

Preparing Preservice Teachers to Become Teachers of Writing: A 20-Year Review of the Research Literature

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University teacher education programs are the “foremost settings for learning how to teach” (Smagorinsky et al., 2005). Yet, how to prepare preservice teachers to teach writing has received little attention from literacy researchers. Despite research reviews for reading teacher research, currently one does not exist for writing teacher education. This article attempts to address this gap by presenting a 20-year literature review (1990–2010) of peer-reviewed studies focused on preparing preservice teachers to teach writing.

In the teaching of writing, teachers’ instructional decisions and practices should be guided by a sound conceptual framework. This conceptual framework encompasses understandings about writing as a subject specific content (what there is to know about the act of composing) and the pedagogy of teaching writing (how to teach writing to others). Ideally, through their undergraduate experiences teachers develop conceptual tools, which are “principles, frameworks, and ideas about teaching, learning and English/language arts acquisition that teachers use as heuristics to guide decisions about teaching and learning,” and pedagogical tools, “classroom practices, strategies, and resources” to inform their teaching (Grossman, Smagorinsky, & Valencia, 1999, pp. 11–12).

Vygotsky’s theory of concept development articulates the need for the integration of scientific or academic concepts learned through formal instruction, often in academic settings, and spontaneous concepts learned through practice in everyday activities (Smagorinsky, Cook, & Johnson, 2003). To Vygotsky (1987), “direct instruction in concepts is impossible” (p. 170); rather, principles learned in formal academic settings must come “in conjunction with empirical demonstrations, observation, or activity”

(Smagorinsky, 2011, p. 43). There is a necessary interplay between scientific and spontaneous concepts in learning to teach and in the settings in which teachers encounter them. Developing both a conception of the subject matter and knowledge of how to teach is a challenge teachers face (Smagorinsky, Lakly, & Johnson, 2002).

Teachers learn about teaching in many settings, with university programs being the “foremost settings for learning how to teach” (Smagorinsky et al., 2003, p. 1407). Teacher educators must support preservice teachers (PSTs) in developing content knowledge about the subject of writing while also providing them with specific tools they can employ in the classroom. It makes sense that an examination of teaching and learning occurring within university programs is necessary to know what PSTs are learning about teaching writing and are prepared to do when they enter the classroom. In this review, we sought to investigate the following questions: What pedagogical understandings do PSTs encounter and appropriate in these “foremost settings” about the teaching of writing? What conceptual understandings are they gaining through their formal coursework and field experiences? In what ways are these foremost settings contributing to PSTs’ future ability to teach writing in their classrooms?

This article sets forth to review research literature published on pre-service writing teacher education. First, we describe our decision-making process. Next, we examine each collection of studies to identify what research has found PSTs learn about the teaching of writing. Finally, we conclude with a discussion of the available research and share directions for writing teacher education research.

Method for Literature Review

Our goal for this literature review was to develop a coherent picture of the research concerning PSTs’ preparation to teach writing. While there is informative research about teaching inservice teachers about writing, for example, research conducted with teachers associated with the National Writing Project (NWP), we argue that PSTs need a specialized agenda. PSTs are beginning their journeys as educators. It is critical that PSTs enter the classroom, whether as student teachers or in their early careers, with strong theoretical and pedagogical knowledge for teaching writing. If PSTs must immediately be ready to teach writing, teacher educators must examine methods courses and practicums to explore ways in which PSTs learn about writing instruction, how they enact this learning when teaching, and obstacles they may face. For these reasons, an examination of research on preparing PSTs to teach writing seemed warranted.

The field currently lacks a comprehensive review of this nature. Even though reading researchers speak to the lack of extensive knowledge of preparing future reading teachers (Anders, Hoffman, & Duffy, 2000; Risko et al., 2008), there are chapters in the *Handbook of Reading Research* (Kamil, Mosenthal, Pearson, & Barr, 2000) and recent articles in research journals such as *Reading Research Quarterly* (see Hoffman & Pearson, 2000; Risko et al., 2008) to which teacher educators can turn. The issue of preparing PSTs to teach writing is not addressed in volumes such as *Handbook on Writing Research* (MacArthur, Graham, & Fitzgerald, 2006) or addressed in a comprehensive manner in research journals. Currently, we know of no equivalent chapters or articles that examine what we know about preservice writing teacher education.

We were guided by Shanahan's (2000) recommendation for conducting a research synthesis that involves "inquiry used to derive generalizations from the collective findings of a body of existing studies" (p. 209). We set several parameters for this review. We examined research focused specifically on preparing K-12 prospective teachers to teach writing. We selected studies published in peer-reviewed publications between 1990 and 2010. Similar to recent research review published by Risko et al. (2008), we selected 1990 as a starting point due to the increased attention to the development of professional knowledge and teacher education research at that time.

While papers presented at peer-reviewed conferences are occasionally available as ERIC documents or for limited years on professional organization's websites, proposals, not papers, are approved through blind review; therefore, we chose not to include presented papers in this review. To build the field's understandings of how PSTs learn to teach writing, we included research studies that represented different methodological paradigms.

To this end, we conducted a series of electronic searches using the following databases: Education Research Complete, ERIC, the Psychology and Behavioral Sciences Collection, ISI Web, and PychINFO. These databases were accessed in a recent literature review of reading teacher education (Risko et al., 2008).

Using search terms associated with writing teacher education such as *preservice teachers*, *preservice teacher education*, *writing*, *student teachers*, *writing method*, and *writing instruction* yielded more than 16,000 results. Initially, many results with the subject term *writing* focused on writing as a reflective tool in various subject areas. Trying combinations of subject terms such as *student teachers* and *writing* produced 263 potential articles while *preservice teachers* and *writing instruction* produced 138 manuscripts. We continued to try various search term combinations until the same articles

repeatedly appeared and we reached saturation. Additionally, two doctoral students independently conducted electronic searches for overlooked articles using various combinations of these terms. They checked potential articles against our reference list to ensure all articles were identified.

We also engaged in “footnote chasing” (Shanahan, 2000) by examining the references of articles for additional studies for consideration. Studies were also located through “systematic browsing” (Green & Hall, 1984) of the *National Reading Conference Yearbook*. The yearbook was selected because it is a conference publication of the National Reading Conference (now *Literacy Research Association*), a professional organization specifically devoted to literacy research. Both “systematic browsing” and “footnote chasing” resulted in additions to confirmed studies.

Articles selected for inclusion had to focus on the preparation of pre-certification teachers for K–12 classroom writing instruction in the United States. We did not specifically examine research conducted in other disciplines, such as math, science, or social studies. We did, however, include studies conducted with content-area PSTs who were taking literacy methods courses. We did not include articles that examined writing as an instructional tool, reflective writing, or journal writing to make sense of PSTs’ field experiences. In our search, we encountered commentary and descriptive pieces from teacher educators about classroom practices. In some cases, these articles appeared in peer-reviewed journals, but we eliminated them if no specifics about the purpose of the study, data collection, and analysis were included. When questioning the appropriateness for inclusion in the review, we returned to the stated research questions in the article to verify that the study focused on preparing PSTs to teach writing. We specifically omitted studies about inservice teachers although if the study results consisted of combined preservice and inservice teacher data (e.g., Kaufman, 2009) we included them in the study. This process resulted in the identification of 51 studies meeting the above criteria for research on PSTs’ preparation to teach writing.

