

THE EFFECT OF FEEDBACK ON WRITING MOTIVATION

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Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements

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by

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William Paterson University of New Jersey

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ABSTRACT

Writing is an essential skill for all students. Yet, many students lack motivation to write. Students are more likely to succeed when they are motivated. In fact, “In this culture of evidence, as he notes, the construct of motivation has become of increasing significance: Students who are motivated are likely to produce better outcomes” (Burstein et al., 2021 Student motivation is impacted by teacher feedback. Similarly, writing is impacted by teacher feedback.

A review of literature was conducted to examine topics related to the problem stated. The review of literature surrounded the research questions. The review consisted of three categories: student motivation, impact of teacher feedback and methods of feedback. The study conducted was a mixed-method study. As an English teacher that teaches both reading and writing, the study was centered on writing as a response to short stories read in class. The participants were eight Ninth Grade students. The participants were low motivated writers. The study was conducted over eight weeks. Five data sources were used: pre writing questionnaire, Cask of Amontillado alternate ending assignment, The Scarlet Ibis symbolism chart, The Scarlet Ibis formal writing assignment and a post writing conference. In addition, teacher observations and reflections were taken into account.

The study findings suggest that students’ motivation can be increased by teacher feedback. Students value verbal conferencing when it comes to evaluating their writing. Students prefer individualized written and verbal feedback to generalized feedback given on a rubri.

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CHAPTER I

Statement of the Problem

Introduction

The problem in literacy and writing that I am concerned about is the level of motivation students have surrounding literacy. This is a problem at the national, state and personal level. At the national level, students across the country in high school and college are reporting lesser levels of motivation. Student motivation decreases can be partly linked to the feeling that what they are learning in school is irrelevant to their future goals. Students must be motivated in order to succeed. A recent study conducted researches the link between motivation and performance. In fact, “In this culture of evidence, as he notes, the construct of motivation has become of increasing significance: Students who are motivated are likely to produce better outcomes” (Burstein et al., 2021). Yet, we are experiencing a general lack of motivation among students according to respondents of a motivation survey. The study (2021) surveyed 556 undergraduate students among 6 different universities in the US. The problem of motivation is sweeping the country and only getting more difficult as time goes on. The article states, “Writing, particularly academic writing, is a challenging task that requires substantial motivation. Flower (1979) viewed composing as a “demanding cognitive operation” (p. 36) in which a goal of writing instruction was giving students “the confidence and motivation to go on” (p. 37) (Burstein et al., 2021). In general, people have a view of middle and high school students that is somewhat negative. People view upper school as a tough environment filled with kids that do not want to learn. However, this generalization is extremely harmful in the way. Students are aware of how they are perceived and this negative perception can affect their self-efficacy. In addition, if people in the US feel this way, we must do something to change this narrative. Katherine Landau

Wright comments on this issue, “As argued by Pritchard and Honeycutt, “tragically, many students who enjoy writing in early elementary grades end up hating or avoiding writing by the time they enter upper elementary school” (p. 32). This trend continues into middle school where students do not feel motivated to write (Bruning et al., 2013; Koster et al., 2015). There is no denying the issue of student motivation in reading and writing in America. The Common Core Standards can be restricting and limit students from autonomy and individuality in their reading and writing. In addition, the Common Core Standards can make it difficult for teachers to differentiate learning. This educational policy has a direct correlation to the decrease in student motivation, which I will explain through my research.

At the state level, the Common Core Standards limit students. The Common Core State Standards divide states and create discrepancies among learning. Therefore, student motivation may be lacking due to student feelings of inadequacy. The New Jersey Partnership for Student Success is a program that was launched in July of 2022 to address “critical educational and mental health challenges exacerbated by the COVID-19 Pandemic” (Department of Education, 2023). The program acknowledges the decline in education, motivation and mental health that educators and students are facing post-pandemic. The goal is academic gains, increased high school graduation rates, reductions in chronic absenteeism, and improved student well-being and mental health (Department of Education, 2023). Absenteeism is a huge problem in the state ever since remote learning and largely contributes to the lack of student motivation. The main concern in my study is student motivation. New Jersey is a state that is concerned with improving literacy among students, which is a win for us. This law will help students become active democratic citizens capable of forming their own opinions and managing multiple sources of information. However, we must find a way to motivate students to become active in this literacy learning. A

