

TEACHERS AS LEARNERS: NEGOTIATED ROLES IN WRITING TEACHERS' LEARNING LOGS

WENDY BISHOP

Journals or learning logs are often used as part of a course to train or retrain writing teachers. Judith Newman believes teacher and student dialogue journals help educators monitor student-teachers' progress and model journal writing for those teachers' own writing classrooms. Andrea Fishman and Elizabeth Raver find journals let new teachers gain admission to the professional community and allow teachers and teacher educators to evaluate the training experience. Such reports are welcome, but currently we have only a limited understanding of what occurs when new or retraining teachers use journal writing-to-learn as they undertake formal study in composition. As part of a study of college writing teachers' development, I had the opportunity to analyze teachers' *dialogue* learning logs, and I was able to develop a more comprehensive look at teachers' response patterns.

The learning logs I studied were unique since the teachers in this particular graduate-level pedagogy seminar formed response groups, sharing entries both verbally and in writing during weekly group meetings. The data and observations discussed here come from an extended analysis of the learning log texts, but I also relied on information gained during the full study, which included

numerous interviews with these writing teachers and their instructor, participant-observation of the pedagogy seminar, and taping of selected learning log group meetings.¹

THE STUDY

During a five-week summer seminar for doctoral students in rhetoric, thirteen seminar participants were introduced to current theory and pedagogy for teaching writing. Most of these graduate students were also teachers of college writing with three to twenty years teaching experience. They were directed by their instructor, whom I'll call Dr. Thomas A. Bridges, to respond in their learning logs to selected readings, to the seminar, to the papers they were writing, and so on. To suggest response directions, Tom Bridges handed out a list of possible learning log response patterns taken from *Learning to Write/Writing to Learn* by John Mayher, Nancy Lester, and Gordon Pradl. For instance, learning log writers were encouraged to question, rehearse, invent or consolidate material in their responses. Additionally, the instructor asked teachers to meet in groups of three outside of the seminar for two, one-hour sessions each week, sharing their learning logs.

By using these groups, Bridges hoped to encourage teachers to evaluate and assimilate theory and research in composition, discovering ways to apply their new learning to their next writing classroom. Also, he expected to model the value of learning logs or journals as a pedagogical tool for student writers. Bridges did not himself respond in the learning logs, relying instead on the peer groups to provide response. He collected the logs at the end of the five-week seminar, along with teachers' final papers.

ANALYSIS OF LEARNING LOGS

During the larger study of teacher change, it became apparent that the teachers' learning logs would provide a major source of information on teachers' learning in the pedagogy seminar. Since learning logs did not cover identical materials nor did entries fall into the same sequence with each writer, I developed a coding system that would allow me to retrieve information from the logs and display it in a useable format.

To do this, I divided the learning logs into T-units and coded them with a set of codes developed from the instructions given

to the teachers by Bridges, directing their log writing (I called these response codes), and with additional codes that were responsive to my original research questions (I called these subject codes); in the latter case, I wanted to describe influences on teachers' learning. Did teachers concern themselves with class readings, their past teaching history or institution, and so on? These code categories are found in the Appendix.

As a single researcher confronting a great amount of data, nearly 8,000 T-units, I worked through the codes myself, trying them on a few logs, conflating overlapping categories and eliminating null categories, until I could recode the same log twice using the final codes with a strong expectation of applying the identical code each time to each T-unit. I felt comfortable coding the learning logs in this manner since mine was a descriptive, context-based study, and the codes were intended to provide a general analysis of teachers' writing by subjects and focus. Additionally, learning logs confirmed, and were confirmed by, other research data—field notes, survey questionnaires, and interviews, for instance.

Once coded, logs could be tabulated by types of responses, allowing me to analyze teachers' individual response tendencies and, eventually, to chart patterns of response for each group. For individuals, I asked, Does he or she *respond* to more than *analyze* class material? Did one teacher focus on teaching while another focused exclusively on the pedagogy seminar, and so on? Similarly, I looked to see if learning log groups had preferred topics or patterns of response.

Additionally, because the logs were response logs—seminar members responding to the entries made in group members' logs—I was able to describe peer responses, using a simpler coding system which helped me analyze the general role of each peer in relation to other group members. I looked to see if the peer was supportive, challenging, questioning, and so on. These response codes also appear in the Appendix.

Altogether, I coded thirteen learning logs (7,917 T-units) which ranged from 25 handwritten pages to 105 handwritten pages and from 15 single-spaced typed pages to 66 double-spaced typed pages. The average learning log was 609 T-units in length.

RESULTS

RESPONSE CATEGORIES

T-unit analysis showed that groups developed particular learning focuses and ways of discussing the pedagogy seminar. Also, individual members of the graduate pedagogy seminar had a priority of concerns when entering learning log materials. Altogether, log writers spent the majority of their time RECORDing, RESPONDing or QUESTIONing material. They focussed their responses on the READINGS, their own TEACHING and the teaching profession, or themselves—SELF-ANALYSIS.

