TESL-EJ Teaching English as a Second or Foreign Language

September 2005
Volume 9, Number 2

Contents | TESL-EJ Top

The Importance of Teachers Writing on TESOL*

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Abstract

In this article, I examine the potential roles of reflective writing in ESOL teachers' learning and professional renewal. I demonstrate its importance with insights from aspects of a study on the accounts ESOL teachers construct when they do write about teaching.

Introduction

In the past, research was generally considered a separate activity from teaching. This view continued to prevail among researchers and teachers, even where the topic of the research was teaching itself, and even when reflection was acknowledged as an essential teaching activity and skill by the likes of Dewey (1933), and later Schšn (1983). The separation has now largely disappeared, at least in the minds of teacher educators (e.g., Connelly & Clandinin, 1999; Freeman & Richards, 1996) many of whom now advocate inquiry-based teaching. Most teachers, however, still see teaching as a consuming, complex activity, which is made even less manageable when research is an additional requirement, even though it is exactly that experience of teaching complexity that makes teachers' input vital to research and reflection on teaching.

Those teachers who do become researchers or reflective practitioners face another responsibility: writing up their research so that their learning is not lost to the profession. Because teacher writing is a means of interpretation (e.g., Pereira et al., 2004) as well of recording classroom events and behaviour, it is part of the learning process in research on teaching. While analyses are now being conducted of teachers' spoken reflection which depend in part on written teaching journals (e.g., Farrell, 1999), little has been published on the role of writing itself in reflection. This means of teacher knowledge, therefore, needs further highlighting.

Consequently, in this study I am concerned to show what kinds of writing teachers produce and publish; and, second, what a large, international corpus of published teacher writing looks like and what these teacher-writers said they had learned about teaching.

Background to the Study

What a few teachers have written, and why many others don't write

Some published teachers' writing can be found in books and journals; however, most teacher writing occurs less formally, for example, through interactive journals in which writers seek to establish common ground with other teachers (e.g., Burton & Usaha, 2004).

Table 1 sets out a typology of ESOL teacher writing:

Table 1: Teacher writing for publication

Mode	**Type**	**Audience**	**Professional role**	**Examples**
Private writing	Journal	The writer	Personal documentation and reflection	Preservice teachers, doctoral teachers
Shared writing	Interactive journals	Another teacher-writer	Collaborative documentation and reflection	Reichmann, 2001; Burton & Usaha, 2004
Published, nonrefereed writing	Group journals, e-mail lists, etc.	Specific teaching community	Collaborative documentation and reflection	Thwaites & Mancini, 1991
Published, refereed writing	Articles (online or hardcopy), books or book chapters	International	Public access, statement of knowledge and experience	Johnson & Golombek, 2002; Wells & Chang Wells, 1992

Shared writing (row 2,Table 1) frequently functions as a simple form of interactive analysis in which teachers describe selected teaching features or incidents that may be of interest to other teachers. It may occur in a number of ways. Journaling is the most common form: for example, journaling one-to-one (e.g., Reichmann, 2001); in focus groups, such as pre-service teacher learners (e.g., Daloglu, 2001); or between groups (e.g., Lipp, 2001, whose study documented penpal journaling between pre-service teachers and Hmong primary-school students). Sometimes journal books are exchanged; more often now teachers dialogue by e-mail. At one public remove from interactive journal-writing are teacher publications that result from collaborative teaching communities (row 3, Table 2). Such writing may subsequently be published outside the initial group in books (e.g., Thwaite & Mancini, 1991, on the LIPT project; further extracts of which were later published in Freeman, 1998) or posted on websites (e.g., Nieto et al., 2003).