After reading each article we created one-page summaries of the research focus, questions, participants, methods, and findings. We discussed each article and grouped them based on common categories (e.g., tutoring experiences, studying writing samples). We examined the ways the researchers explored writing in the studies and noted patterns in the types of investigations occurring across studies. For example, we noticed a collection of studies examined PSTs’ experiences and decision-making in K–12 settings where they were either student teaching or beginning their first years of teaching. We created the grouping Methods Applied in Teaching to repre-

sent these studies. In the end, we identified four thematic clusters: Preservice Teachers' Attitudes and Beliefs toward Writing, Preservice Teachers' Interactions with Student Writers and Writing, Influential Experiences in Methods Courses, and Methods Applied in Teaching. We think it is helpful to examine the studies in this manner because it allows the field to see the ways similar aspects of writing are being investigated. In addition, it helps researchers understand the extent to which the field can claim established understandings about preparing PSTs to teach writing.

We have chosen to position this current review on K-12 studies as a collective entity because we believe it is helpful to see ways writing is being taught and investigated across licensure or certification bands. With this decision, we can examine the questions writing researchers are posing and the ways writing is being investigated. We acknowledge the decision to examine K-12 studies collectively may overlook some of the complexities of preparing teachers for particular grade bands as there are different demands and expectations for writing placed on early childhood compared to high school teachers, for instance. Other researchers have examined the plight of teacher preparation for particular grade bands noting the demands and challenges specific to the secondary environment (e.g., Grossman, 1990; Smagorinsky, 2010; Smagorinsky & Whiting, 1995). However, we believe by taking a comprehensive view we can examine the scope of writing research being conducted in teacher education today.

Organization of Article

We present our findings within the four identified clusters. We provide a table in each section identifying the studies that inform each cluster. In the table, we identify the researcher(s), research focus, participants, duration and context, data sources, and findings for each study. We made decisions about how best to represent data reported in the studies. In some cases, researchers addressed both reading and writing in their studies. For example, Draper, Barksdale-Ladd, and Radencich (2000) surveyed and interviewed 24 elementary PSTs about their habits and attitudes; however, 12 were interviewed for reading and 12 for writing. In this case, we listed number of PSTs on the chart as 12 as we were only focused on findings related to writing. In some cases, we modified the duration of the study as researchers often reported preliminary work that shaped their study in addition to the time they collected data on participants. We present the length of time data were gathered on participants. Our goal was to be as informative and specific as possible to best inform the field.

We present our findings within each section by first providing an overview, highlighting studies included. Second, we examine the pedagogical understandings PSTs were learning about teaching writing, providing specific evidence from studies that best illustrate these investigations. Finally, we end each section by analyzing the contributions and limitations of each thematic cluster.

Findings

Preservice Teachers' Attitudes and Beliefs toward Writing

Eight studies (see Table 1) focused specifically on PSTs' attitudes and beliefs about themselves as writers, their beliefs about writing instruction, and changes in their beliefs due to course experiences. Of these studies, five took a moment-in-time snapshot of PSTs' attitudes and beliefs either about themselves as writers (Draper et al., 2000; Lickteig, Johnson, & Johnson, 1999), writing instruction (Dreher, 1990), or both (Gallavan, Bowles, & Young, 2007; Norman & Spencer, 2005). Three studies found experiences within a methods course positively influence PSTs' writing identities (Chambless & Bass, 1995–1996; Gerla, 2010; Lenski & Pardieck, 1999). These studies shared the key assumption that it was critical for teacher educators to be aware of PSTs' beliefs about themselves as writers and as writing teachers. They argued PSTs' writing identities might influence future instruction; therefore, knowing their past experiences, views of themselves as writers, and beliefs about instruction provide insight into how best to prepare them to become writing teachers.

What PSTs Believe

PSTs' former experiences as students influenced how they thought about themselves as writers. PSTs held binary views about themselves as writers, placing themselves on a good/bad dichotomy. These beliefs were influenced by past experiences in schools, with former teachers serving as powerful agents in how they viewed themselves as writers. One study aimed at better understanding PSTs' beliefs about writing by asking them to write. Researchers asked questions such as “What are preservice teachers' perceptions of themselves as writers?” (Norman & Spencer, 2005) and “What are preservice teachers' beliefs about writing and the writing process?” (Gallavan, Bowles, & Young, 2007).

Norman and Spencer (2005) asked PSTs to write autobiographies about their lives as writers. They found PSTs discussed how past teachers' responses to their writing shaped their view of themselves as writers, with

Table 1. Preservice Teachers' Attitudes and Beliefs toward Writing

Researchers	Research Focus	Participants	Duration and Context	Data	Findings
Gerla (2010)	One PST's self-perception as writer and influence of participating in a writing workshop	1 secondary female PST	1 semester language arts methods course	Interviews, transcripts of small group sessions, reflexive and response notebooks, literacy history, student writing, field notes	One PST's experience writing daily within a writing workshop setting contributed to her perception of herself as a writer.
Gallavan, Bowles, & Young (2007)	PSTs' beliefs about writing and the writing process	112 early, elementary, middle, and secondary PSTs	1 semester, various teacher education courses	Survey	PSTs identified themselves as poor writers. They felt unsure about how to teach writing effectively and how to integrate writing in a meaningful way.
Norman & Spencer (2005)	PSTs' beliefs and experiences about writing and writing instruction	59 elementary PSTs	1 semester literacy methodology course	Literacy autobiographies, prewriting activities	Most PSTs held positive views of themselves as writers. Many viewed writing as a fixed trait and did not view instruction as influencing students' writing.
Draper, Barksdale-Ladd, & Radencich (2000)	PSTs' writing habits and attitudes	12 elementary PSTs	1 semester language arts methods course	Survey, interviews	Many PSTs' beliefs about themselves as writers were based on their own experiences as writers and narrow perceptions of writing. They were unable to articulate how to foster a love of writing to their future students.
Lenski & Pardieck (1999)	PSTs' attitudes about writing in a writing workshop	42 elementary PSTs: 40 female, 2 male	1 semester (focused 4-week writing workshop) language arts methods course	Adapted Pre/Post Daly-Miller Writing Apprehension survey, questionnaire	PSTs' attitudes toward writing improved after participating in writing workshops and developing their writing identities.
Lickteig, Johnson, & Johnson (1999)	PSTs' reflections on learning to read and write	107 elementary PSTs	1 semester reading and language arts course	Survey	PSTs did not view themselves as good writers and did not enjoy writing. They least looked forward to teaching writing in comparison to the other language arts.
Chambless & Bass (1995-1996)	PSTs' attitudes toward writing	7 elementary PSTs	1 semester student teaching	Listed Thought Procedure	PSTs' attitudes toward writing improved after experiencing a process approach to teaching writing in their methods class.
Dreher (1990)	PSTs' attitudes toward process approaches to teaching writing	38 early childhood PSTs	1 semester reading methods course	Questionnaire	PSTs were more supportive of process approaches to teaching writing than non-process approaches. PSTs identified wanting to use the process approach in their classrooms and believed it could be easily implemented.

critical or harsh comments contributing to negative views of themselves as writers. Over 90 percent of PSTs identified writing as a “fixed” trait, viewing writing as a talent that one does or does not possess. Similarly, in a survey of 112 early, middle, and secondary PSTs, Gallavan, Bowles, and Young (2007) found many PSTs disliked writing and considered themselves to be poor writers. Only 49 percent felt proficient to teach writing to preK–12 students. They articulated wanting more guidance, modeling, practice, and feedback in their teacher education courses.