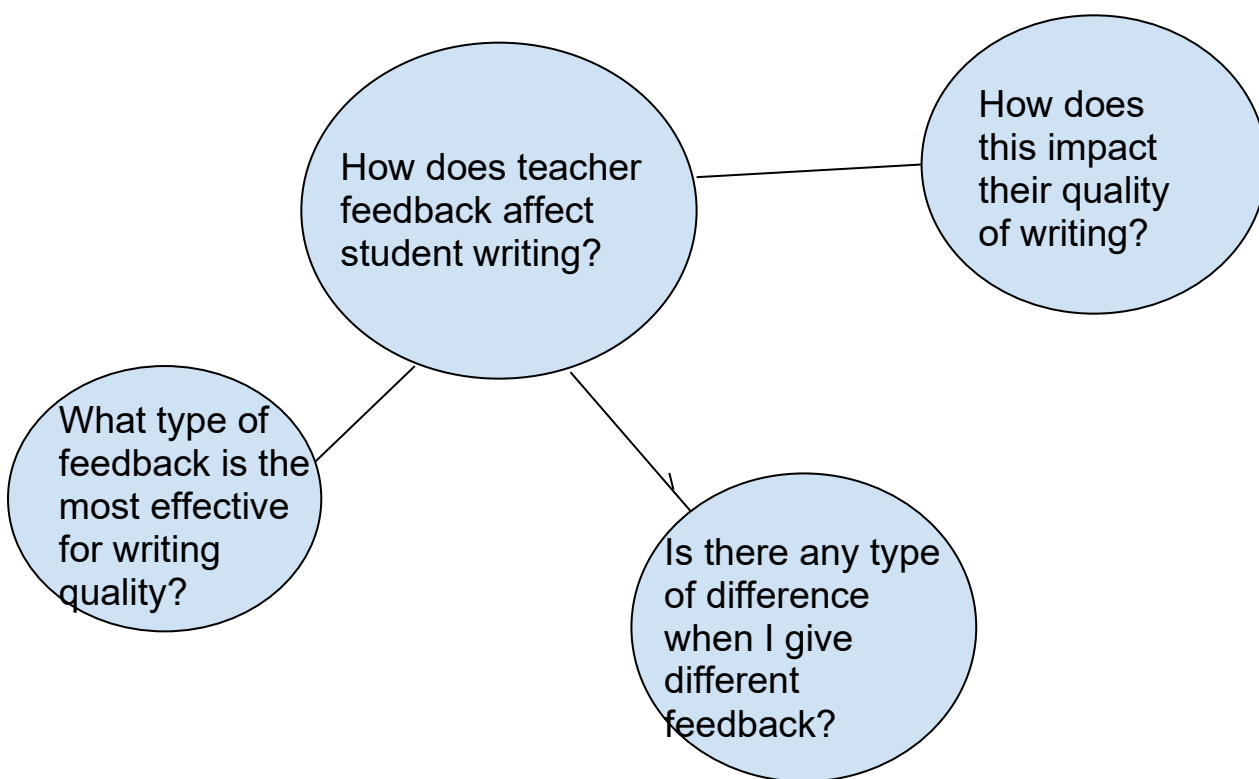
research study conducted in 2015 found that, “academic motivation did not influence how well the students performed in terms of math proficiency, but did influence how well students performed in the language arts section of the NJ HSPA” (Perez, 2015). Motivation is a factor that greatly impacts students' motivation to write. Writing is a skill that feels very personal; therefore, if students do not feel sufficient in their ability to write, they will be adverse to it. While this study focuses on high stakes assessments, like state testing, the same idea can be applied across all Language Arts focuses assignments. Academic motivation and low HSPA scores were a precursor for the issue we are seeing now: low motivation in New Jersey students to write in ways that will improve their long-term success (Perez, 2015).

In my district, Wayne Township Public Schools, motivation is relatively low, but not among all students. I can see a stark difference between the level of motivation in the English 10 Enriched classes I teach and the English 9 ICR classes I teach. The English 9 ICR lacks motivation compared to the Enriched classes. However, the school as a whole still resembles that of a post pandemic world. Students are constantly referring back to Covid times when they “did nothing” and “loved virtual learning.” I believe that this experience has diminished some of their motivation. I also believe that since there was a lack in personal communication and instruction time that students lack of motivation stems from a lack in feedback throughout the Covid years. In my experience, I can see the effects of the pandemic on my high school students. When I first started teaching ninth and tenth grade in 2021, the pandemic was still in full swing. We were masked all day at school and students were returning to in person instruction for the first time in almost two whole years. They were apprehensive, anxious and limited socially. Since then, students are working to get back to “normal”, but the laziness and disinterest of Covid times prevails. On a personal level, I can relate to the students' apprehension to coming back to school

full time after being somewhat antisocial for two years. However, also based on my experience, I have learned how much social interaction and positive feedback can influence motivation. As stated earlier, the Common Core Standards can sometimes feel limiting when designing literacy instruction. The lack of choice can decrease motivation. As a teacher, I try to find ways to incorporate choice by doing outside read projects and other projects and group work. Lastly, in my classroom I have noticed the importance of feedback on students.

Figure 1

teacher feedback



Research Questions

Based on the problem stated above, a general lack in student motivation, the primary question is identified. The primary research questions are: “How is student motivation impacted

by teacher feedback?” and “how is this feedback impacting their writing?” Due to my experience, I will be researching the ways that feedback impacts motivation in order to improve literacy instruction. The goal of this study will be to identify the connection between feedback and motivation.

In addition to the primary research question stated above, this study also examines related questions and observations. What kind of feedback is the most successful in improving motivation? Is

Some specific questions about my teaching will be examined. How will my feedback change due to student response? What would the student's reaction be to receiving peer feedback in addition to my feedback? What would the student's reaction be to receiving peer feedback instead of my feedback? How do my students react to verbal feedback such as writing conferences? Do students benefit from teacher feedback directly on writing samples?

Definition of Terms

This section gives a definition of terms that will be used throughout this study. This research study will be designed to answer the research questions: “How is student motivation impacted by teacher feedback?” and “how is this feedback impacting their writing?”

First, I will define “students,” “motivation,” “impact,” and “feedback.” Then, I will define “writing,” “rubric,” and “conference.”

Students: For this study, the students referred to are boys and girls in my ninth grade English ICR class. The students are between 13-14 years old at Wayne Valley High School in New Jersey.