Most teachers find any more formal kind of writing (row 4, Table 1) for publication challenging (see Burton, 1992; Casanave & Vandrick, 2003). With its emphasis on following style guidelines and meeting standards for research, editing processes in formal writing are widely seen by teachers as denying them voice and academic recognition on their own terms in public professional settings: That is, refereeing and editing processes function as gatekeeping. Consequently, teacher-writers tend to mark achieving refereed publication as an unusual professional milestone, rather than a natural means of communication. This is a disservice

both to themselves and to the profession, which is, as a result, denied the benefit of recorded teachers' insights and reflections from the classroom and other learning contexts. At the same time, the sorts of writing that teachers may produce for their own reflection and learning (row 1, Table 1) is often not valued professionally and so another source of professional learning is lost to the broader teaching community.

The role of written reflection

Although reflection is recognized as a professional activity (e.g., Hatton & Smith, 1995; Richards & Lockhart, 1994; Schšn, 1983), the role of writing in teacher reflection has been less widely acknowledged (though more recently, see Moon, 2000; Pereira et al., 2004; for example). Writing as a reflective tool has two main functions:

1. Documentation: It records activity and thought, thus assisting future reflection by preventing loss of information
2. Analysis: It acts as a form of analysis when the decisions about what to document and how to represent activity and thought are also recorded.

Writing reflectively for professional renewal tends to observe the kind of sequence illustrated in Table 2:

Table 2: Reflective writing sequence

Step	Function	Responding to questions . . .
1	Expressing, intuiting	What happened?
2	Reflecting	Was this really what happened? Why?
3	Rewriting	Is this a more effective account? Why? Why not?
4	Later reflecting	What do I think now on later reflection?

With each step which may involve increasing intervals of time, sole teachers or teacher pairs and groups may focus more effectively on their actions and beliefs and find new insights: Reichmann (2001) and Thonus (2001), for example, trace the insights that journal writing over the extended period of a teacher education course or program brings teachers.

Reflective writing sequences enable teachers to establish and make use of connections and coherence and, also, disjunction and incoherence [1] among stages and types of work. Teachers' examination and documentation of teaching experience and beliefs are an important source of professional learning because research has shown (e.g., Woods, 1996) that teachers' plans and decisions are influenced as much by their perceptions and beliefs as by any body of knowledge.

In the remainder of this article, I consider some aspects of a corpus of published teacher writing of which I was series editor for Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages, Inc. in the USA. The Case studies in TESOL practice series (Burton, 2000ff)-hereafter CSS-enabled classroom teachers to share and explore their experience (see the CSS review article by Stoynoff, 2004, p. 391), and so functioned as a vehicle for public forms of teacher writing on

TESOL. Its format invited personal-voice writing and information on specific teaching contexts. Reflection on meaning and negotiation of text occurred several times with all chapters, many of which were collaboratively written. The corpus fits in row 4 of Table 1, as published, refereed writing. Most of the case studies in the corpus incorporate all four writing steps (Table 2).

The Corpus

Since 2000, sixteen volumes have been published in the CSS. Five more are in press. The 21 volumes are listed in Table 3:

Table 3: Case Studies in TESOL Practice volume topics

Published	In press
Academic writing programs	
Action research	EFL in primary schools
Assessment practices	Global perspectives on English
Bilingual education	International teaching assistants
Community partnerships	Literature in language learning
Content based instruction K-12	
Content based instruction for higher education	
Distance learning programs	
English for specific purposes	
Gender and language learning	
Grammar teaching in teacher education	
Postsecondary intensive English programs	
Interaction for language learning	
Journal writing	
Mainstreaming	
Teacher education	
Technology enhanced learning environments	

The topics of the volumes in the CSS address teaching programs, perspectives, and contexts; curriculum approaches; and teacher learning. Some volumes are more technically oriented; others are more research or classroom focused. Each volume contains twelve or so case studies

that together showcase practice and thinking on a TESOL topic. The sixteen published volumes involve 265 different authors.