Shifts in Beliefs

PSTs entered coursework with negative perceptions of themselves as writers; yet, these studies demonstrate that methods course experiences helped them overcome these experiences and allowed them to consider writing from a new perspective. In these studies, researchers asked, “Do preservice teachers’ attitudes about writing change after experiencing a language arts class that includes a writing workshop?” (Lenski & Pardieck, 1999) and “What influence does a transactional model of teaching have on one preservice teacher’s perception of herself as a writer?” (Gerla, 2010). While these course experiences were integral to PSTs’ shifts as writers, the research studies did not examine in detail how coursework or specific assignments influenced these changes. For example, Lenski and Pardieck (1999) investigated PSTs’ pre- and post-attitudes about writing and writing instruction after participating in a writing workshop during a language arts methods course. The PSTs who initially held positive and negative writing identities made shifts in the pre-post survey. Those students with ambivalent identities remained constant.

Contributions and Limitations

These studies make an important contribution by highlighting that PSTs do not enter teacher education as “blank slates”; rather, they enter after having a lengthy apprenticeship of observation (Lortie, 1975) where their past experiences as students influenced how they view themselves as writers and guided their beliefs about how writing should be taught. Unfortunately, in this collection of studies, the majority of PSTs did not view themselves as “good” writers. PSTs did not enter their university coursework confident in their writing abilities; many had poor experiences and felt apprehensive about teaching writing.

Based on these results, examining PSTs’ attitudes and beliefs about writing is a starting point as teacher educators begin their work with PSTs. The information from these studies is important but is limited in what it offers fellow teacher educators. The key assumption of all these studies was

that if PSTs do not identify themselves as writers, they will not value writing in their future classrooms and may provide poor writing instruction or ignore writing altogether. Three of the eight studies found the writing experiences PSTs have in methods courses can offer them another set of apprenticeship-like experiences, albeit much shorter ones, allowing them to see themselves as writers and expand their understanding of how writing can be taught. These studies leave an important question unanswered: How do teacher educators support these dual goals? In the few studies that examined pre-post attitudes, there were few details about the kinds of experiences that brought about these changes. How can teacher educators work to counter the negative perceptions that many PSTs have about themselves as writers? What specific writing experiences and types of instruction can help PSTs explore and change their attitudes and beliefs?

When teacher educators have PSTs in methods courses, how can they best engage them in necessary and thoughtful conversations about how their views of self-as-writer might influence their future teaching decisions? Teacher educators seem to know that positive or new experiences with writing can influence PSTs' beliefs; however, the extent of that change and what it means for classroom teaching remains unknown.

Preservice Teachers' Interactions with Student Writers and Writing

Twelve studies (see Table 2) found PSTs learn to teach writing by working with students or students' writing samples. These studies found responding to writers and students' writing was critical in PSTs' growth as writing teachers. Three studies examined how PSTs developed a deeper understanding of the writing process through working with students (Colby & Stapleton, 2006; Kelley, Hart, & King, 2007; Wake & Modla, 2010) and nine examined how PSTs learn to provide feedback to student writers (Dempsey, PytlikZillig, & Bruning, 2009; Fey, 2003; Flint, Van Sluys, Lo, & East, 2001; Florio-Ruane & Lensmire, 1990; Friedman, Zibit, & Coote, 2004; Fry & Griffin, 2010; Gibson, 2007; Moore, 2000; Moore & Seeger, 2009). Across all studies, the researchers believed an essential element in teaching PSTs about writing was providing opportunities for them to interact with students or students' written work.

Learning about Writing Instruction

Researchers examined how working directly with students helped PSTs better understand specific instructional approaches to teaching writing. These studies pointed to the benefits of field experiences (Colby & Stapleton, 2006;

Table 2. Preservice Teachers' Interactions with Student Writers and Writing

Researchers	Research Focus	Participants	Duration and Context	Data	Findings
Fry & Griffin (2010)	PSTs' experiences working with fourth-grade students using 6-Traits writing	5 elementary PSTs	1 semester student teaching	Observations, field notes, formative assessments, audio-recordings of sessions, researcher reflexivity journals, fourth graders' writing samples	Initially, PSTs were unaware that there are defined approaches and traits for writing instruction. PSTs grew in their abilities to offer feedback for revision. Their understanding of children's writing skills developed over the course of the semester.
Wake & Modla (2010)	PSTs' experiences teaching with the Language Experience Approach and digital storytelling	9 elementary PSTs at University #1: 8 females, 1 male 16 elementary PSTs at University #2: 16 females	1 semester University #1 Foundations of Reading course; University #2 Expository Reading and Writing for Elementary & Special Education Students course	Pre/post adapted Hayes & Robnolt survey. University #1 PSTs' lesson plans; University #2 Descriptive Response Form	While PSTs increased their knowledge of the writing process, including shared writing and assessment, they still articulated discomfort in teaching writing.
Dempsey, PytlikZillig, & Bruning (2009)	PSTs' experiences evaluating fourth graders' writing samples through a website using 6 Traits	109 elementary PSTs	Two-week period during 1 semester; 63 enrolled in an intermediate educational psychology course, 46 enrolled in an upper-level literacy methods course	Pre/post-test, website movement, survey, questionnaire	PSTs were better able to assess students' writing and developed great self-efficacy for this task. They developed in their knowledge of writing traits.
Moore & Seeger (2009)	PSTs' analysis of fourth and fifth graders' writing through pen pal letters	38 elementary PSTs: 29 females, 9 males	10 weeks each semester for 2 semesters, language and literacy methods course	PSTs' analysis of students' letters, writing samples and written language profiles, journal entries, pre/post survey, field notes	PSTs grew in their understanding of their roles as models when writing to students via pen pal letters including the need to focus on students' strengths rather than weaknesses.
Gibson (2007)	PSTs' analysis of students' writing through dialogue journals	28 elementary PSTs	1 semester language arts methods course (with an emphasis on writing instruction)	Dialogue journal entries	PSTs demonstrated their ability to combine aspects of writing skill while attending to their students' needs, purpose, and interests. PSTs developed more elaborate writing pedagogical knowledge.