Motivation: In this research study, motivation refers to the students' attitude towards approaching a writing assignment. Motivation is a student's intrinsic and extrinsic motivation to accomplish a writing assignment.

Writing: In this study, various types of writing will be evaluated and researched. Writing refers to a task that is "a demanding cognitive operation" (Flower, 1979, p.36). The writing in this study will be assignments that students complete during task time, over a few class periods. Students will have instruction and guidance prior to responding to the writing prompt on their own.

Impact: For the purposes of this research study, impact refers to the overall effect on students. Impact will be used to describe the consequence teacher feedback has on students.

Feedback: In this study, feedback refers to teacher response to student writing. Various formats of feedback will be tested in order to determine the best one to improve student motivation.

Rubric: Throughout the research study, different rubrics will be tested. Rubrics in this study will work as, "Instructional rubrics can provide the scaffolding that students need to become self-regulated writers" (Andrade & Saddler, 2004, p. 49).

Conference: For the purpose of this rubric, writing conferences will be one on one meetings between teacher and student. The student will have a piece of their own writing that is ready to enter the revision and editing phase. The teacher and the student will work together to revise the writing sample, answer any questions and address and concerns.

Theoretical Framework

This section presents the theoretical framework selected based upon the research questions. The research questions are: "How is student motivation impacted by teacher feedback?" and "how is this feedback impacting their writing?" These questions were used to identify the theoretical

framework. This framework includes the following theories: self-efficacy (Bandura, 1977) and constructivism (Piaget, 1980). Self-efficacy was originally researched and coined by Albert Bandura. Bandura defines self-efficacy as, ““People’s judgments of their capabilities to organize and execute courses of action required to attain designated types of performances”” (Artino, 2012). Self-efficacy is one’s personal belief in their own capability. As stated, Bandura is the original publisher of self-efficacy. He published his article ‘Self-Efficacy: Toward a Unifying Theory of Behavioral Change.’” Artino states, “During the last decade, research on student self-efficacy has received increasing attention in the area of academic motivation and achievement” (Artino, 2012). Not only did Bandura research self-efficacy, but he spent years explaining its importance.

In his book, he describes the importance of self-efficacy, ““*Unless people believe they can produce desired effects by their actions, they have little incentive to act. Efficacy belief, therefore, is a major basis of action. People guide their lives by their beliefs of personal efficacy*”” (Bandura, 1997, as cited in Artino, 2012). Therefore, one’s belief of what they can accomplish does not necessarily match with the domain of which they are actually capable. Interestingly, Bandura argues that the overestimation of one’s academic capabilities can actually “increase effort and persistence” during hard times (Artino, 2012). Self- efficacy as Bandura defines it is actually two parts. The second aspect is the idea that individuals make their self-efficacy judgments based on some goal. It is important to note that this goal is not one singular goal throughout a person’s life that then determines their self-efficacy forever. Rather, self-efficacy judgments are situational. In this way, “goals” are task specific and situational (Artino, 2012).

In addition, Bandura theorized that people who have a low expectation for a task, are less likely to do it. For example, “People who have low self-efficacy for accomplishing a specific task may avoid it, while those who believe they are capable are more likely to participate” (Artino, 2012). Compared with students who doubt their capabilities, students with high self-efficacy are more likely to be motivated to engage and participate (Miele & Wentzel, 2016, p. 33). Research has proven that self-efficacy affects learning, motivation, confidence, achievement and self regulation. In terms of schooling, self-efficacy influences student choice of activities, effort expended, interest and persistence (Miele & Wentzel, 2016, p. 34). Therefore, the research questions will follow the theoretical framework of Albert Bandura’s “Self-Efficacy Theory.”

The research questions will also be guided by Jean Piaget’s “Constructivist Theory.” Jean Piaget helped shape the transition from behaviorism to constructivism, his research sparked major change for the future of education. Originally a scientist, Piaget was interested in the way that we (organisms) interact with our environments (Mankato). Devi explains, “Jean Piaget viewed children as discovering or constructing virtually all knowledge about their world based on their cognitive levels” (Devi, 2019, p. 5). Constructivist learning is student-driven and definitely not limited to instruction confined to the classroom walls. Learners develop their own understanding of information alongside the teacher. The learner will refer to their own experiences and meaning making skills as well as those of their classmates when making decisions surrounding their education (Devi, 2019, p. 6). In this way, the classroom becomes a reciprocal environment amongst teachers and students. The act of teaching is seen as “co-constructing knowledge” in this pedagogy. Many argue that an effective classroom is one that is dependent on Constructivist theory and practices.

Cognitive Constructivism (Piaget, 1980) is often used in conjunction with Social Constructivism (Vygotsky, 1968). The two work together to create an effective classroom environment in which students have autonomy over their own learning. The interaction is described, “In cognitive constructivism, ideas are constructed in individuals through a personal process, as opposed to social constructivism where ideas are constructed through interaction with the teacher and other students” (Kalina & Powell, 241). Piaget also states, “Piaget's theory of cognitive development proposes that humans cannot be given information, which they immediately understand and use; instead, humans must construct their own knowledge“ (Piaget, 1953, as cited in, Kalina & Powell, 242). Students will go through a process of assimilation when coming into an understanding surrounding their own learning. This theory will aid in guiding my research question as the goal is to determine best writing and feedback practices for students.