Often these focuses were somewhat exclusive. That is, some log writers were predominantly concerned with the readings and materials of the pedagogy seminar. Others used the readings only as a springboard for talking about their own teaching, their own institution, or themselves and their life roles. A few log writers had a split interest or a wide-ranging interest in several subject areas. The log analysis quickly yielded a rude “thumbprint” of each log writer’s interests or what literary critic Norman Holland calls an “identity theme.”

Since I will be discussing nine individuals in three representative, three-member learning log groups, let me first list the group members’ names, changed for this report:

GROUP 1	GROUP 2	GROUP 3
Ken	Julia	Jerah
Robin	Peg	Alice
Reed	Helen	Nick

To learn about responses in each groups, I looked for dominant patterns. For instance, two of three participants with an extremely high number of READING responses (65% and 51% of T-units) were second-year doctoral program students, Reed and Ken. Although their next highest response category was that of TEACHING, Reed and Ken both directed their energy to scholarly analysis and synthesis of the course materials. Being successful doctoral participants, they knew how to extract material for class discussion and for their upcoming comprehensive exams.

A single pedagogy seminar participant, Helen from Group 2, was exceptionally focused on teaching in her learning log. 60% of her entries concerned TEACHING, the teaching profession, and/or her HOME INSTITUTION (categories which I eventually

grouped together since they were, contextually, often closely related). These subjects were found in conjunction with a high percentage of RECORDing T-units (54%); that is, Helen constantly recorded stories about her own teaching or teaching institution. A close content reading of Helen's log let me confirm those T-Unit counts. Regularly, Helen discussed her own teaching past and then touched lightly on seminar issues. It seemed that Helen did not feel that the course had anything "new" to offer her in terms of "practice" and that she avoided considering the theoretical implications of the research under study.

In her log, Helen appeared to avoid engagement with new and challenging material and because of this seemed unreceptive to change. In an unsolicited letter that Helen sent to me a semester after this study, she explained that she had not seen the seminar as useful *at the time*. Only when she returned to her home institution did she begin to understand that she had been offered new and useful materials.

Similarly, another log writer, Nick from Group 3, had an exceptionally high number of entries overall—1,065 T-Units—the highest of all thirteen log writers, and a great number of these focussed on the writer himself and stories of his teaching. Nick used the log as a vehicle for self-exploration, and his analyst model of learning log entry served a different function than the scholarly model of the senior discourse participants, Ken and Reed, or the practitioner model of Helen.

Nick, in log entries, appeared comfortable with process jargon and always took a liberal position. Often, however, he championed those positions without examining theoretical or philosophical underpinnings and ramifications. In his log entries, Nick took an admittedly "teacherly" look at all research, even suggesting that he read most carefully those pieces that he felt would "fit," giving minimal attention to those pieces he felt would have little to say to him.

Finally, other log writers, like Alice and Jerah in Group 3 and Julia in Group 2, found a middle ground in their responses, being more evenly spread among the categories of READING, TEACHING and SELF-ANALYSIS (with additional categories such as CLASS, LEARNING LOG, and INSTRUCTOR represented in higher numbers than for members of other groups). Alice, Jerah and Julia gave serious consideration to the course material, sifting it for usefulness and appeared to learn with few overt or expressed

biases. However, even respondents with wide subject spreads still retained a slight inclination to the scholar, practitioner, or ANALYST model of approaching learning. When such an inclination was not apparent in T-units counts, it could be traced in the content and substance of actual entries.

During my original pattern analysis, then, I identified three primary models of learning log response:

- (1) SCHOLARs—learners who focused on seminar issues and readings;
- (2) PRACTITIONERs—learners who focussed on teaching;
- (3) and ANALYSTs—learners who focussed on several subjects—reading and teaching primarily, with comments tending toward self-analysis.

At first, it was difficult to determine if individuals' responses molded group responses or if group interactions helped to tailor and modify individual responses. After more pattern analysis, it became clear that influence traveled in both directions. To show the mutual influence of individual-on-group and group-on-individual, it is worth looking more closely at three groups. Table 1 summarizes the group response patterns that I will be discussing next.

Table 1
Learning Log Group Focus by Subject Response
Categories and T-Unit %.

	Group 1 Ken, Robin, Reed SCHOLARs focus on readings	Group 2 Julia, Peg, Helen PRACTITIONERs focus on teaching	Group 3 Jerah, Alice, Nick ANALYSTs focus on several categories
READING	59%	24%	36%
TEACHING	21%	41%	23%
SELF	10%	19%	16%
ALL OTHER	10%	16%	25%

Note: numbers represent *group* averages in this category; under TEACHING, T-units for TEACHING and O-H (own HOME INSTITUTION) have been combined.

LOG GROUP 1: KEN, ROBIN, REED

Ken, Robin and Reed were primarily SCHOLARS. Robin was a first year participant and Ken and Reed were senior (second year) participants. The group tended to focus on READING (group average 59%), next on TEACHING (21%) and finally on SELF-ANALYSIS (10%) and to fall into a SCHOLAR model. Given Ken and Reed's senior status and interest in preparing for comprehensive exams, the group's scholarly focus was not surprising.