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Table 2. Preservice Teachers' Interactions with Student Writers and Writing (continued)

Kelley, Hart, & King (2007)	Examining PSTs' writing pedagogy during a service learning experience	9 elementary PSTs: 6 females, 3 males	10 sessions for 1 semester	Field notes, weekly course reflections, interviews, focus groups	PSTs progressed in a nonlinear fashion as they tried to negotiate writing content while striving to meet the individual needs of their students.
Colby & Stapleton (2006)	PSTs' perceptions about teaching writing to elementary students	52 elementary PSTs (semester 1); 26 elementary PSTs (semester 2)	1 semester language arts methods course or curriculum methods course	Written reflections, survey	PSTs applied course content in an individualistic manner. They identified working directly with small groups as helpful in learning to meet the needs of individual learners.
Friedman, Zibit, & Coote (2004)	PSTs' responses to ninth graders' writing through tele-mentoring	45 secondary PSTs	1 year English secondary methods course	Student writing samples, PSTs' written responses, focus interviews, field notes	PSTs learned how to provide more specific, helpful feedback to students. They learned how to be more focused when providing feedback.
Fey (2003)	PSTs' experiences providing face-to-face and electronic responses to ninth-grade students' writing	25 secondary PSTs	1 semester; two English methods courses	PSTs' reflections, questionnaires, emails, researcher notes	PSTs grew in their understanding of role as teacher from grader and corrector to provide more support to students throughout the piece and in the need to affirm students' writing attempts.
Flint, Van Sluys, Lo, & East (2001)	PSTs' beliefs about writing instruction during author's circles with elementary students	16 elementary PSTs	1 semester language arts methods course	Pre/post interviews, pre/post belief statements, author circle and chair transcripts, written reflections, field notes, written artifacts	PSTs developed more complex understandings about what it means to teach writing with aspects such as revision, understanding of the writing process, and actions they would need to take in helping students become better writers.
Moore (2000)	PSTs' understanding of the writing process through pen pal letters with first and second graders	44 early elementary PSTs	10 weeks during 1 semester language arts methods course	PSTs' written personal recollections, open-ended survey, analyses of children's letters, PSTs' journal entries, informal surveys, student language profiles	PSTs became better able to notice and identify growth in language development. PSTs grew in their understandings that writing should be authentic, students should write in different genres and should write for an audience.
Florio-Ruane & Lensmire (1990)	PSTs' views about writing instruction and application of knowledge when working with elementary students	6 elementary PSTs	1 semester reading methods course	Interviews, field notes, work samples, freewriting	PSTs' understandings about teaching writing were altered after engaging in writing workshops. They moved from more of a teacher-directed stance toward a facilitator-guide role.

Wake & Modla, 2010) and service learning opportunities (Kelley et al., 2007) to provide PSTs real-life situations to practice teaching. Researchers asked questions such as “What are preservice teachers’ perceptions regarding their experiences of teaching the writing process to elementary students?” (Colby & Stapleton, 2006) and “How does participation in a service-learning writing tutoring program impact preservice teachers’ pedagogy of writing instruction within the context of a service-learning experience?” (Kelley et al., 2007). Studies found that these types of experiences provided PSTs with rehearsals for enacting the types of instruction they were learning about during methods courses.

Three studies found field experiences were important to PSTs’ understanding of students’ needs and instructional methods to meet those needs (Colby & Stapleton, 2006; Kelley et al., 2007; Wake & Modla, 2010). For example, Colby and Stapleton (2006) investigated PSTs’ ($n=52$) perceptions about teaching writing in a Writer’s Workshop format to elementary students. Data indicated the majority of PSTs recognized the value in engaging students and learning about students through Writer’s Workshop, identifying this experience as the most beneficial part of learning how to teach writing. The research found this experience contributed to PSTs’ feelings of preparation, especially in meeting the needs of diverse learners.

Providing Meaningful Feedback

Researchers in these studies operated under the assumption that PSTs might need to understand how their responses to students influence the ways students perceive themselves, their writing abilities, and the ways they develop as writers. They posed questions such as “What are preservice teachers’ views about writing instruction and application of knowledge when working with elementary students?” (Florio-Ruane & Lensmire, 1990) and “How did on-going analysis of the children’s letters shape the preservice teachers’ conceptions of the development of the writing process and their role as teachers?” (Moore, 2000).

The studies in this subcategory initially found PSTs considered feedback to be correcting students’ writing for grammatical or mechanical issues. PSTs assumed students would read their corrections, understand the thinking and action involved in making such corrections, and make all necessary revisions. These studies examined how PSTs learned how to provide meaningful feedback to students’ writing across three different means: one-on-one interactions with students, analyzing writing samples, and using technology to facilitate learning.

Three studies aimed to explore how PSTs learned to provide feedback to students' writing through direct interactions with students (Flint et al., 2001; Florio-Ruane & Lensmire, 1990; Fry & Griffin, 2010). Flint et al. (2001) found participation in author circles assisted PSTs' development in learning to respond to writers. By the end of the study, PSTs acted as writing advisors, providing specific advice and meaningful responses to students. PSTs also understood the theoretical underpinnings of author circles and writing as a socially constructed act instead of their initial belief about writing as an individual endeavor.

PSTs learned to give feedback by examining and responding to student writing samples (Gibson, 2007; Moore, 2000; Moore & Seeger, 2009). Gibson (2007) had PSTs collect and analyze weekly writing samples during their student teaching experiences. Through exchanging weekly dialogue journals with Gibson, PSTs reflected on how students responded to classroom writing instruction and the type of instruction that could best help these students. PSTs began thinking of instructional implications for their students' writing and were able to integrate knowledge of writing with their knowledge of students' specific needs.

Three studies aimed to show how technology assists PSTs in providing effective feedback (Dempsey et al., 2009; Fey, 2003; Friedman et al., 2004). Dempsey et al. (2009) asked "Do participants show improvement in knowledge of the writing rubric and in assessment ability after working in the site?" and evaluated 109 PSTs' ability to assess fourth-grade students' writing samples through a website tutorial. Through the website, PSTs learned about the 6+1 Trait Model rubric and how to apply the rubric to assess students' papers. PSTs' confidence in responding to students' writing increased from these experiences. In this design, PSTs had access to a range of student writing that might not have otherwise been possible. Moreover, PSTs had time to collaborate with peers before responding to student work, which they reported as helpful. Friedman et al. (2004) found that through their experiences with online mentoring, PSTs learned how to monitor their language when providing feedback and how to provide more balanced feedback in terms of content and mechanics.

Contributions and Limitations

These studies found PSTs benefit from opportunities to experience writing instruction, not only as students but also as beginning teachers working with K-12 students. PSTs learned how to work with students through instructor-designed experiences such as author circles and service learning teaching.

PSTs practiced the types of instructional approaches they learned about in methods courses.

This research found PSTs benefited from opportunities to provide students with feedback on their writing. When working directly with students' writing samples, PSTs had opportunities to practice supporting students' writing development. These studies reported that when responding to K-12 student work PSTs were quick to focus on surface features, such as grammatical and mechanical mistakes. Through practice, discussions with K-12 students, and conversations with university instructors, PSTs provided meaningful feedback to help students revise their writing. PSTs viewed writing as an interactive process, not just a final product.

Does learning to provide feedback leave PSTs prepared to teach writing in meaningful ways?

While these studies contributed to the field's knowledge, there were limitations. While providing feedback is important, the emphasis solely on how to provide feedback could be problematic. With these experiences, PSTs are not necessarily focused on effective instruction that occurs before or during writing instruction, but instead might only be attending to what happens after students write, which could turn into an emphasis on assessment and grading. Additionally, in these studies when PSTs were facilitating learning or giving feedback in these situations, they were working in one-on-one or small-group settings. How do PSTs learn to work with an entire class? Does learning to provide feedback leave PSTs prepared to teach writing in meaningful ways? Moreover, despite the use of technology in K-12 school settings, only one study examined how technology might play a role during instruction and three studies examined the role of technology in providing feedback to students. Teacher educators might consider ways that technology can play a more fundamental role in teaching PSTs how to teach writing.