Educational Significance

The purpose of this study is to examine the research questions: "How is student motivation impacted by teacher feedback?" and “how is this feedback impacting their writing?” These questions are extremely significant because it is important that we learn more about ninth grade high school English students in the ICR class. Teachers, administrators and in class support will be able to learn from this study because they will better understand how to best support students. As a result of this study, teachers, administrators and in class support will be able to increase student motivation by use of teacher feedback. In addition, the study will uncover the ways that this feedback will impact student writing. Teachers will be able to maximize the writing motivation in students, which will result in improvements in student writing as well. When students feel more supported by their teachers, they are more motivated to engage in writing. This motivation can be fostered through effective forms of feedback.

Research Methods & Approaches

There are two main kinds of research questions: qualitative and quantitative. A study can be a mix of both. Generally, qualitative research questions are more open ended (Efron & Ravid, 2020). One can use “how” or “what” to frame research questions. Qualitative research is evolving, which means it is changing; so, one can adapt their research questions as the study goes on. Quantitative research, on the other hand, is concerned with research variables that can be measured (Efron & Ravid, 2020). Research statements using quantitative research are typically equipped with phrases like “how many” or “how much.” Another distinguishing feature of quantitative data is that it is generally followed by a hypothesis. Lastly, a mixed methods research study is one in which the researcher wants to pose a variety of research questions that each require a different type of research method (Efron & Ravid, 2020). Interestingly enough, one research question phrased three different ways can lead to three different types of methods being used. The example in the textbook proves that one general statement can warrant three different types of research.

Appropriate approaches for my research topic

For my research topic I will be using a mixed method approach. My primary questions are: “How is student motivation impacted by teacher feedback?” and “how is this feedback impacting their writing?” I will use a qualitative approach when addressing student motivation.

Researching student motivation will not involve numbers or “measurable” data. Instead, I will focus on students’ emotions and perceptions of writing. Further, “the purpose of qualitative research is to gain insight into and understanding of how students, teachers, parents, and administrators make sense of their educational experience” (Efron & Ravid, 2020, p.45-46). Therefore, my research on student motivation will use a qualitative approach. In addition, my

second research question “how is feedback impacting student writing?” will take a quantitative approach. I will use student writing scores to answer this research question, this is numerical data. Quantitative research aims to “produce an effective and efficient achievement of all students” (Efron & Ravid, 2020, p.48). Therefore, to answer both of my research questions I will use a mixed method approach.

Chapter II

Introduction

This chapter reviews literature that is relevant to the primary research questions of this study. The research questions are: “How is student motivation impacted by teacher feedback?” and “how is this feedback impacting their writing?” The following review of literature discusses student motivation, impacts of teacher feedback, and various methods of effective feedback.

Student motivation

Student motivation can be defined as the way that students both respond to writing and go about the writing process. Student motivation refers to the way that students feel when presented with a writing prompt or assignment.

Philippakos, et al., (2023) conducted a study to examine and investigate college students in first year composition (FYC) class’s motivation to write. These students had low level writing skills. The study was conducted on two groups: students with low writing skills in a basic skills class and students in typical FYC classes. The study was conducted in three colleges across two states; however, it does not specify which colleges or states. There were 371 participants. Out of the 371, 142 were in basic writing and 229 were in FYC. Most of the students had graduated high school the prior year (71%). The study design was structural equation modeling. The students that participated in the study completed a questionnaire which asked them 49 questions relating to motivation when it comes to writing. The questions related to scales of goal-orientation, self-efficacy, and beliefs. At the end of the questionnaire students wrote an argumentative essay. The length of the study was one year. The study reported on the four scales of motivation. These are as follows: goal orientation, social performance, avoidance and mastery avoidance. The conclusions are that goal orientation findings are consistent with prior research in writing motivation. Also, the three main goal orientations are identified as: performance, mastery

and avoidance. Yet, both theory and research prove that low achieving writers, both basic writers and FYC find that when an emphasis is placed on mechanics and conventions, motivation will decrease. Research has found that there is a positive relationship between writing performance and mastery goals. This goes to show that students feel more motivated when they feel sufficient in what they are writing. Self-efficacy is essential to students' intrinsic motivation and the substance of what they are writing. In this way, students need to feel that what they are writing is important to their own lives. Another finding of the study is that FYC students scored higher on self-efficacy for strategies and grammar while BW scored higher on self-regulation. The BW group actually scored higher on the belief of the importance in mechanics. Both groups scored the same on the belief of substance, this implies that both groups feel that what they are writing about affects their motivation to write. This questionnaire can be used across colleges and high schools to analyze multiple factors of student motivation. The questionnaire could be used prior to instruction to help guide teachers in the way that they teach and evaluate writing. It could also be used multiple times throughout the school year as benchmark assessments.