The writers described themselves in various ways in their biographical statements. Their roles are summarized in Table 4:

Table 4: Case Studies in TESOL Practice authors

Role	Number	Percentage
Researcher/academic	230	92
Teacher	141	56
Teacher trainer/educator	116	46
Administrator	102	41
Published author	75	30
International	50	20

Although the most common roles writers assigned themselves were research and academe, teaching was the second most common. Some researchers also described themselves as teachers; some teachers were also teacher educators; and so on. A sizeable group also mentioned administration. Two smaller clusters also described themselves as experienced authors or having international work experience. No writers described themselves under only one label-hence the number column in Table 4 totals 714 (not 265), giving the CSS authors a mean of just under 3 roles each. This represents the multiple roles and identities that teachers adopt, and, incidentally, the nonsense of isolating research from teaching and the other things that teachers do.

Each chapter in each volume follows a series format. This basically comprises: introduction, context, description, distinguishing features, practical ideas and conclusion. This format was remarkably effective for the majority of volumes for several reasons:

- The format addressed the need for writers to provide an appropriate balance of information, analysis, and practical implications for readers;
- Less experienced authors tended to flounder when they had to create their own structure;
- Consistency of format gives readers an immediate basis for cross-case analysis.

In the following subsections, I discuss how writers in the CSS wrote under three of the six chapter headings: Introduction, Context, and Conclusion.

Insights in Teachers' Writing

The "What" of writing

The Introduction section of each case study in the CSS functioned as a point of departure for a topic or concern. Broadly, writers addressed one or more of the following:

- What's desirable in my/our program/course/project?
- What's new in my/our program/course/project?
- What's practical in my/our program/course/project?
- What's tested and true in my/our program/course/project?

Writers justified their focus according to the extent to which it was expected to motivate students and teachers, reflect increased classroom interaction, or stimulate collaboration (across disciplines, among students, or in the workplace). Teacher-writers professed enthusiasm for innovations but also sought to reveal the practical pitfalls.

Many of the studies focused on program and course development, with concern for sequencing and progression, bridging and transitioning, or integrating and complementing. Writers highlighted sheltering programs, mentoring colleagues, and team teaching, for example. They were concerned with the profiles of their courses (e.g., their credit status within higher institutions and the workplace) and their potential impact on students' eventual roles in the wider community. For most teacher-writers, learning English was merely a vehicle for achieving community or work-related goals.

Thus, writers presented curriculum as a living process affecting students, teachers, administrators, and the community at large in constantly shifting, subtle ways. For example, curriculum content was often text, discourse, or genre; context-based; and could be learner-generated.

What teachers wrote of embodied the circumstances in which they worked, and these proved somewhat harder to construct in writing, but, as a result offered greater potential for reflection, as the next section shows.

The circumstances of writin g

When teachers complain of theory in articles and books, it is often because what is written is divorced from context, or contexts which are credible to teachers. Yet teaching issues never exist in a vacuum. What makes them real is the writer's context and their sense of their readers' contexts. In writing for an audience, writers have to construct contexts for readers, ones which are recognizable and interesting. For example, the experienced teacher-writer will write differently about their classroom for fellow-teachers, parents, and policy-makers. Volume editors in the CSS reported having to discuss with writers how much and what kind of contextual information to provide for readers. Many authors seemed not to realize, for example, that the CSS as a commercially available, published series would be read outside North America-even though this information was provided in writing with the Series outline and guidelines for authors and editors.

Reading through the volumes in the CSS makes plain how complex a construct context is. For TESOL activity, it often involves combinations of historical and geographical information and political, cultural and language analysis of some kind as well (summarized in Table 5). Writers chose to give histories of different phenomena: The history of an educational institution is sketched in one study; in another, a language history of the region is provided. Course and program histories were often given. Some studies included sociological description of the home, the school, the local community, adjacent regions, the country as a whole, or

international or global settings. Other writers reviewed a central educational or linguistic theory, contrasted teaching approaches, gave a rationale for a new approach to materials development, and so forth. Current classroom contexts and target discourse communities were described. There were profiles of students, clients, workers, employers, teachers. Stable patterns were described and established; transitory phenomena were portrayed.

