designed to give me an idea about your exposure to "Writing-Across-the-Curriculum" and "Writing-to-Learn" ideas.

Please tick all the statements which describe your exposure to "Writing-Across-the-Curriculum" and "Writing-to-Learn" concepts and ideas.

42.——I read about this topic
43.——I heard a paper at a conference on this topic
44.——I attended a workshop on this topic
45.——I had training at college on this topic
46.——I have conducted workshops and presented papers on this topic
47. I have heard teachers talk about it informally.

H. The questionnaire may not have touched all your important thoughts about writing in content areas. In the space provided, I would appreciate any additional comments you wish to share.

Thank you for your contribution to this study.
B. TABLES

Table 5.8: Percentage distribution of frequencies with which writing tasks are assigned, English teachers (N=17)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of writing task</th>
<th>ne(^a)</th>
<th>quar(^b)</th>
<th>month(^c)</th>
<th>wk(^d)</th>
<th>2-4 wk(^e)</th>
<th>day(^f)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mechanical</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multiple-choice</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fill-in blank</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Short-answer</td>
<td>06</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>01</td>
<td>00</td>
<td>00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Math Calc.</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>06</td>
<td>00</td>
<td>00</td>
<td>00</td>
<td>00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Copying</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dictation</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>06</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>06</td>
<td>06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Note-taking</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>00</td>
<td>00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transactional</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reports</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summary</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>06</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Analysis</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>00</td>
<td>00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Synthesis</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Application</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>06</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graph, chart</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>06</td>
<td>06</td>
<td>00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Persuasive</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>06</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>06</td>
<td>00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creative</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poem</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>06</td>
<td>00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Story</td>
<td>00</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>06</td>
<td>00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Play Script</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>06</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expressive</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Journal</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>06</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>06</td>
<td>00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Letter</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>06</td>
<td>00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^a\) ne = never.  \(^b\) quar = once a quarter.  \(^c\) month = once a month.  \(^d\) wk = once a week.  \(^e\) 2-4 wk = 2-4 times a week.  \(^f\) day = everyday.
Table 5.9: Percentage distribution of frequencies with which writing tasks are assigned, natural sciences teachers (N=16)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of writing task</th>
<th>ne</th>
<th>quar</th>
<th>month</th>
<th>wk</th>
<th>2-4 wk</th>
<th>day</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mechanical</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multiple-choice</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>08</td>
<td>00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fill-in blank</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>00</td>
<td>00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Short-answer</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Math Calc.</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>08</td>
<td>08</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Copying</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>08</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dictation</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>08</td>
<td>08</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>00</td>
<td>00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Note-taking</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>08</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transactional</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reports</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>08</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summary</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>08</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Analysis</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>08</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>08</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Synthesis</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>08</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>00</td>
<td>00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Application</td>
<td>08</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graph, chart</td>
<td>08</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Persuasive</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>08</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>08</td>
<td>00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creative</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poem</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>08</td>
<td>08</td>
<td>00</td>
<td>00</td>
<td>00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Story</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>08</td>
<td>00</td>
<td>00</td>
<td>00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Play</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>00</td>
<td>00</td>
<td>00</td>
<td>00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expressive</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Journal</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>08</td>
<td>08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Letter</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>08</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>00</td>
<td>00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

^a ne = never.  
^b quar = once a quarter.  
^c month = once a month.  
^d wk = once a week.  
^e 2-4 wk = 2-4 times a week.  
^f day = everyday
Table 5.10: Percentage distribution of frequencies with which writing tasks are assigned, social sciences teachers (N=16)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of writing task</th>
<th>ne(^a)</th>
<th>quar(^b)</th>
<th>month(^c)</th>
<th>wk(^d)</th>
<th>2-4 wk(^e)</th>
<th>day(^f)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mechanical</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multiple-choice</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>06</td>
<td>00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fill-in blank</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>06</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Short-answer</td>
<td>06</td>
<td>06</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Math Calc.</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>06</td>
<td>00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Copying</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dictation</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>06</td>
<td>06</td>
<td>06</td>
<td>00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Note-taking</td>
<td>06</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>06</td>
<td>00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Transactional</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reports</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>07</td>
<td>07</td>
<td>00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summary</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>07</td>
<td>00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Analysis</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Synthesis</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>06</td>
<td>00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Application</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>06</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graph, chart</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Persuasive</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>07</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Creative</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poem</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>00</td>
<td>00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Story</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>06</td>
<td>00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Play script</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>06</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>06</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Expressive</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Journal</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>06</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>06</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Letter</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>06</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>06</td>
<td>06</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^a\) ne = never.  \(^f\) day = everyday

\(^b\) quar = once a quarter.

\(^c\) month = once a month.

\(^d\) wk = once a week.

\(^e\) 2-4 wk = 2-4 times a week.