Wright et al., (2020) conducted a study examining how students' motivation for writing actually differs through the middle school years. The middle school years in this study are 6th, 7th and 8th grade. The researchers administered a survey called the *Self-Beliefs, Writing Beliefs, and Attitude Survey* (SWAS) to a cross-sectional sample of students. The students went to two different middle schools. After the survey, seventh graders had to complete a high-stakes writing exam. The location of the study was not disclosed, but the participants were three grades of middle school students. The study was a quantitative study in which the researchers surveyed middle school students. The survey was used to determine student beliefs surrounding writing, themselves as writers and their attitude towards writing. The study was one month long. The

study found that writing motivation is a construct constructed of 3 levels. The first is attitude toward writing, the second is beliefs about the self as a writer and the third is the belief about writing. The results show that students' attitude toward writing varies among the three grades widely. Interestingly, sixth graders entered middle school with a positive attitude toward writing. Yet, once students reach seventh grade they started to gain a negative attitude toward writing because teachers were teaching to a high-stakes test. The attitudes generally changed based on experiences. The students generally had negative experiences in seventh grade, which as stated is most likely attributed to the seventh grade high-stakes test writing exam. The implications are that teachers should not explicitly teach to a test because then students lose motivation. Students will likely not practice writing if they feel it is not a worthwhile endeavor, which is likely to be the case if they are only learning to write for a test. Therefore, student motivation lacks when they feel pressure of a high stakes test.

Wang and Troia (2023) conducted a research study to explore writing motivation among students and teacher instruction. The research study had three research questions, which hypotheses for each. The first research question was, "Does students' writing motivation predict their writing quality?" The hypothesis for this question was, "Students' writing motivation relates to their writing quality. More specifically, we posited that the composite motivational scores of students, encompassing self-efficacy beliefs, task interest and value, and outcome and efficacy expectations, would exert a positive influence on their writing performance" (Wang & Troia, 2023). The second research question was, "Do teachers' professional traits and teaching effectiveness predict students' writing quality?" This research question warranted two hypotheses. Hypothesis 2a was as follows, "Teachers' self-efficacy beliefs, writing knowledge, writing ability, and professional development efforts relate to students' writing quality" (Wang &

Troia, 2023). Hypothesis 2b was as follows, “Teachers' instructional practices related to process, skills, materials, teaching tactics, and classroom management relate to students' writing quality” (Wang & Troia, 2023). The third research question was, “Does the relationship between students' writing motivation and their writing quality depend on teachers' instructional practices?” The hypothesis for this question was, “ Teachers' instructional practices related to process, skills, materials, teaching tactics, and classroom management moderate the relation between students' writing motivation and writing quality” (Wanag & Troia, 2023).

The participants of the study were 41 English Language teachers and 246 students. The students were of mixed ability level and grade. The students were determined by district writing scores and their general writing abilities. The study took place in Midwestern school districts. The research study was conducted by using a two level stratified cluster sampling design. The students were at the first level and teachers and classrooms were on the second. The findings from this study can be generalized to similar populations because the study focused on a wide set of age range and abilities. The study found that writing motivation had a positive predictive outcome on writing achievement. That is, when students were more motivated to write, their writing quality was better. This was evident in both the teacher and student models. The researchers (2023) explain that when students had high motivation their writing quality was more likely to be higher in a classroom setting that emphasized the writing process focusing more on teaching tactics and materials than process features and mechanics. The findings suggest that teachers' instruction greatly affects writing motivation and achievement. Teachers' professional traits and actions influence students' motivation and proficiency (Wang & Troia, 2023). Also, instructional practices that target developing students' writing proficiency and procedures are predictive of motivation and quality.

Cordero et al (2023)., conducted a study to identify student writing motivation and ability profiles in the US. They used an automated writing evaluation (AWE) using MI Write. This intervention was used to determine transition pathways. The study had four research questions: “what are the writing motivation and ability profiles to diverse middle school students?”, “Are the identified profiles invariant across a school year and across different demographic groups?”, “What are the within-person and within-sample transition paths between these profiles across a school year, and what is the effect of an AWE intervention on these transitions?”, and “are there differences in students’ writing motivation and ability profiles and transition paths according to demographic predictors?” The study was composed of 2,487 students in grades 7 and 8. 51.9% were female. There were 37 teachers that participated in the trial. The trial was a randomized controlled trial. Three school districts across the Mid-Atlantic and Southern US participated in the trial. These districts were chosen because 50% or more of their population was considered a priority population. This means that students were Hispanic/Latinx or Black and/or experiencing poverty (Cordero et al., 2023). It should also be noted that the study included only 2.6% English Language Learners.

As stated, the study was a randomized controlled trial. It was composed of two data collection time points, which were the beginning of the school year and the end of the school year. Data collection was taken in the 2021-2022 school year when students were still experiencing effects of the Pandemic. The AWE intervention that was used was MI Write. It is designed to address the feedback burden on teachers by assigning more writing to students but allowing teachers to provide high-level feedback. All the while students are experiencing more opportunities for writing practice and accelerated “writing-feedback style” work (Cordero et al., 2023). In addition, the writing motivation and beliefs survey was composed of two scales.

Students completed the Self-Efficacy for Writing Scale (SEWS) and the Liking Writing Scale (LWS). The study found that students in the Low-Motivation and Ability (L-MA) profile had the lowest scores on all indicators throughout the study. These students were well below the median for self-efficacy and liking writing. Next, students in the Low/Mid Motivation and Ability (LM-MA) group were slightly higher than the L-MA group in both sections (Cordero et al., 2023). The trend continues. The Mid/High Motivation and Ability students were both above the median and above the previous group. Lastly, the High- Motivation and Ability (H-MA) profile was composed of students with extremely high motivation and self-efficacy scores. Yet, these students were only slightly higher on the writing ability score. In general, students were likely to follow the same path that they started the school year on. The most consistent and stable profile was the H-MA group. The other profiles were stable for half the students. The most likely transition was for students to move a level higher by the end of the school year.