Table 5: "When", "Where", and "How" in TESOL

When	Where	How
History	Course or program	Approach
	Institution	Policy
	Classroom	Culture
	Geographical location	Language

Selection and arrangement of contextual elements-the "when", "where", and "how"-are forms of analysis and reflection (cf. Golden-Biddle & Locke, 1997), vital steps in problematizing, and evidence that learning to compose in writing for a TESOL audience is a sophisticated skill. 'Telling a story' requires selection and sequencing of information and ideas, and, therefore, analysis and reflection. What to include (for example, how many years to go back in a program history), how to link information and ideas, what points to make and develop-all are decisions made during writing, whether writers are immediately conscious of making them or not. Reflective writing, as when constructing a case study, involves writers in becoming conscious of composition processes and the effects of their accounts-whether, for instance, they will reassure or challenge readers. Sense of audience is therefore an important writing skill also (cf. Becker, 1986).

For such reasons, creating context is an essential part of the reflection process writers-in this case, teachers-go through in the development of ideas and explanation. Retelling a history from a particular perspective, employing an unexpected theory, tracing the relationships within a teaching team of new partners, locating a project in a novel setting-any one of these elements can lead to new insights. Careful, thoughtful placement-that is, artful juxtaposition-of elements, features, or characteristics aids the discoveries of new patterns, factors, gaps, and so forth. Having thoughtfully composed a written context, writers can draw on it to chart and bounce off the focus of their study-their new course, project, or curriculum.

So, for example, in one case study in the CSS, two adult writing workshop leaders decided to juxtapose their writing projects for disadvantaged communities in Chicago. One concerned a village project, the other a kitchen workshop. The writers (Adams & Hurtig, 2002) presented and compared how their community partnership projects set out to raise self-esteem and increase employment using different strategies and different group compositions within the same city. In another chapter, in the Assessment practices volume, evaluators of a training project in Egypt applied an evaluation model developed some years previously for a North American setting. In the same volume, two other writers (one American, one Japanese) compared their understanding of Japanese university entrance examinations (Murphey & Sato, 2003). In another volume, three writers (Green, Collier, & Evans, 2001) wrote of the design and implementation of a distance learning program in English from Hawaii to students in Tonga across the International Dateline using telephone and computer connections. In their

Context section, they wrote of the university, its student base, the need for English, and the stability of the university's English program, illustrating this latter point with a brief account of the university's long-term working partnership with the Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter-Day Saints for primary and secondary school systems in Tonga. Their Context section, therefore, was quite detailed and lengthy, as befitted a complex experiment.

The Action research volume (Edge, 2001) used 'Situation' as the equivalent section in its case studies. Thus, problematizing in this volume was directly addressed via context construction. In one chapter, for example, the reader is asked to imagine the ideal English learning situation (Adams, 2001). An ideal was then presented. The reader was then told the ideal existed, but it didn't work. The juxtaposition forces the question, 'Why didn't it work?' The author explored the question from what was known about the problem from other research and thus provided a point of departure for her own research. In the same volume, a teacher in Brazil sketched the broad context of TESOL in Brazil and set her own institutional circumstances within it. She began by charting the growing demand for English over the past 20 years and then posed herself a question to reflect on in writing, 'With so many English language schools being opened, a large demand for ESOL teachers has been created. Where are they to be found?' (Santana-Williamson, 2001, p. 33). After discussing this question, she evaluated her own situation against this background, describing her qualifications and work experience, and explaining why her institution asked her to manage a teacher education project (p. 34). She next summarized the project responsibilities, before continuing to reflect, 'With this in mind, I looked again at . . . and was struck by . . . '. In her chapter, you can read how she looked at a known situation with new insight, which gave her the rationale for the next step, namely, conducting a TESOL literature search. In these ways, she formulated her own position and situation.