Peer response in Group 1 also showed Reed and Ken responding as senior learners to a junior learner, Robin, as seen in Figure 1. For instance, when responding to Ken, a fellow senior participant and his roommate, Reed spent the majority of his response time AGREEing. When responding to Robin, Reed tended to offer SUPPORTing remarks. In context, many of Reed's remarks were also instructional, as if he were mentoring Robin, new to the doctoral program but a friend of Reed's from before the program. Reed often pushed Robin to clarify his log entries or thinking as in this example: "Which study? No context clues at all [for log entry]. Need to be slightly more referential. Ken and I do not have the text in front of us. Even if we did, we'd have to do a lot of hunting."

REED	Total peer responses:	152	
to KEN		144	Main focus: AGREE
to ROBIN		40	Main focus: SUPPORT
KEN	Total peer responses:	222	
to REED		114	Main focus: AGREE/ SUPPORT
to ROBIN		80	Main focus: EXTEND
ROBIN	Total peer responses:	67	
to REED		35	Main focus: QUESTION/ EXTEND
to KEN		32	Main focus: EXTEND

Figure 1. Group 1: Peer response patterns.

The group's overall SCHOLAR emphasis can be seen in the analytical responses to class readings. Here is Ken considering a research report:

These researchers' four studies are interesting, and I will comment on what I feel are a few-significant findings. I understand more clearly now how *planning* facilitates *translation* by targeting a cluster of information in the long-term memory and making it available for translation into sentences. The process works in reverse, where the writing of sentences changes the plans, and perhaps even changes the "understanding of the topic" (124). I've found this to be true for me as a writer that my understanding of the topic changes.

When Reed, the other senior learner of the group, responded to a reading, he too analyzed and often connected readings to his teaching concerns. Robin, the junior member of the group, however, often took a more whimsical approach to the learning log entries. Robin would fall in love with a reading, theory, or idea and then work through the implications of the material with the guidance of Reed and Ken or the pedagogy seminar discussions.

Robin was also more interested in seminar interactions and tended to be the group member most interested in analyzing SELF and the PEDAGOGY SEMINAR. In the next example, Robin reviews the class activities in a manner rarely if ever evident in Reed's or Ken's learning logs:

Yesterday's class—the way it operated—needs examination. I see this pattern that when there is collaborative work to be done, people fall into convenient groups, friendship groups, which of course seems natural. But then there is also a grouping that goes on that is very intentional—let me get with someone who is competent because I don't want to be associated with someone who will discredit me (and my grade). I clearly don't like this, but feel frustrated about how to change this.

Robin voiced lots of questions and expressed highs and lows of enthusiasm when dealing with class materials, getting irritated at research reports and becoming enthusiastic about new teaching ideas. As one still sorting out the field, Robin clearly held the novice position, while his peers—Ken and Reed—were thoroughly familiar, at times possibly even jaded by, doctoral program demands and also quite familiar with the pedagogy seminar readings, having read some of the materials in previous courses.

GROUP 2: JULIA, PEG, HELEN

As PRACTITIONERS, Julia, Peg, and Helen focused on TEACHING (group average 41%), next on READINGS (24%) and finally on SELF (19%). As mentioned earlier, Helen's percentages were quite impressively turned towards matters of TEACHING and her HOME INSTITUTION, and she responded less often than any other log writer to assigned readings (10%). In Helen's entries, engagement with the class readings was usually submerged in a discussion of how she had already used the theory or technique being described. This emphasis was underlined by her strong use of RECORDing type responses; she used RECORD responses in 54% of her entries to tell stories from her professional life.

Of the other two members, Peg tended to respond to both READINGS and TEACHING and engaged with the class materials in a search to improve her teaching. Julia's responses were even more balanced, focussing almost equally on TEACHING, READING and SELF-ANALYSIS. Both Julia and Peg were experienced teachers. Julia called herself "traditional," and Peg described herself as someone looking for a new method for teaching to rejuvenate her somewhat lagging interest in the writing classroom. Therefore, although all group members had an interest in teaching, Julia and Peg were looking for new material while Helen's log entries regularly signaled her satisfaction with her teaching as it was.

Peer response in Group 2 further supported these teachers' PRACTITIONER orientation as seen in Figure 2. In this group, Helen offered the largest number of peer responses that used EXTEND comments and did so with both Peg and Julia. Entries showed her using the EXTEND comment as another opportunity to 1) tell stories or share facts about her own teaching, or 2) to advise the other members on teaching strategies.

JULIA	Total peer responses: 104
to PEG	58 Main focus: AGREE
to HELEN	46 Main focus: EXTEND
PEG	Total peer responses: 117
to JULIA	43 Main focus: AGREE
to HELEN	74 Main focus: EXTEND

HELEN	Total peer responses: 167	
to JULIA		86 Main focus: EXTEND
to PEG		81 Main focus: EXTEND

Figure 2. Group 2: Peer response patterns.