Influential Experiences in Methods Courses

In five studies (see Table 3) researchers found PSTs reported learning about the teaching of writing in a methods course when they had a range of experiences such as teacher modeling (Kaufman, 2009; Stockinger, 2007), experiences learning to read like writers (Morgan, 2010; Stockinger, 2007), extensive writing opportunities (Morgan, 2010; Stockinger, 2007), and engaging in the process of writing a genre-specific book(s) (Daisey, 2008, 2009; Morgan, 2010). Across the studies researchers provided PSTs with routine time to write, having them engage in aspects of writing that mirrored many of the complex decisions writers must make. These studies assumed that

Table 3. Influential Experiences in Methods Courses

Researchers	Research Focus	Participants	Duration and Context	Data	Findings
Morgan (2010)	PSTs' identification of salient course experiences	42 early childhood PSTs	1 semester writing methods course	Essays, interviews, weekly exit slips, books written in various genres, book reflections, informal and formal course evaluations	PSTs identified salient course features including reading like a writer, writing regularly, choice in topic, and designing writing minilesson as helpful in their learning.
Daisey (2009)	Comparison of PSTs who enjoyed writing with those who did not	124 secondary PSTs	1 semester content area literacy course	4 researcher-created surveys (pre, mid, post, and follow-up)	PSTs were identified as having either low or high writing enjoyment. All PSTs developed stronger writing identities and grew in enjoyment.
Kaufman (2009)	PSTs' reflections on observing the instructor's literacy practices	62 elementary PSTs, 13 elementary inservice teachers	1 semester, 3 courses in the teaching of reading, writing, and/or language arts in elementary schools and 1 course in the teaching of writing	Formal written course evaluations	PSTs identified instructor modeling as having both affective and academic benefits.
Daisey (2008)	PSTs' writing apprehension	115 secondary PSTs: 58 female, 57 male	1 semester content-area literacy course	Sketches, survey, adapted Daly-Miller Writing Apprehension Survey	PSTs' writing apprehension was reduced after writing a "how-to" book.
Stockinger (2007)	PSTs' beliefs and understandings of writing and writing instruction	2 female elementary PSTs	1 semester literacy methods course	Interviews, writer's notebooks, literacy autobiographies, observations	PSTs learned from teacher demonstrations and examined prior beliefs about writing. PSTs began to envision their future instruction from their own experiences.

PSTs benefited from experiences with specific instructional methods from the stance as a writer to envision using these instructional approaches in their future instruction.

Modeling

Two studies found that having the instructor serve as a model writer allowed PSTs to explore how modeling positively influenced their own writing. These researchers asked questions such as "What benefits do my students perceive

receiving from my personal literacy practices in class?” (Kaufman, 2009). They reported that this experience allowed them to understand how their own modeling could benefit their future students. These instructor demonstrations helped PSTs develop an “image of what they might become” (Stockinger, 2007, p. 220). Kaufman (2009) explained how sociocultural theories of language and learning influenced his decisions to share his “literate life” with preservice ($n=62$) and inservice teachers ($n=13$) across four classes. Using instructor-designed course evaluations as data, he explored how modeling and sharing his writing process helped PSTs understand how writers make decisions and the motivational and personal values inherent in writing. PSTs identified instructor modeling as a powerful practice, one that provided both affective and academic benefits. Affective benefits included PSTs’ willingness to take more risks in their writing and their positively influenced attitudes and emotions. Academic benefits consisted of demonstrating the craft of teaching through modeling and providing PSTs with a vision of future instruction in their own classroom. PSTs felt this experience helped them develop personal identities as writers and provided them with guidance for future teaching practices.

Genre Studies

Researchers, who also served as course instructors, provided focused opportunities to have PSTs examine a genre in depth posing questions such as “Does writing a ‘how-to’ book reduce the writing apprehension of secondary preservice teachers?” (Daisey, 2008). These researchers investigated how through the process of having to write their own books, PSTs were able to better understand the needs and challenges their future students will face. PSTs learned to be intentional in their decision-making, closely study the work of mentor texts when writing, and work on their writing over time. From their own experiences, PSTs identified the benefits of having their future students study examples of quality writing to help them make intentional decisions because they lived the experience themselves. For example, Daisey (2008; 2009) conducted two research studies that examined PSTs’ experiences studying and writing how-to books during a reading in the content-area methods courses. In her study of 115 secondary PSTs, she found that writing the how-to books played a factor in PSTs’ sense of writing efficacy and in enjoying the writing process. Daisey measured PSTs’ writing apprehension at the beginning and end of the course and for the majority of PSTs their apprehension decreased. PSTs attributed this to choice of topic, writing multiple drafts, developing a sense of ownership, and studying the structure of the how-to books before writing. For those PSTs whose writing

apprehension increased it was attributed to procrastination in researching a topic and having to turn in their earlier revisions.

Examining Specific Acts or Practices Associated with Writing

Two researchers investigated practices associated with writing. Stockinger (2007) found that having two PSTs keep a writer's notebook allowed them opportunities to reflect on past, present, and future writing lives. The PSTs in Morgan's (2010) study identified the practices of learning how to read like a writer and creating writing minilessons as salient course experiences. In both studies, PSTs identified being able to see the benefit of implementing these ideas with future students.

Stockinger (2007) aimed to show through a case study of two PSTs how writers' notebooks influenced PSTs' self-image as teachers by helping them find their voices and sense of identity as writers. PSTs took their writers' notebooks to their teaching site and used their notebooks with a small group of students. The experience of keeping and using the notebook influenced their self-image as teachers, helping them find their voices and sense of identity as writers. Specifically, through the use of writers' notebooks, Stockinger found PSTs developed an awareness of audience, reflected on past writing experiences, and supported their vision of themselves as writers.

In Morgan's study (2010) PSTs learned how to read like a writer, a stance that helped PSTs realize that writers read in a special way. PSTs learned to study how authors intentionally craft their texts and then PSTs applied this knowledge to their subsequent texts and deliberately noted their intentional decisions as part of a course assignment. PSTs identified reading like a writer as a pivotal learning experience, one that made them feel stronger as a writer and offered them a way of looking at writing they could teach future students.

In that same methods class, PSTs wrote minilessons for a genre of choice. This provided opportunities to examine how they would teach specific genre or general writing process understandings in a short, focused way. PSTs realized the need for clear examples when illustrating a certain writing technique or genre element to students, often taking these examples from their experiences reading like writers of authors' texts. They also identified the teaching act of creating minilessons with memorable examples as helpful to their understanding of what future writing instruction could look like.

Contributions and Limitations

Across these five studies, students wrote in an extensive fashion in their methods courses. These studies support that when PSTs were asked to write

in ways congruent to what they ask their future students to do they were able to imagine this same instruction in K–12 settings. Researchers noted that course experiences often challenged the writing instruction PSTs received in the past. Often the methods instruction was quite different from what PSTs experienced previously, and those experiences were in sharp contrast with what they were learning how to do. Thus researchers concluded that for many PSTs their sense of writing and of teaching writing shifted. PSTs reported beginning to see themselves as writers, growing in their writing abilities, and developing a strong connection to writing through various course experiences.