These are just a few examples of how teachers writing about their work constructed context as a framework for making sense of what they do. Spelling out what is 'understood' may be necessary for readers, but it is also productive for writers. It enables them as teachers to put some distance between themselves and their work-to render the common uncommon and no longer taken for granted (cf. Geertz, 1973, and making the familiar strange).

The final chapter section I draw upon from the CSS corpus is the Conclusion; this was the section in which writers presented what they had learned through the research and writing processes that they had initially justified in their Introductions and framed in their Context sections.

The outcomes of writing

Conclusions were a conscious opportunity for writers in the CSS to pull together the insights they had gained through their studies. Writers tended to state: "This is what we know or think now" and "This is what needs to done next." The Conclusions were generally practical, realistic, commonsense rationalizations reviewing what writers had achieved or intended to do. Although some statements and assertions apparently restated starting positions, the restatements clarified them, demonstrated deepened or richer understanding of issues, or were more sensitive to situation.

Obviously, the warranty for writers' assertions depended on what came between the beginning

of the written account in the introduction and context sections and the conclusions. The body of the case studies included how the data were collected and evidence was presented (Description), what findings were made and their character (Distinguishing Features), and the teaching implications (Practical Ideas). For the purposes of this article, however, I was interested to survey the positions and foci that CSS writers began from and where these took them so as to track whether changes of position, and perceptions of progress or learning had occurred. Whether writers considered that the writing process itself assisted any change or progress through being a reflective aid will be the focus of a later stage of study via questionnaire and interview, and the need for this study is argued in the conclusion to this article.

As one would expect, the conclusions to the case studies varied in their degrees of conviction. Some contained positive, grounded statements. Others asserted or hypothesized. Frequently, however, assertions and statements were tempered by reference to the potential for different outcomes in different contexts. Some conclusions were a mixture of statement, assertion, and hypothesis. I give the first example in full:

> **Example 1**
>
> This chapter's main aim has been to dispel the myth that journals are time-consuming for teachers [statement]. If structured using the four golden rules laid out in the Description section, journals can be effective and take up little of the teacher's time [hypothesis]. The rules have worked for me [assertion]. In fact, three years after I had them in my class, six students are still writing journals to me (with their teacher's knowledge, of course) [substantiation]. Finally, if this chapter tempts teachers to try out journals with their classes, then I will have succeeded in what I set out to do [projection]. (Quirke, 2001, p. 34)

The conclusion in Example 1, step 4, depends on earlier steps, 1 and 2 and/or 3 (see Table 2). The writer drew on his account and understanding of what happened to reflect later what he thought some time after the event.

The second, rather longer, Conclusion is not printed in full; I have reproduced the structure to the Conclusion (rather than its content) to illustrate how some writers were able to capture the directions of their thinking in writing:

> **Example 2**
>
> I return to where I began: with my own professional development. This project [action research] has allowed me to understand . . .
>
> The project also led me to reflect at some length on . . . Two points here seem particularly relevant . . .
>
> As I stated at the beginning of this chapter, the project described here constituted a milestone in . . . Reconceptualizing the . . . allowed me to move forward . . . This development took the form, not of resolving my problems, but of helping me redefine them and move onto new issues . . . The three central tensions that I see follow . . .

My project, then, has not 'solved my problems'; it has, however, helped me to see the situation in a radically new light, and to move forward toward new understandings of my work. This alone has made the process worthwhile. (Johnston, 2000, pp. 171-2)

In the second example, the structure indicates that the content is almost entirely reflective (steps 2-4). Reconceptualizing and redefining issues meant that the teacher-writer was left with a new set of facts or phenomena about which to ask, 'What happened next?', which would enable him to embark on another sequence of reflection.