Interestingly, Helen's attention to EXTEND comments appeared to elicit the same type of remark from her peers. When responding to each other, however, Julia and Peg used more SUPPORT and AGREE remarks. Helen's emphasis in the log on explicating "her way" tended to set up a mentor-to-novice relationship with the other two members who queried her for teaching "tricks" and general explications of her practices. This occurred even though Julia and Peg both had extensive teaching experience. When responding to each others' logs, however, Julia and Peg developed a peer-to-peer relationship. During interviews, Julia and Peg both mentioned feeling uncomfortable at times with Helen's strong influence.

The PRACTITIONER emphasis in this group was maintained by Helen. She tended to examine every reading in light of her own strong teaching and portrayed colleagues at her home institution as always less enlightened than herself. Helen's response "theme" was set up immediately, and continued to her last entry:

July 14, 1987

[first entry]

Several ideas come to mind as I reread Flower and Hayes' "A Cognitive Process Theory of Writing," First of all, Hayes and Flower articulate one of the problems with the writing process as taught by a few of my colleagues. You see, although some of my friends claim to teach in a process-centered class, they so structure their activities—with pre-writing to be done only during the pre-writing stage and editing/revising only to be done at the editing/revising stage—that the process lacks any relationship to what real writers do. (Are they fake-process courses?)

[from the final entry]

Although I LOVE electronic composing, I always knew that it would be a problem in many classroom situations. Between my experiences and the literature I've read, my gut feelings about electronic composing were not off target. One of the

problems of using computers in the classroom is that many schools merely insert a word processing component into their writing classes without making the word processor part of the composing process. For instance, a nearby Catholic college called me two years ago and asked me to teach a “computers and writing course, starting the next day.” Some computers and writing class! . . .

The log responses of Peg and Julia were more questioning, hesitant, and finally more exultant when these teachers came up with solutions to problems that had been bothering them. Seemingly less exposed previously to the content of class readings, both Peg and Julia engaged the research in what appeared to be a more productive fashion. Peg’s first entry shows this tonal difference:

As I begin reading Flower and Hayes I have a sense of how closely tied together are linguistic theory and the process being introduced. In fact I find myself thinking of the hardwiring concept as I read, almost to the point of getting two super-imposed pictures.

The idea of hierarchical embedding intrigues me and clarifies my visual concept of linguistic theory. . . .

On the other hand, since Julia was a “traditional” teacher encountering stimulating but sometimes confusing new material, she responded in her first log entry with a wealth of questions concerning the class reading:

How do writers write? This is a question I’ve posed often. I agree with Flower’s and Hayes’ supposition that the forces of purpose, relationship, exigencies and language determine how, when and for whom we write?

Is the cognitive process the same for all writers? Should it be? . . . Why don’t they (F&H) just come out and say what they believe? Why beat around the bush with presenting the other side and then discussing the main point (i.e., the process)? I suppose, then, we’d have no article to read huh?

Overall, Julia, Peg and Helen expressed satisfaction with the logs and their response group and made supportive and humorous comments and entries too numerous to detail here. Still, Peg and Julia were uneasy that the overall tone for this group was set by

the dominant member Helen and that the flow of information sometimes seemed limited by her taking an exclusively PRACTITIONER stance in relation to the seminar materials.

LOG GROUP 3: JERAH, ALICE, NICK.

Jerah and Alice were ANALYSTS with a leaning toward SCHOLAR. The group focussed on READINGS (36%), next on TEACHING (23%) and finally on SELF-ANALYSIS (16%). All three members of this group were first-year participants although Nick had taken a few classes in rhetoric the year before. Alice was the only M.A. candidate in the three log groups. She also had the most evenly distributed sets of Subject T-units. As a whole, Group 3 spent more time discussing and monitoring log and log group progress than did any other groups and wrote most extensively—both number of log entries and number of peer responses—which seemed to signal an ANALYST model log writer.

Peer response in Group 3 was very supportive as shown in Figure 3. Jerah and Nick tended to EXTEND each other's entries, with Nick mixing his remarks to Jerah more uniformly between the EXTEND, SUPPORT and AGREE categories. Generally the facilitator, Alice offered the largest number of written peer responses.

JERAH	Total peer responses:	148	
to ALICE		57	Main focus: SUPPORT/ AGREE
to NICK		91	Main focus: EXTEND
ALICE	Total peer responses:	212	
to JERAH		73	Main focus: SUPPORT/ EXTEND/AGREE
to NICK		139	Main focus: EXTEND
NICK	Total peer responses:	169	
to JERAH		77	Main focus: EXTEND/ AGREE/SUPPORT
to ALICE		92	Main focus: EXTEND/ AGREE

Figure 3. Group 3: Peer response patterns.

Jerah, Alice and Nick maintained a relatively consistent joking relationship in their entries. However, this group experienced some

tension during one group meeting. Nick took exception to spoken comments from Alice and Jerah, and the group, in order to continue, carefully renegotiated their group rules and commitment to writing. After that point, both Alice and Jerah were more guarded in their responses, using light humor and primarily supportive remarks.

At times, the Analysts' tendency to take a "cheerleader" tone seemed to lead to a downgrading of inquiry. This could be seen particularly in Nick's log. A close inspection of the content of Nick's entries showed him championing "practitioner" viewpoints and providing somewhat facile readings of assigned seminar texts.