Impacts of teacher feedback

Teacher feedback plays a large role in the way students perceive their own writing. Feedback effects student's writing throughout their education. The studies below explore the impacts of teacher feedback.

Sieben (2017) conducted a study with the research question: "What type of feedback is most effective in secondary students' development as hopeful and competent writers?" Her study used her own experience as a High School English teacher. The participants were here 12th grade English class. The length of the study was continuous as it was over years of experience. Sieben used interviews, focus groups, and surveys of both teachers and students to conduct her research. She reports using open coding to examine the data. She looked for overlapping themes in the responses to make conclusions. Sieben explains that there are six main types of effective

feedback, which she places in hierarchical order. First is to relate and react to the content and ideas of the piece. The second is to find a balance between compliment and critique. Third is to use minimal marginal notes and summative endnotes. Fourth is to keep it conversational and ask questions. Fifth is to actually ask students to write their own feedback and highlight their revisions. Sixth is to use emojis and use students' digital language. The findings are that all six of these feedback types should be used in order to create a feedback climate that is caring, motivational and effective. Writing needs to matter to students in order for them to be motivated. So, providing meaningful feedback is essential. The researcher suggests that a strength-based approach is the most effective and meaningful.

Listyani (2021) studied the way that students perceive teacher feedback on their writing. The two research questions were: "Do you think that teacher feedback is necessary? And the second question was: How do you feel when you get teacher feedback?" (Listyani, 2021). The research was done on four classes of writing. The courses were: Research Proposal Writing, Academic Writing, Writing for the media and Creative Writing. These courses were given in an English Language Education Study Program at a private university in Jali, Indonesia. The data was collected from each of the four classes at the beginning of semester II and at the end of semester II. In total, there were 76 research participants. It is important to note that the students were taught by the researcher and no regular classroom activity were changed due to the research. The sampling technique was random sampling. Students were given questionnaires, interviews and journals. All of the data that was collected was collected in English. Also, the students submitted hard copies of daily activities like practice with paraphrasing, summarizing, in text - citations, and writing parts of the essay. However, for the final draft students submitted an electronic copy. The study drew three conclusions from the research: students had positive,

negative or mixed emotions when it came to teacher feedback. 49 (64.47%) of students had positive responses to teacher feedback, 10 (13.16%) showed negative or unfavorable responses to teacher feedback and 17 (22.37%) showed mixed emotions toward teacher feedback.

According to Listyani (2021), the implication for future research is to close the gap between teacher and learner when it comes to feedback. Both teacher and learner should be on the same page when it comes to expectations surrounding feedback. This way, the student is not shocked or disappointed and the teacher is not either. This will create a more effective feedback pathway. The article states that researchers can consider the three “parameters of effective feedback.” These are: the clarity of language in the feedback, the tone of the feedback and how to deal with the word choice and style.

Mewborn et al (2016)., conducted a research study to investigate the writing feedback perception of both middle and high school students. The study was an explanatory sequential mixed methods study. In addition, the role that self-efficacy and writing feedback have on students’ self-regulation were measured using mediation regression analysis. The study took place in a Southeastern school district. There were 598 students across four schools in a large Southeastern school district. The students were in grades 6 through 10. There were 306 males and 292 females. The study took a mixed method approach. In fact, this study is actually a part of a larger study that examined elementary and secondary students’ perception of both the writing process and themselves as writers (Mewborn et al., 2016). Throughout the spring semester, both quantitative and qualitative data were collected using an online platform. The quantitative data included The Student Writing Feedback Perceptions Scale, The Writing Self-Efficacy Scale, and the Writing Self-Regulation Aptitude Scale. The qualitative data was an online survey. The quantitative results found that students’ perceptions of the feedback they

receive did partially mediate their relationship between writing self-efficacy and self-regulation aptitude (Mewborn et al., 2016). The qualitative data suggested that students perceive writing feedback in both negative and positive ways. The research suggests that in the younger grades (3-5) students like receiving feedback on their writing while in the secondary grades students are more fearful towards criticism. This could be attributed to students fearing criticism, bad grades, judgment or a lack of confidence in their writing ability. It should be noted that while the online surveys in this study were administered to a large group of students, they only allowed for short responses. Future research should aim to conduct interviews and classroom observations to add to the understanding of student perception on writing feedback.

Methods of effective feedback

Latifah et al., (2019) set out on a study to determine the differences, if any, between direct and indirect feedback on student writers. The aim was to determine if these types of feedback impacted writing ability. The population of the study was a class of seniors in High school in Indonesia. There were 32 students in group 1 and 32 students in group 2. The study design was quasi experimental because they needed to test hypotheses for a cause and effect relationship. The study had four phases: 1) planning, 2) pretest, 3) treatment given through indirect and direct feedback, 4) post-test given at the end of the treatment. The students' test was scored by two raters to determine the improvement in writing ability. The researcher was able to determine that indirect feedback was actually more effective than direct feedback. Indirect feedback was more effective than direct feedback in improving students' overall writing ability. This type of feedback may encourage writers to understand their own mistakes. In this way, the learners become more active and independent. These learners actually asked the teachers questions relating to their feedback. Also, the students were more aware of their errors through indirect

feedback. The students felt more motivated and challenged when they received indirect feedback from their instructor. The scores of the pre and posttest prove that this type of feedback was more effective in improving students' writing abilities. The test analysis proves that direct feedback was less effective. The overall findings suggest that when trying to improve motivation and writing ability, indirect feedback is more effective.