In the third example from a case study of content-based instruction, the processes [2] in its Conclusion are reproduced to indicate how the writers' perceptions developed. The writing in Example 3 suggests the teachers have been able to evaluate activity (a collaborative teaching project) and identify evidence in support of the teaching innovation analysed (step 2). Though not conclusive, the innovation had gained some solid basis and rationale for being continued. The Conclusion reads almost as if the writers are documenting the reflection as it happens, rather like a 'think-aloud' (step 3). The writers document what they had discovered, how they had evaluated their project and the future usefulness of their learning in their own immediate context and for other content specialists.

Example 3

Our collaboration began with the CS [content specialist]'s frustration over . . . We conceived . . . as . . . We recognized that . . . and we tried to . . . That we cannot claim . . . does not mean . . . On the contrary, we believe that . . . CSs would be well advised to . . . Further, they would be best served . . . In fact, what the present CS most importantly takes away from this collaboration . . . Although this case did not conclusively identify . . . it has prompted us to reexamine . . . It suggests . . . That . . . is another argument in their [sheltering courses] favour. (Schneider & Friedenberg, 2002, p. 168)

The fourth and final example comes from the Action research volume (Edge, 2001), in which the conclusions are represented in two sequential sections: Outcomes and Reflections. The writer embeds his reflective questioning in the writing and based on what he has learned confidently predicts what needs to happen next. He is able to justify his actions and thinking on linguistic, research, and professional grounds. In his terms, there is clear evidence of learning, of having moved to step 4. Again, rather than the whole sections and the content, I mainly give the structures:

Example 4

Outcomes

Given the multiple demands on the time and energy of ESOL teachers, can an investigation of this kind be justified? In my opinion, the answer is an unqualified yes . . .
For a start . . .
At a practical level, . . .
There was also confirmation that . . .

There were unlooked-for outcomes, too . . .
Furthermore, . . . , I discovered . . .
As for the difficulties of my students themselves, they were shown into sharp relief . . .
Next steps

I foresee consciousness-raising activities grouped into three types as a way of starting the sensitization process

1. Diagnostic assessment . . .
2. Contextual analysis . . .
3. Creating requests . . .

Reflections

At a linguistic level, I now know . . . I also have a greatly heightened awareness of . . . Failure to appreciate this is to misunderstand . . .
As an action researcher, I feel validated in my efforts not only by . . . but also by . . . My own sense of professional enhancement is thereby enhanced.
As a developing ESOL professional, I am . . . I also see in this a chance to . . . In this sense, I feel myself engaged in . . . (Nicol, 2001, pp. 101-103)

Clearly, the examples above document learning of some kind. They also portray moderation through writers' awareness of what more needs to be done. Feak summarizes this sense of balance rather well at the outset of the conclusion to her case study in the Series on an ESP program for law students, 'Although we have encountered a number of unforeseen obstacles . . . , each year we move forward' (2002, p. 22). In the remaining section of this article, I start from this sense of proportion that teachers bring to teaching knowledge and continue with the wider, deeper role writing can play in learning about teaching from and with teachers.

Discussion

Common sense

The balanced sense of achievement and realism that teacher-writers display in the CSS is at least partly captured by the term 'common sense'. It is easy enough to think of examples of common sense. By definition, common sense isn't restricted to particular people and particular settings. But however widespread it is, its importance is somewhat undervalued professionally. The statement about someone's decision, "Well, it was only common sense," may on one occasion mean, "The decision was a sensible one," and on another, "That didn't require much intelligence." Widespread use of the term is both its strength and its downfall-and, therefore, its ambiguity. Thus, teachers expect common sense of themselves but simultaneously tend to see it as the limit of their professional contribution.

So, what is it? The four dictionaries I consulted (Chambers, Macquarie, Collins, and the Australian Concise Oxford) produced the following characteristics:

- Good sense
- Practical wisdom

- Sound perception and understanding
- Community opinion.

Thus, common sense teaching is sound and wise when it is based on practical experience, and when it is seen to be effective according to community (here, the professional community) opinion.