First entries in the learning logs of Group 3 members demonstrated many of their issues. Here is Alice's first log entry:

I found myself making a number of notes in the text as I read the article. The first was to question "protocol analysis" (p. 366). I'd heard of it, but didn't really know what it meant. This reading defined it for me as the transcript of a writing session—the authors call it a "thinking aloud" protocol—are there other types? In a protocol, a writer talks aloud as he goes through the process of writing. Flower & Hayes point out that *introspective analysis* (after the fact) is inaccurate and influenced by people's notions of what they should have done. Can a protocol be done with younger (junior high) writers? I'd like to know what some of them are thinking as they write.

[at the end of her entry she makes the first of several class-related analyses]

EVAL. OF CLASS: 1st Day. In retrospect, probably my initial reaction was one of surprise—surprise that the class is to be so practical. I'm also delighted that it is to be so, because that's what I'm looking for. I'm also catching a hint of interest on Tom's [instructor's] part in younger writers—elementary and secondary. Since I deal with secondary students, I'm hoping I'll feel free to question or discuss them. I feel like a fish out of water sometimes in dealing with so many people who teach college students. Oh, oh,—the prospect has me worried!

The beginning of Alice's entry was Scholarly in format. She responded to the reading, questioned the researcher's methodology, and then connected to her own teaching. The section

on class evaluation was pure Analyst. She responded affectively to the class, the course organization, the instructor, and her feelings in relation to other class members.

Here is Nick's first log entry:

Is there ever going to be enough time? Already I'm regretting that I'm taking Basic Writing during a 5-week summer session. My feeling after our first class is that this is one course that is better suited to a regular 15 week semester, for the simple reason that there seems to be so much meat to the course that a student would need no less than 15 weeks just to begin to digest it. Carnation Instant Breakfast has all of the nutrition of a two-egg, bacon, and toast breakfast, but I'd rather eat the latter than drink the former. And since I'm speaking of eggs, I'll continue the metaphor, so that I can get finally to my point—will we have sufficient incubation time to give the material the thoughtfulness that it seems due. [Later in the same entry he responds to the first reading.]
Flower and Hayes

I don't think I'm willing to buy into the validity nor the reliability of protocol analysis. If we have a biological predisposition to language acquisition, not being able to attend consciously to that process, how can we consciously attend to all that we're doing when we write. We all seem to edit our thinking, regardless of whether a microphone is unobtrusive or not. I'm not trying to argue that Flower and Hayes' analysis is faulty because of my doubts about the protocols—I'm merely wondering whether they have the whole picture—whether they have provided insight into the 1,000,000 rpm working of the mind, or whether they have focused on the 33 1/3 rpm working of mind/mouth, mind/hand.

This entry exhibited several of Nick's response techniques. Often he would use a humorous metaphor (eggs) to defend his point, showing a love of the writing act that leads him eventually to the longest learning log of the nine considered here. Second, his challenge of the Flower and Hayes material was much more combative than was Alice's consideration of the same article. Still, Nick's entry had all the attributes of an ANALYST log writer: he was interested in the class, in the materials, and in himself as successful member of the pedagogy seminar.

Jerah's first entry was even more clearly organized around self-analysis: "I must confess that, while I do recognize most of the names of the people we'll be reading, I have very little in depth knowledge of their ideas." Although many of Jerah's entries dealt with the class readings, he often took a highly personalized view of their applications: "How often at — U. did I hear the names "Flower & Hayes" batted around? and when the job applicant showed up with a letter of reference from Linda Flower, everybody just about died and went to heaven! Now I get to put details with names. . . ."

Like the other Analysts, Jerah was enthusiastic about the class and labeled himself a novice although he had an M.A. in English/Teaching Composition. His response to readings might begin with personal anecdote and biographical information and eventually start to question and discuss the work. Like Alice, Jerah challenged the reading from a "practitioner" stance but with less drama in the questioning than in the case of Nick, who tended to assert that he couldn't "accept" this or that piece of information.

Nick's peer responses were also typical of his "challenging" behavior. To Jerah's comments on John Hayes, Nick EXTENDED: "Why did I get the sense that Hayes did 90% of the writing of this article? For some reason, I don't think Linda helped out a whole hellava lot on this one." As a practitioner, Nick was taking a big swipe at one of what he termed "the gurus of cognitive process." In Alice's log he EXTENDED both by invoking the seminar instructor, Tom Bridges, whom he greatly respected, and by suggesting further readings for her: "Bridges, I bet, would support you all the way on this one [studying protocols of junior high students]—that kids can show us a lot about what really goes on—Berietter and Scardamalia might prove to be interesting reading for you." In suggesting readings for Alice, Nick invoked the PRACTITIONER to novice relationship sometimes noted in Helen's interactions in Group 2.

TEACHERS' EVALUATION OF LEARNING LOG ACTIVITY

Overall, teachers found the log and log groups valuable. Half way through the pedagogy seminar, Bridges asked seminar members to fill out a questionnaire on group work; teachers consistently rated the groups as productive, although they suggested some changes. Of particular interest, the open response statements

for this questionnaire allowed teachers to detail some of the problems their groups encountered and to offer ideas for improving group work.