However, is seeing oneself as a writer necessary to becoming a writing teacher? These studies seem to indicate this is a crucial element as it seemed to allow PSTs to identify certain tools and experiences they wanted to use with future students. Even if methods courses help PSTs value writing, see themselves as writers, and provide them with specific tools for teaching writing, questions remain. From these experiences, do PSTs truly understand what it means to be a teacher of writing? Does living the process mean PSTs are able to implement this type of instruction? Is “living through” a writing workshop and all it entails a significant method for learning how to teach writing? Currently, we do not know; however, these studies provided an understanding that writing within the course helps PSTs envision possibilities for their teaching of writing, visions that many did not hold prior to the start of class.

In addition, due to the one-semester duration of these studies, knowledge is limited in whether and how these experiences translate into classroom teaching. These studies provide information about experiences that help PSTs develop understandings such as how teacher modeling can help writers think about decisions as they compose, how reading like a writer can offer possibilities and directions for writers, and how to craft lessons to teach students specific things about writing. PSTs demonstrated an awareness and appreciation of how these tools and understandings for teaching writing could aid them in their future teaching. What remains to be seen is how this knowledge is applied in classroom settings.

Methods Applied in Teaching

The researchers in this category examined PSTs’ teaching practices. These six studies (see Table 4) followed PSTs from their university coursework to their student teacher sites and some to their first few years teaching. Researchers examined this transition by asking questions such as: What ideas,

Table 4. Methods Applied in Teaching

Researchers	Research Focus	Participants	Duration and Context	Data	Findings
Smagorinsky, Wright, Augustine, O'Donnell-Allen, & Konopak (2007)	PST's teaching of grammar and usage across four settings of learning to teach	1 secondary PST	University coursework, student teaching, first and second jobs	Interviews, field notes, observations, self-reports from teacher	A PST's grammar instruction was influenced by the context of where she worked. Her instruction was also shaped by her idea of effective engaged instruction.
Johnson, Smagorinsky, Thompson, & Fry (2003)	Analyze PST's thinking about teaching writing, particularly her use of the five-paragraph theme across multiple settings	1 secondary PST	Student teaching and first year of teaching	Observations and observation-based interviews	A PST's instruction was influenced by her belief in the form's utility in general, on state tests, and her previous success as a student with this form. Her lack of methods experiences did not help her critique this writing framework.
Street (2003)	PSTs' attitudes toward writing and writing instruction	5 middle school female PSTs	1 year language arts methods course and student teaching	Questionnaires, interviews, electronic journals, field notes, observations	PSTs who identified as writers provided students with a passion for writing, saw their roles as teachers differently, and provided more specific instruction than those who classified themselves as reluctant or developing writers.
Wang & Odell (2003)	PSTs' understandings as they worked with mentors who modeled standard-based writing instruction	2 elementary PSTs	2 years literacy methods course, student teaching, and first year of teaching	Surveys, retrospective interviews, videotaped observation	PSTs' conceptions of teaching writing were influenced by their initial beliefs, their mentor's teaching practices, and school context. When their beliefs were inconsistent with their mentors they did not take on those instructional practices.
Grossman et al. (2000)	PSTs' experiences learning to teach writing	3 PSTs: 1 secondary, 2 elementary	3 years literacy or language arts methods course, student teaching, and first 2 years of teaching	Individual and group interviews, classroom observations, documents	PSTs needed a balance of conceptual and practical tools in their methods coursework. PSTs were influenced by their available curriculum materials when student teaching and in their first few years. PSTs did incorporate methods course ideas in their second year of teaching.
Mahurt (1998)	PSTs' attitudes toward writing and their teaching of writing	24 elementary PSTs in methods, 6 elementary PSTs in student teaching, 1 elementary PST in first-year teaching	3 years language arts methods course, student teaching, and first year of teaching, US Virgin Islands	Course: Published pieces, self-evaluations, weekly journals. Student teaching: observations, questionnaire. First year: observations, interviews.	PSTs overcame their insecurities about writing and become more confident in writing after experiences with writing workshop in a methods class. PSTs were also influenced by their cooperating teachers' instruction.

concepts, strategies, and specific tools for teaching writing do preservice teachers develop during teacher education? How do features of the settings of teacher education and the schools affect the ways in which beginning teachers develop their understanding of teaching writing? (Grossman et al., 2000). What attitudes did preservice teachers hold regarding writing and the teaching of writing when they entered their final semester of preservice professional education? What was the relationship between the participants' writing attitudes and the teaching process they actually employed during student teaching? (Street, 2003).

The uniting factor in these studies was the focus on how PSTs enacted writing or grammar curriculum in teaching settings where they held (some) autonomy as decision makers. Across all studies, PSTs' teaching was examined. For example, two studies found PSTs' beliefs influenced the instructional approaches they used during student teaching (Street, 2003; Wang & Odell, 2003). The earlier Attitudes and Beliefs section represented studies that examined either a single-point assessment of beliefs or a pre- and post-examination of beliefs and attitudes. The two studies in this cluster represent an investigation of how PSTs' beliefs influenced the instructional approaches they used during their student teaching or beyond. In this case, beliefs were not only documented but also investigated and determined to be foundational to the teaching decisions PSTs made in the classroom.

While two studies examined the influence of a methods course (Grossman et al., 2000; Mahurt, 1998), two studies found the lack of a methods course with attention to writing instruction influenced PSTs' ability to enact certain instructional approaches (Johnson, Smagorinsky, Thompson, & Fry, 2003; Smagorinsky et al., 2007). Across studies, researchers investigated PSTs negotiating teaching writing within K–12 classroom settings. These researchers documented the ways PSTs were able or unable to apply conceptual understandings and pedagogical tools when teaching writing and examined the influence of mentors and school culture on PSTs' teaching decisions.

Teaching Decisions Influenced by Beliefs

PSTs' beliefs about themselves as writers and writing instruction influenced the decisions they made during student teaching and in their early careers. Two studies found that PSTs with more positive writing identities were better able to engage students in meaningful writing experiences by employing pedagogical practices more aligned with a process approach to writing instruction, such as modeling, writing workshops, and authentic writing experiences (Street, 2003; Wang & Odell, 2003). For example, in an investigation of the importance of PSTs' attitudes, beliefs, and self-confidence

about writing, Street (2003) found a relationship between five PSTs' writing attitudes and the instructional approaches they used during student teaching. PSTs were categorized as reluctant, developing, or confident writers. PSTs considered confident writers viewed their role as writing teachers differently than reluctant or developing writers. These PSTs offered more to their students as writers and provided students with a passion for writing, something the other PSTs were unable to do. As evaluated by university supervisors and cooperating teachers, the PSTs who identified themselves as confident writers were deemed better teachers of writing.

Applying Methods Course Understandings

While PSTs are influenced by past beliefs and experiences as writers, methods courses can help PSTs develop their pedagogical understandings about the teaching of writing. Two studies highlighted how, in method classes, PSTs develop a vision for the kinds of instructional practices they would like to implement (Grossman et al., 2000; Mahurt, 1998).