The next study examines both teacher and student feedback. Harassi et al., (2023) examine three patterns of writing: comparison-contrast essays, opinion essays and cause and effect essays. The research is done through college courses. An academic writing course titled English 1222 was the research study group for this study. The course meets for six hours a week and there are about 15 weeks of instruction in the semester. The study follows three teachers and their 18 students (six students per class). The demographic is a mix of male and female. The data was collected through qualitative techniques. The three that were used were: interviews, class observations and an analysis of course documents and student writing. This data was collected throughout a whole semester of one academic year. The data collected was completed in five steps using the techniques aforementioned.

The study found that teachers' feedback can mostly be attributed to their beliefs about academic writing. Therefore, students tried to adapt their writing to fit what they thought were their teachers' beliefs. For example, one teacher in the study provided much of their feedback on rhetorical features because of their belief that academic writing should train learners to write for a variety of writing tasks. Yet, all three teachers in the study had different views on which type of feedback was the most important. These views clearly reflect different opinions and beliefs about academic writing.

The second part of the research question in this study was to figure out how students take feedback and apply the revisions on different patterns of writing and then to identify the reasons behind these revisions (Harassi, et al., 2023). Students all responded differently to different types of feedback. In general, a majority of the students actually seemed to ignore comments on rhetorical features. Yet, they seemed to pay more attention to feedback on grammatical errors. Students revealed in their interviews that they had a more positive reaction to feedback regarding grammar usage and mechanics because they believe that is more important to enhance their academic writing. They also believed that vocabulary usage and mechanics of language was important to their academic writing. They were less worried about comments on their rhetorical features because they did not see the importance in writing in different patterns of text.

The study suggests that actually both teachers and students do not take full advantage of feedback, especially that of rhetorical features. An implication of the study can be that teachers may be more successful in providing feedback on rhetorical features if they do it orally rather than written. In this way, there is a two way conversation occurring between teacher and student rather than a passive stream of information. Motivation is multidimensional and a tough topic to cover. The implications of this research study show that motivation is complex to measure and is actually dependent on the beliefs and values of both the writer and the teacher. The teacher can increase motivation by adapting their feedback technique to meet the needs of the students.

The next study by Zou, Xie, and Wang (2023) examines technology enhanced feedback. The study examines the use of technology enhanced feedback in the way that it can assist students in comparing research articles, promoting student critical thinking, and their effectiveness in enhancing students' cognitive and behavioral engagement in learning. Cognitive,

behavioral and emotional engagement in learning all affect a student's motivation to learn and write. The study was conducted by Masters of Education students in Hong Kong. There were 90 students used in the study. 30 were in each group. The three groups were: technology enhanced peer feedback, technology enhanced teacher feedback and technology enhanced self-feedback. There were 18 males and 72 females between the ages of 22 and 24. The study design was composed of a diagnostic writing exam. There was also a pre questionnaire survey during week 2 of the study. The study design was a mix of qualitative and quantitative data. Lastly, there was a post questionnaire survey and semi structured interviews. The study was 14 weeks long. The results of this study showed that technology enhanced teacher feedback and technology enhanced peer feedback were much more effective than technology enhanced self-feedback. Also, teacher feedback was the most effective in enhancing cognitive engagement in learning. Also, the students reported that the use of digital tools like Google Docs and FlipGrid has a positive effect on their feedback experience. The students reported that these tools enhanced the feedback and learning experience. It also allowed them to gather useful information quickly and effectively as they needed it. This study indicates that technology based teacher and peer feedback is beneficial to students. This study also shows that self-feedback may not be the best type of feedback, but can be good for behavioral and self-efficacy purposes. The study suggests that teachers include more technology based feedback.

Overall theme of the review

The ten literature reviews above relate to the motivation of students and types of effective feedback. The overall theme is that teacher feedback plays a large role in the motivation of student writers. Philippakos, et al., (2023) found that students need to feel that what they are writing is important to their own lives. This feeling along with self-efficacy increases motivation.

There are various types of effective feedback. In general, it can be stated that students need to understand the importance of their writing in order to be intrinsically motivated to write. One way to encourage this intrinsic motivation is to encourage self-efficacy and students' own beliefs that they are capable writers. In addition, teachers should adjust their feedback techniques to meet the needs of the student writers. Motivation and feedback are complimentary of one another. The literature reviewed above proves that motivation and feedback are essential in creating effective student writers.

Many studies found that students of writing benefit from a variety of feedback rather than just one type of feedback. Sieben (2017) actually found that there are six main types of effective feedback. It is beneficial to include most or all six types of feedback in the classroom because different students respond to different methods of feedback. This can be attributed to the fact that different learners have different requirements. One type of feedback that can be differentiated to help learners is technology enhanced feedback. Zou, Xie and Wang (2023) explain that technology enhanced feedback was proven to engage learners. This type of feedback can enhance cognitive and behavioral engagement in student learning and writing. Therefore, increasing motivation to write.

Similarly, studies found that a variety of six types of feedback were the most effective in her high school English students (Sieben, 2017). Overall a strength based approach is the most successful. This means finding a balance between compliment and critique. Finding this balance will allow teachers to improve student writing while also increasing student motivation to write. Along the same lines is Wright et al., (2020) study surrounding middle school writers and the way their motivation changes throughout the middle school years. The study found that high stakes writing assignments like standardized testing decreases seventh grade students' motivation

to write immensely. High stakes testing takes the individuality out of writing and results in students feeling like their writing process does not matter.