Learning log group members in this study felt torn between the supportive nature of group talk and their need to be efficient and to complete their work within an hour. Handwritten logs presented a reading problem. Extensive or boring or repetitive entries slowed group progress. Some members felt they agreed too much with each other or didn't play devil's advocate often enough with the seminar materials; this suggests a social rather than educational focus for such a group. In other groups, individuals worried about an overly dominant member. Also, groups sometimes found keeping logs "just another task," particularly at the end of the session when teachers were writing final papers for the pedagogy seminar.

Next, there were several remarks about how Bridges could have helped the groups or individuals in groups. Some teachers felt he should have reviewed the logs, let writers know if they were doing the right thing, continued group work within the seminar classroom, varied membership in seminar groups, and let groups have some seminar time to share their progress. Essentially, the seminar members wanted to have the instructor more involved in the group process.

Additionally, during one seminar discussion, teachers reported that the learning log groups helped them to clarify seminar assignments and also provided members with a forum for sharing graduate program and seminar lore. They admitted that they gossiped and shared coping techniques. The groups, then, provided an opportunity for "blowing off steam" about the seminar. Finally, while listening to tapes and discussion of members' logs, I noted that the groups were arenas for rehearsing subsequent class behaviors and for articulating beliefs. A teacher might respond to a reading in a journal, talk about it with other teachers before class, and then quote herself in the seminar.

CONCLUSIONS

This exploration into nine writers' learning logs confirms pedagogical reports that log writing is a complex learning device. Like all writing groups, these log groups exhibited some of the strengths of the group method. There were moments of true col-

laborative learning when the sum—teachers' knowledge—became greater than the parts—seminar readings and discussion—from which they forged this knowledge. Log groups provided a supportive environment for class learning and a powerful personal forum for writing-to-learn.

Tom Bridges had hoped that the log groups would allow teachers to evaluate and assimilate theory and research in composition in order to improve their next writing class. Also, he wanted to model the use of journals or learning logs for student writers. His second goal seems to have been the most easily accomplished; the teachers in this study were convinced that learning logs would be part of their next classrooms.

The first goal—teachers using logs as a way to move from theory to practice—was also accomplished, but the degree of accomplishment varied by individual. Practitioners intent on exhibiting their own teaching expertise before peers (Helen) or looking for published support for current practices (Nick) did not appear receptive to seminar materials. Teachers who expected to find new ideas and those with an expressed felt need to change their teaching (Peg, Julia, and Robin, and to lesser degrees Jerah, Ken, and Reed) used their learning logs to record and plan for pedagogical changes.

Next, the pedagogy seminar learning log groups also exhibited typical group problems. Looking closely at these problems may allow trainers to improve group work in their own courses. There was the occasional overly dominant member; this happened when Helen's concerns seemed to set the tone for Julia's and Peg's responses. Left to themselves, Julia and Peg might have worked more collaboratively and focussed more often on seminar topics.

At times groups became unbalanced. For instance, when Reed and Ken assumed senior learner attitudes to Robin, they dominated the discussions, missing, possibly, some of Robin's contributions. Robin's contributions were often couched in the form of enthusiastic responses that might have encouraged Reed and Ken to look again at readings they had quickly categorized and filed away for formulaic reference on exams.

The reverse situation could be equally problematic; sometimes a group focussed exclusively on readings when other members needed affective clarification. In the case of Group 3, the Analysts, a discussion of the readings could not take place on the day Nick felt the other group members—Jerah and Alice—were

misunderstanding him. For this group, work could not continue without a session where rules and values and goals were renegotiated.

As I reviewed these learning log texts and teachers' evaluations of group work, I found that my pattern analysis led to further observations about learning log groups. These observations, and the issues they raise for future researchers, can be overviewed briefly.

First, a strong type of response pattern from one group member tended to elicit a similar type of response pattern from other members. That is, a PRACTITIONER telling a teaching story elicited teaching stories from group members. Second, a log writer's response pattern or "identity theme" seemed to be set early and did not appear to undergo drastic changes. Since teachers in this study kept learning logs for only five weeks, it would be useful to know if and how an individual log writer's response pattern might change over a longer time period.

Second, a greater number of log entries could, but did not always, represent fuller engagement with the seminar material. For instance, the term ANALYST indicates *direction* of interests not necessarily quality of understanding; in fact, all three terms, SCHOLAR, PRACTITIONER, and ANALYST, should be seen as labels and not as value-laden designations. Because a writer was an Analyst, it did not of necessity follow that such a writer had a more complex understanding of seminar and group interactions even though ANALYSTs tend to write more extensively, tell more stories, and include non-seminar topics in their seminar learning logs. The quantity of such entries did not always predict the quality of understanding regarding topics and issues nor did quantity indicate the depth of the writer's insights.

This can be illustrated. At one point Nick complained to me in interviews that his group was too focussed on the final seminar project. He felt this was due to the concerns of the other two group members (regarding graduate program performance and seminar grades). My later analysis of Alice and Jerah's logs did not bear out that perception; Nick used as many entries as his peers to direct group discussion to final projects.