For example, Grossman et al. (2000) demonstrated the influence of methods courses as three PSTs progressed through student teaching and into their first years of teaching. Their four-year investigation followed 10 PSTs from methods coursework to student teaching to their first two years of teaching. They report on three case studies in depth and share the cross-case analysis themes from the 10 PSTs followed. Findings from the cross-case analysis indicated PSTs needed a balance across conceptual and practical tools in their methods courses; they referenced and relied on both the theoretical and the how-to ideas presented in class. PSTs' instructional practices were also influenced by available curriculum materials in their student teaching and first years of teaching. They found PSTs held onto ideas presented in methods courses even while trying out antithetical practices in student teaching or during their first year of teaching. PSTs did incorporate methods course ideas in their second year of teaching. The tools presented in methods courses helped PSTs develop a vision for their teaching and provided a lens to examine teaching practices.

Teaching without Specific Methods Course Guidance

Two single-subject case studies highlight the tensions that teachers face during student teaching and in their early careers (Johnson et al., 2005; Smagorinsky et al., 2007). While conceptual understandings "provide teachers with critical tools to shape their decisions" (Smagorinsky et al., 2007, p. 89), failure to develop these understandings leaves teachers in vulnerable positions. For example, in an examination of one teacher's experience

learning to teach the five-paragraph theme, Johnson et al. (2003) followed one teacher, Leigh, through university coursework, student teaching, and her first job. Leigh did not have a specific course in the teaching of writing; rather, she had one methods course mainly concerned with the teaching of literature. Left with “little formal training in the teaching of writing,” Leigh relied on her experiences as a student, her colleagues in her student teaching site, and school context to guide her writing instruction (p. 146). Leigh taught the five-paragraph theme, in part, due to her successful use of that format in high school and her belief in the format’s organized structure to guide students’ thoughts. The researchers believed Leigh emerged “without a strong conceptual framework for critiquing the five-paragraph theme or developing a rationale for teaching writing in other ways” (p. 167). Lacking a formal conception for teaching writing left Leigh unable to critically evaluate mentoring relationships and curriculum materials.

Contributions and Limitations

The influence of PSTs’ attitudes and beliefs on their teaching and the application of method course ideas and practices were addressed in this section. Results from these studies help the field understand that PSTs’ perception of themselves as writers and their attitudes toward writing shape the instruction they offer students. Methods courses can serve as a place to confront and challenge the attitudes PSTs bring to the university (Street, 2005). These findings build an evidence base that illustrates how methods courses influence PSTs’ teaching. In some cases, PSTs immediately applied their knowledge in student teaching, and in others, PSTs held on and applied that knowledge at a later time. Without a methods course, PSTs relied heavily on their experiences as students and were influenced by the intuitional pressures of schools. They did not have specific course knowledge to draw on, leaving them less able to act with a sense of agency (Smagorinsky et al., 2007).

While these studies are critical to teacher educators’ knowledge about how and what PSTs choose to teach and where they attribute learning this knowledge, the limited number of studies is a concern. Most are case studies; thus, our understandings of how PSTs negotiate this transition from coursework to teaching are based on a relatively small number of PSTs’ experiences.

These studies do illustrate the influence of school culture, materials, and colleagues on PSTs and provide teacher educators with information about the specific difficulties PSTs encounter. Additional studies would allow the field to examine patterns relative to these difficulties. There is a university-school setting divide where each setting holds different beliefs, goals, and motives for teaching writing (Johnson et al., 2005). It might be

that part of necessary coursework in writing is helping PSTs know how to communicate their ideas for teaching writing, helping them understand how to have these potentially difficult conversations if needed. Also identifying patterns of what understandings PSTs seem to appropriate in their teaching could inform teacher educators about what to include in coursework experiences.

Discussion

Now more than ever teacher educators are faced with the critical need to prepare PSTs to become confident and capable teachers of writers. With the current national focus on writing instruction in schools due to the adoption of the Common Core State Standards (National Governors Association Center for Best Practices & Council of Chief State School Officers, 2010) teachers must be prepared to enter the profession with strong pedagogical knowledge of how to teach writing and with a sense of their own writing self-efficacy. Just

The findings from these collective studies highlight the crucial need for PSTs to experience methods courses that provide explicit, consistent, and thoughtful writing experiences.

as schools at the K–12 level are being required to increase their writing instruction, universities should consider increasing the amount of teaching writing preparation PSTs receive. Reading coursework cannot dominate literacy teacher education preparation. While some educators might argue that a language arts course might be a viable option, especially since PSTs might learn how to effectively integrate reading and writing, the concern is that reading instruction might overshadow writing instruction. We advocate for PSTs to have a methods course devoted solely to the teaching of writing (National Commission on Writing, 2003). This 20-year research review provides teacher educators with specific experiences fellow researchers have found influential in their method courses and what PSTs have identified as salient in learning about writing and how to teach writing. It also poses questions still in need of further research.

These studies highlighted how PSTs' "deeply ingrained" beliefs about themselves as writers were impossible to ignore (Kennedy, 1998, p. 15). Unfortunately, these beliefs are often negative, and when unexamined permeate their feelings and beliefs about how they will teach writing. The findings from these collective studies highlight the crucial need for PSTs to experience methods courses that provide explicit, consistent, and thoughtful writing experiences.

These studies highlight that PSTs' attitudes and beliefs toward writing can shift positively after methods courses, countering past negative schooling

experiences. These studies also highlight the benefits of PSTs having multiple opportunities to see themselves as teachers of writing through experiences with students or with student writing. The findings from these studies show that hands-on practice sparks a dialogue about how best to teach students to write. PSTs learn that providing feedback that supports students in making revision to their own writing requires skill and finesse. The act of living through the writing process and writing books within specific genres help PSTs envision a way to teach their future students. Experiencing direct and explicit modeling from their instructors provides a window into writerly thinking and decisions that PSTs identify as being helpful to their understanding of teaching writing. PSTs are highly influenced by their teaching contexts and the manner in which they teach can represent a struggle between what they learned in their methods course (if they had one), what they believed, and how their current teacher (in the case of student teaching) or colleagues teach writing. There is often an ongoing negotiation as PSTs try to navigate the tensions in teaching writing. However, what the field does know about teaching writing and the difficulties PSTs face in enacting writing curriculum provide teacher educators with a firm foundation from which to design their own course experiences and what to consider including to help PSTs begin to develop a conceptual framework for teaching writing.

While PSTs benefit from experiences with writing and writers in their methods class, student teaching and their first years as teachers are also significant points in their learning. These studies suggest that there seems to be a divide between instructional approaches taught in methods courses and writing instruction that is often implemented at the K–12 level. The limited writing experiences students are having in today’s schools contribute to this divide (National Commission on Writing, 2003). This disconnect is difficult for PSTs to navigate and these studies suggest, rather than forging ahead with their new knowledge from their methods courses, PSTs may return to their K–12 school experiences and be influenced by their current school context. This requires that teacher educators support PSTs’ transition into student teaching and beyond. It is important that the field knows more about how better to prepare PSTs as they transition from the university to their own classrooms and what helps them hold on to sound instructional practices in spite of difficulties. The field could also use additional research on effective clinical models that help bridge the traditional school and university divide.

While these findings from this review provide the field with knowledge about how to teach PSTs to teach writing, they also leave no doubt that investigating PSTs’ preparation to teach writing is an under-researched area of inquiry. In 2000, Anders et al. noted, “Few researchers have asked questions

about the process that teachers go through as they learn and continue to learn to teach reading” (p. 719). It is clear from our findings that this statement also holds true for the teaching of writing.