Common sense isn't very often written down. In the teaching environment, it is often spoken- in the school corridor, over the photocopier, as an aside in a staff meeting, over a drink. It is kaffeeklatsch. While there are relatively few examples of common sense writing by teachers for the profession, there are even fewer large collections of row 4 (see Table 1) published, refereed writing by teachers. However, the one large corpus I know well, the CSS, also demonstrates that few teacher-writers come from or write about elementary or secondary schools (Stoynoff, 2004, p. 390) [3]. As Stoynoff's review of the CSS argues, when schoolteachers do write about teaching what they have to say is interesting and useful. Once written down and recorded, it can be used as a basis for further teacher reflection. Teachers nevertheless remain reluctant to write.

What are they missing out on?

How written reflection works

Writing can be used to generate meaning in qualitative inquiry (Richardson, 2003; van Manen, 1990). Pereira et al. (2004, pp. 15-18), for example, suggest that teachers who write about teaching can find meaning through constructing different perspectives of an event or phenomenon: for example, step 3 (Table 2). These perspectives will be based on the writers' practical experience and employ their judgement of the appropriateness of particular explanations or accounts of an incident or episode. Sense of appropriateness, or fittingness, is determined by writers' sense of what is relevant and informative. This consciousness through writing offers a base for what I have called 'common sense." Teachers 'make sense' all the time, on the run. Consciously writing something down in an attempt to explain an event for others (to 'make it common') entails reflection-on-action (cf. Schšn, 1983), but it also makes learning (new explanation) possible. In Pereira et al.'s analysis, this is practical wisdom (what they call 'phronesis'), which is one way dictionaries I consulted defined commonsense.

Reflective writing, then, begins as dialogue between teachers as writers and their thoughts on teaching experience; published writing makes this reflection on experience available for mediation in social interaction (cf. Vygotsky, 1962). Thus, from the beginning (step 1), writing for others (imagined or real) enables teachers to learn from the questions they ask themselves as writers in inner speech--for example: "Is this accurate?" "Will readers understand what happened?" "Will readers know what I mean?" Editors who are the interface between writers and readers in published, refereed writing (see Table 1) take on this dialogic, reflective role when writers appear not to have asked or responded to such questions. For example, as indicated previously, teacher-writers in the CSS often had to be prompted to provide context (the teaching circumstances they were writing about) so that readers could more fully relate their own experience and concerns to those of the writers. In anticipating what information readers needed to understand, writers gave reasons for their actions (explanation) and considered potential consequences (evaluation). If a written account is meaningful (that is, its

explanation and evaluation resonate with readers), it is a useful document which can generate further inquiry and reflection.

Table 6, which recreates the reflective writing sequence in Table 2 as a reflective writing typology, summarizes the types of reflection teachers as writers could do. Types 3-5 assume writing that is read by others and may be subject to some kind of peer feedback. This can happen with types 1 and 2 as well, but it is more likely with the other three types. A published example of this in TESOL can be found outside the CSS in Sharkey and Johnson (2003), which is a collection of dialogues among researchers and teacher educators stemming from ten articles published in the TESOL quarterly. However, while the writers may also be teachers, they are not only teachers. Hence, this book turns out to be another example of Stoynoff's point (2004) about the small numbers of classroom teachers who write for publication on teaching.