Third, a swift movement from readings to self-analysis or simple story-telling seemed to indicate a superficial engagement of seminar materials. This happened when a PRACTITIONER like Helen moved immediately from notations about seminar readings

to discussions of her teaching past, rarely returning to the issues at hand or engaging in debate about possible solutions to curricular problems.

Overall, becoming entrenched in a predominant response style may block learning in other areas. For instance, the ANALYST log model, generally, predicts a stronger consideration—meta-awareness and monitoring—of the pedagogy seminar, the seminar instructor, and seminar log groups. But, while ANALYSTs profit from such monitoring, they may sometimes neglect to apply such awareness to their teaching considerations, focussing instead—as did some of these writers—on job hunting, worries over how they were perceived by seminar or group members, and so on. This is also seen when ANALYSTs develop cheerleading tendencies—“Aren’t we a great group!” Such tendencies may develop at the expense of deeper insights or engagement with seminar materials but may also signal necessary group maintenance efforts for these highly introspective individuals.

Fourth, peer response designed to extend a discussion (one teaching writing in another teacher’s journal to *add* to the discussion rather than to question or contradict) was of two very different types: 1) essentially supportive in nature and meant to continue and deepen discussion (peer to peer)—this could be seen in Alice’s entries particularly—or 2) more patronizing, “Here’s how I do it” (practitioner to novice)—this could be seen in Helen’s entries particularly.

Teacher educators will want to consider the experience of these teachers. When using learning logs in a pedagogy seminar, it will be worth considering:

1. Degree of intervention
 - a. Should a teacher-educator read the journals once, twice or more during a term?
 - b. Should the teacher-educator use his/her classroom authority to move a log-writer from a fixed position (telling too many teaching stories, failing to consider aspects of a research report, focussing on personal anxieties, etc.) to a new position through the use of written questions, modeling, and other activities?
2. Forming groups and changing group membership
 - a. Should a teacher-educator form groups with a member strong in each area (SCHOLAR, PRACTITIONER, ANALYST)? If response identity themes are set early,

- the teacher educator might choose to read and code preliminary responses and then form balanced groups.
- b. Can a teacher-educator allow groups to form naturally and then modify group memberships in a productive way during the course of a term? For instance, would it be worthwhile to have group members code and analyze their own learning logs as a way to redirect group work or change group membership?
3. The relationship of educator's seminar goals to developing group goals
- a. To what extent does the teacher educator believe the group needs to stay "on task" with seminar readings and projects?
 - b. To what extent does the teacher educator feel the group should develop its own focus, supporting general writing-to-learn needs of individual members?

These points also, of course, suggest more research directions. We need to explore learning logs in order to better understand the complex negotiations—of roles and teaching identities—that occur in graduate-level, writing pedagogy seminars since these negotiations influence the teachers that we train. I believe learning log analysis provide a deeper understanding of teachers' learning; their insights and changes are available for analysis in the rich entries we so often ask them to compile.

APPENDIX

Learning log WRITER'S TYPE of RESPONSE codes. In this T-Unit:

REC: The log writer *records* information or events.

RES: The log writer *responds* to information or events.

QUES: The log writer *questions* information or events.

REHERS: The log writer *rehearses* a role (example: prepares statements about readings that she might later insert into a seminar discussion almost word-for-word) or uses jargon (example: after reading about writer's block begins to use terms like "algorithmic" or "heuristic" or "blockers and non-blockers")

CONC: The log writer *connects* information and or seminar or learning events.

CONSOL: The log writer *consolidates*, summarizes, or interrelates systems and/or concepts, perhaps linking readings from one seminar to readings from another, and so on.

PRE: The log writer *predicts* future interactions of information or events. This category often contained references to future teaching practices or graduate study plans.

INVEN: The log writer *invents* new material from concepts/and or relationships. This category was activated in a few cases but more often participants were working to consolidate or synthesize material rather than creating new material.

A/S/L: The log writer makes *analytical* or *synthesizing* comments on his own *learning* process (example: comparing how little he/she knew early in the seminar to what he/she knows at a later entry time period). [metacognitive monitoring]

A/S/T: The log writer makes *analytical* or *synthesizing* comments on *Tom Bridges' teaching* methods in the pedagogy seminar. [metateaching monitoring]

A/S/W: The log writer makes *analytical* or *synthesizing* comments on his or her *own writing* in the log or for the seminar (for example: a participant observes how he/she qualifies all statements with remarks like "based on the literature" and indicates his/her awareness that his/her writing style and thinking has changed, and so on). [metalinguistic monitoring]

Note: Instructor's original source for learning log writing directions come from Mayher, Lester, & Pradl (1983 p. 24).

Learning log WRITER'S SUBJECT codes.