While we are hopeful that the national attention the CCSS has brought to the teaching of writing will help schools of education consider the amount of writing instruction they are providing PSTs, we have concerns that this opportunity to expand the writing teacher education research agenda may be still overlooked. One reason for this, we believe, is that there may be a lack of awareness among literacy researchers about the paucity of research focused on preparing PSTs to teach writing. We argue against the danger of an “assumption of knowledge” where literacy researchers may assume that findings from studies on preparing PSTs to teach writing is “already known” or “does not add to the research base.” It could be that literacy researchers are drawing from studies that examine inservice work concerning the teaching of writing, such as investigations of teachers participating in the NWP (e.g., Whitney, 2008). To suggest the field knows how inexperienced future teachers learn about teaching writing based on another population is a false assumption. Our understandings can be guided and informed by findings from inservice work, but these findings from a different population do not replace the need for empirical knowledge about developing pedagogical awareness in PSTs.

The empirical evidence we do have to guide teacher educators about teaching writing is limited. In a 20-year span, only 31 published studies focused on preparing PSTs to teach writing. For comparison, Anders et al. (2000) examined 140 studies from a 30-year period (1965–95) and Risko et al. (2008) examined 82 studies over a 16-year period (1990–2006) in their respective reviews of reading teacher education.

Teacher educators cannot research what is not being taught and many have not made the teaching of writing a priority in their preparation programs (Hillocks, 2006; Smagorinsky, 2010; Tremmel, 2001). Few universities have a writing methods course (National Commission on Writing, 2003). Researchers have expressed concerns about the focus on reading over writing especially in the earlier grades (Morgan, 2010; Norman & Spencer, 2005). Without writing methods coursework, the topic of writing is “sandwiched in” the semester, with often just a few class periods devoted to teaching writing and the rest devoted to teaching reading. This provides PSTs with, at best, surface understandings of and experiences with teaching writing.

At the secondary level, researchers suggest the teaching of literature overshadows the teaching of writing (Smagorinsky, Wilson, & Moore, 2011; Tremmel, 2001). Much of the coursework PSTs take are content courses

in the English department. They take composition courses, but these are different from writing pedagogy courses taught in education departments. These researchers argue that due to the sheer number of English courses required, PSTs are often left to rely on a single instructional methods course to guide their decision-making.

The teaching of writing is quite complex, requiring PSTs to develop deep knowledge about this specific subject area. Smagorinsky (2010) argues that PSTs need courses that emphasize

how to teach writing in ways that feature the writer's ideas, the relational nature of writing conventions, the various writing processes that writers employ with different tasks and communities of readers, the presence and problems of mandated standardized writing assessments, and other aspects of writing that distinguish it as a complex recursive process for communicating ideas that is not easily quantified. (pp. 300–01)

Tremmel (2001) argues that writing teacher education deserves its own “disciplinary status” (p. 25). And yet, not much teaching of writing is occurring in methods courses. In fact, Hillocks (2006) argues that while we know what students need to learn about writing and the methods that are best suited to help students develop this expertise, teacher education has, in part, failed to convey this pedagogical content knowledge to teachers. He suggests, “one might conclude that colleges and universities simply do not prepare teachers for the teaching of writing, and therein lies the problem with writing in school” (p.74). It is clear that colleges and universities are not the sole contributor to the plight of writing instruction in schools today. Just as the national attention to the CCSS has called more educators' attention to writing, we also recognize that educational policies, such as the National Reading Panel report, Reading First, and No Child Left Behind, have historically influenced the emphasis on reading instruction. School culture, colleagues, and available materials also greatly influence how writing is taught. However, teacher education is a “foremost setting” where PSTs can begin to develop a framework for writing pedagogy that allows them to question and modify existing practices and enact new ones if necessary. And attention to the teaching of writing at the preservice level is warranted.

To further understand what is occurring in this foremost setting, interested researchers could draw on the earlier work of Smagorinsky and Whiting (1995) who analyzed methods course syllabi from colleges and universities across the country to examine the ways in which secondary PSTs learn their craft. They found that methods courses took one or more of the following approaches: survey, workshop, experience-based, reflective,

and theoretical, each with possible benefits and consequences. A similar investigation could be conducted at the elementary level and again at the secondary level since the original examination occurred almost 20 years ago. Researchers could examine writing course syllabi from universities that have such a course and also examine literacy methods syllabi to see the role writing plays within those course experiences. In addition, the ease of technology allows for researchers to also survey and interview instructors to gather additional insight into the design and intent of the class. As Smagorinsky and Whiting (1995) proposed, the goal of such work was not to identify a “best” way but rather to help teacher educators become aware of possibilities when designing their courses (p. 21). Identifying these options to teacher educators, especially those who may not have given time and attention to the teaching of writing, may provide them with helpful guidance in future course designs.

Many questions are still unanswered. Exactly what is most important for PSTs to learn about writing in teacher education programs? With limited time, how do teacher educators select what to study? Should priority be given to certain experiences over others? To what extent are instructors implementing research-based writing instruction proven to work with students in schools? Could university instructors better draw on the work of Hillocks (1986) and Graham and Perin (2007) to guide what they teach PSTs? Also, if teacher educators help PSTs learn how to critique more traditional writing practices and how better to articulate their beliefs about writing, would they be better able to negotiate traditional teaching practices they encounter in schools? Additionally, there is an apparent lack of research about how PSTs learn to teach writing using technology. The articles that focused on technology for writing instruction emphasized technology as a means for facilitating feedback on writing. While there are descriptions of effective writing methods courses that emphasize the use of technology (Doering, O’Brien, & Beach, 2007), research is necessary for examining how PSTs learn to not only use technology during the teaching of writing, but also how they learn to teach digital writing and multimodal composition.

The field would also benefit from longitudinal studies following PSTs from their methods courses to student teaching and beyond. We believe it would be important to follow PSTs who have received ample instruction in writing pedagogy, although what constitutes enough instruction to support thoughtful teaching of writing requires further investigation. These kinds of studies can help the field begin to understand what happens when PSTs have rich preparation. Is there a pattern to how teachers take on writing instruction? What often happens first? Also, most research about writing teacher

education was conducted by course instructors within specific sites. There are few large-scale studies to provide the field with understandings that work across institutions. Collaborative efforts across schools of education could provide more opportunities to contribute to our understanding about how best to prepare writing teachers and add to the public conversation about the role of university preparation in teacher education.

Writing is a complex, nuanced, and layered activity. Teaching writing is even more so as teachers are challenged with making visible the in-the-head processes associated with writing, often to 30 students at a time, each with individual writing processes. To make instructionally sound decisions, teachers need to develop a conceptual framework that will guide their interactions with students. PSTs should be able to look to teacher education for that initial guidance.

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If you have concerns about issues that affect your teaching or if you'd like to see NCTE take a stand on a position you support, you have an opportunity to be heard! Propose a resolution that may be voted on at NCTE's Annual Convention.

For further details on submitting a resolution, to see resolutions already passed by Council members, or to learn about proposing position statements or guidelines other than resolutions, visit the NCTE website (http://www.ncte.org/positions/call_for_resolutions) or contact Lori Bianchini at NCTE Headquarters (800-369-6283, ext. 3644; lbianchini@ncte.org). Resolutions must be postmarked by **October 15, 2014**.