Table 6: Types of reflective writing</p>

Type	Function	For example, answering . . .	Comment
1[4]	Expressing, intuiting	What happened?	Recording an event in your own words
2	Revising	How did it happen?	e.g., adding more detail, approaching the account from another angle, answering a different question or need
3	Generalizing, hypothesizing	Is this so? Why? What does it mean outside the immediate context of the event's occurrence?	Theorizing on the description and explanation of types 1 & 2
4	Reviewing and rewriting	Is this still so? Why?	Based on the author's own reflections or following feedback from publication of type 1, 2, or 3 writing
5	Later reflecting	What do these accounts mean now?	Reexamination of type 1, 2, or 3 writing in the light of intervening experience; potentially endlessly generative and may follow long or short intervals

The need for more teachers to write about teaching

Recent literature on reflective practice (e.g., Moon, 1999) notes that reflection-on-action, which reflective writing necessarily is, can start as a relatively informal process and over time become more systematically and explicitly grounded in theory. Teacher educators should therefore start teachers writing types 1, 2 and 3 as a solid base on which to build their confidence for types 4 and 5 writing; these types generally entail wider sharing and feedback. Individual and collaborative journal writing are effective examples of type 1, 2 and 3 writing

(e.g. Daloglu, 2001).

Zeichner and Liston (1996) in their book on reflective practice argue (p. 6) the importance of teachers being "aware of and question[ing] the assumptions and values [they bring] to teaching" and being "attentive to the institutional and cultural contexts in which [they teach]." The examples taken from the CSS for this article illustrate how writing case studies or documenting action research can assist teacher reflection in the writers themselves and the professional community. Table 7 summarizes those possibilities.

Table 7: Possibilities for learning through teachers' writing

Mode	**Type and function**	**Role**	**Form , e.g . . . .**
Private	All types are	Personal documentation and reflection	Journals
Shared	possible, but types	Collaborative	Interactive journals
Published, nonrefereed	3-5 are more likely to involve greater sharing, and some kind of refereeing/td>	documentation and reflection Public access, statement of knowledge and	Group journals, e-mail lists, teacher accounts and reports
Published, refereed	process	experience	Articles (online, hard copy), book chapters, books

Conclusion

The CSS represents a large corpus of writing in a small field of teacher writing in TESOL. It reveals the potential of teacher writing as a tool of reflection and learning for the writers themselves and their teacher audience.

There are several reasons why teachers don't write about teaching:

1. Lack of time
2. Lack of support to write
3. Lack of confidence in their abilities to write
4. Lack of reward or recognition as teachers when they do write.

These reasons are widely acknowledged among teacher educators and teachers.

Since relatively few teachers publish, there has been little opportunity to study how such teachers perceive the writing process: whether, for example, they see it as an aid to learning. My next step is to survey teacher-writers, such as those published in the CSS, on the writing process. Casanave and Vandrick (2003), for example, report some perilous publishing experiences. Furthermore, case study and ethnography, the two forms of qualitative inquiry that appear to interest teachers favor realism, confession, and impression (van Maanen, 1988). These kinds of writing, in my view, expose writers to criticism outside a supportive peer

network and leave them with the potential to feel professionally vulnerable. For these reasons, a study investigating how teachers experience public as opposed to private writing and what kinds of published writing they want to read on teaching is long overdue. Since teachers' contribution to knowledge about teaching is now widely recognized and since reflective writing can be justified as a research tool, it is important to support teachers to become comfortable reflecting in writing about what they do.

Notes

[1] I am grateful to Dick Allwright (personal communication, 13/12/04) for the observation about disjunction and incoherence.

[2]I was influenced here by Halliday's (1994) analysis of processes [verbs in traditional grammar], and in particular, of mental processes and their association with humanness and consciousness, and how facts can be sensed (pp. 112-5).

[3] One of the volumes in the CSS does features EFL in primary schools, and another features K-12; at the time of writing, both are still in press, however.

[4] In other versions of this typology, I have included an extra type to capture the practising and learning to write a specific genre that, for example, language learners struggle with as novice journal-writers or graduate students. I am assuming here that the writers under discussion, practicing teachers, have this type 1 ability. So what is type 2 in five-part versions of this typology is here type 1 in a four-part typology.

* This article is a written version of a plenary paper given at the AMEP National Conference in Darwin, NT, Australia, on 10 July, 2004; I greatly appreciate funding support for my presentation from the Australian Centre for Languages (acl), in Sydney.

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