The log writer's T-Unit primarily:

- R = focuses on the pedagogy seminar or doctoral program *readings*
- C = focuses on content or activities of the *class* (pedagogy seminar)
- I = focuses on the *instructor* Tom Bridges (or on his methods)
- LL = focuses on the *learning log* or *learning log group*
- S = focuses on personal concerns and/or *self-analysis*
- T = focuses on log writer's *own teaching* or the *teaching profession* in general
- O-S = focuses on *other participants* of the pedagogy seminar
- O-GP = focuses on the *graduate program* or the *field of composition studies* in general
- O-H = focuses on the *teacher's home institution* (includes colleagues, administrators, and so on)

Learning log PEER RESPONSE codes.

AGR: *agreeing* with log writer's statements

QUES: *questioning* log writer about assertions or statements

CHAL: *challenging* log writer, often by offering a disconfirming or perplexing reading of a text or personal experience

EXT: *extending* the discussion started by the log writer

SUP: *supporting* the log writer with sympathy, encouragement, and any generally empathetic remark

Sample Coded Log

Extract from Learning Log for Reed, Log Group 1.

- RES-R I like Perl's explanation of "retrospective structuring" to clarify the recursive nature of making meaning./ She also does a good job in discussing the features of BWs that many of us have seen
- RES-R so often in our classes—role confusion, selective perception, egocentricity, etc./ But discerning these problems and doing something about them are two entirely different things./ Her first principle
- CONC-T that teachers must identify which characteristic components of *each* student's process facilitate writing and which inhibit it before they can do any good is certainly sound./ [I felt the
- RES-R same way when I read it. Ken] It is also a very daunting challenge for each of us
- AGR-KEN to put into practice, given the constraints of our teaching situations./
- CONC-T Flower, *Writer-based prose*, Flower really puts her finger on the BW complaint "I know what I want to say, but I just can't put it into words."/ The gulf between psychological meaning and reader-based
- RES-R expression is a tough one to bridge for all but the most articulate of us;/ I can really empathize with those kids./ [me
- CONSOL-R too. Ken]
- RES-R Obviously, traditional emphasis on
- AGR-KEN teaching essay structure according to a formula of thesis divided into topic
- CONC-T sentences has been our attempt to force our students out of the natural, writer-based framework of narrative prose into the more difficult (and more artificial?), reader-based framework of analytic thinking./ But trying to coax functional explicitness through highly
- REHEARSE-T rigid structures in order to approach an autonomous text (which, by the way Mr. Olson, is *impossible*) has its costs (see next entry on Rose article)./ [Shall we
- SUP-ROBIN have coffee cake together, Robin] That doesn't mean that we don't have the prerogative to ask our student writers

CONC-T "What's the point here?" so that they deal
with refining concepts,/ but I think
that's best done through collaborative
CONC-T personal feedback, not by lecturing them
on syllogistic reasoning. [.I've had to
rethink my entire approach to teaching
EXT-KEN precisely because of what you are
describing. Ken] [.Yep. They're certain to
AGR-ROBIN turn off then. Robin]
Since writer-based prose is preliminary to
reader-based, we should start with
CONSOL-R expressive writing in our classes and
evolve toward transactional./ [.Here's
EXT-KEN another example of what I said above—I
will value expressive in the future. Ken]
Too often writing instructors don't
account for the fact that *all* thinkers
CONC-T engage in inner speech and egocentrism
before attempting to communicate with
others./ That's part of the
thinking/composing process, an aspect that
they tend to ignore in concentrating on
CONC-T products that are reader-based as if they
come out of our minds full-blown like
that./ [.but basic writers believe it
CHAL-ROBIN comes out of our minds that way! Robin]
We need to be especially patient with BWs
as we help them to progress along that
continuum from the writer-based,
PRE-T egocentric, expressive end to the
reader-based, critically-distanced,
transactional end./ [."Patience" is
AGR-KEN right—I hope I'm upto the task. Ken]
(And Let's hope they don't lose their
voice & personality in the process, that
PRE-T autonomous doesn't necessarily imply
automaton.)/ [.often, I've found they
EXT-ROBIN haven't discovered a voice—not need to
worry about losing one! Robin]

NOTES

¹For a more extensive discussion of this research project, including selections from coded learning logs, see my monograph *Something Old, Something New*. The most comprehensive treatment of the learning logs and the research can be found in *A Microethnography*; a section of a coded log appears in Appendix L of that study.

WORKS CITED

- Bishop, Wendy. *Something Old, Something New: College Writing Teachers and Classroom Change*. Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press, 1990.
- . *A Microethnography with Case Studies of Teacher Development Through a Graduate Training Course in Teaching Writing*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Indiana University of Pennsylvania, Indiana, PA, 1988.
- Fishman, Andrea R., and Elizabeth Raver. "‘Maybe I’m Just NOT Teacher Material’: Dialogue Journals in the Student Teaching Experience." *English Education* 22 (1989): 92-109.
- Holland, Norman. "Identity Unity Text Self." *Reader-Response Criticism*. Ed. Jane Tompkins. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, 1980. 118-133.
- Mayher, John S., Nancy Lester, and Gordon Pradl. *Learning to Write/Writing to Learn*. Upper Montclair, NJ: Boynton/Cook, 1983.
- Newman, Judith M. "Sharing Journals: Conversational Mirrors for Seeing Ourselves as Learners, Writers, and Teachers." *English Education* 20 (1988): 134-156.