Another overall theme that can be determined from the research is that students' perception of writing feedback is highly varied. Students may have negative perceptions of writing feedback because they are fearful of judgment or criticism. Similarly, students who lack motivation and confidence to write are often adverse to writing feedback. There is research showing that younger students welcome writing feedback more than older students. In addition, secondary students seem to prefer technology based feedback in addition to writing conferences and interviews.

Chapter III

Research Design

Introduction

A lack in students' motivation to write is apparent in the US. Teacher feedback on writing impacts student motivation (citation). This chapter describes the mixed method research design of this study. The data was collected and analyzed to answer two research questions: "How is student motivation impacted by teacher feedback?" and "how is this feedback impacting their writing?" The participants of this study were aware that they were a part of the research. In this chapter I will discuss my research methods and why they are appropriate for my topic, my research setting and my data sources.

In this research project, I am the researcher. This research follows a mixed method approach; both qualitative and quantitative data will be used. My research method will be a mixed method approach. I will be using both qualitative and quantitative data. I will be using both qualitative and quantitative data because my research question seeks to determine how to increase motivation in students, which would use qualitative data; while also seeking to determine how teacher feedback impacts writing, which would use quantitative data. The word "impact" is being used to describe student writing scores. Generally, qualitative research questions are more open ended (Efron & Ravid, 2020). One can use "how" or "what" to frame research questions. Qualitative research is evolving, which means it is changing; so, one can adapt their research questions as the study goes on. Quantitative research, on the other hand, is concerned with research variables that can be measured (Efron & Ravid, 2020). Research statements using quantitative research are typically equipped with phrases like "how many" or

“how much.” Therefore, I will need to use both methods in order for my research to run effectively.

Specifically, I will take a two-phase research approach. Two-phase research uses both qualitative and quantitative data throughout research process, but in two steps (Efron & Ravid, 2020). In two-phase research, there is not much mixing between qualitative and quantitative data. Therefore, I will take a two-phase research approach as my two research questions require different types of data. I will use both qualitative and quantitative data and treat both with equal weight. As the researcher, I will take both a subjective and objective stance when assessing writing and student motivation. This is appropriate for my research questions because I will use observations, writing samples, questionnaires and rubrics in the classroom. Activities like journaling, observations and questionnaires will require qualitative data analysis while student writing samples, rubrics and applied feedback will require quantitative data analysis.

Research Setting

This section presents the setting for this research study. This study is designed to answer the research questions: “How is student motivation impacted by teacher feedback?” My research setting will be a suburban public high school in New Jersey. The town is about 52,960 people. The percentage of people under 18 years old, which is the age of my students, is 21.4% (US Census, 2022). The town is composed of 80% white alone or partially, 2.5% black alone or partially, 9.6% Asian alone or partially, 11.5% Hispanic or Latino or partially (US Census, 2022). According to the US Census, 2.8% of residents are in poverty and the median household income in 2021 dollars from 2017-2021 was \$137,168. Also, the percentage of people speaking a language at home other than English ages 5 and above is 27.8%. In the school district, there are

two high schools. My research will be done at a high school in a class of ninth grade. The ninth graders are in the inclusion classroom (ICR) in English 9. The school has just over 1200 students. The English department that I work in is predominantly women teachers. The school is a huge sports school with a student body dedicated to each and every football game. The school spirit is high and students are proud to attend the school. There are more male than female students (CCD, 2023). The total ninth grade students is about 310.

Data Sources and Data Collection Procedures

I will use a variety of data sources that are already used in my classroom. I will use a writing questionnaire pre and post research. The goal of this questionnaire is to choose which students I will select for my research. However, all students will be engaging in all activities. I will use this questionnaire both pre and post research to assess how motivation has increased and in which students. Therefore, this questionnaire will be administered two times. This will be qualitative data.

I will also use rubrics to assess student writing. The same rubric will be used twice throughout the writing process. First, for a draft. In this draft I will score and provide feedback for students on rubrics and writing samples. Then, students will apply this feedback to a final draft. I will use the rubrics as quantitative data. The written feedback and rubrics will be quantitative data because they will result in a numerical grade for student writing samples.

In addition, I will be using a symbolism chart that students will fill out prior to completing their writing assignment. The symbolism chart will follow a lesson on integrating quotes. I will provide feedback on students' symbolism charts on the format and integrating of their quotations and citations. Students will need to apply this feedback to their writing drafts.

Students will fill out the symbolism chart only once and I will provide one round of feedback on writing samples. All of the data will be posted on Google Classroom for students to complete on their Chromebooks. However, I will also provide paper copies for students who prefer paper in order to differentiate. The symbolism chart will represent quantitative data as I will analyze whether or not students made the revisions to quote integrations.

I will also keep an observation journal. In this journal I will report on my perception of students' attitude toward writing and revising. I will use observations, conversations with students and conversations with colleagues to guide my reflections. In my conversations with colleagues, I will discuss the various types of feedback that I am using. I will ask colleagues about their experiences with these techniques. In addition, I will provide mini writing boot camp lessons throughout the unit. Students will apply lessons to their writing samples. Lastly, once students hand in their final draft of the writing assignment, I will have a writing conference with each student. The writing conference will be the last step in gathering my data. The information I gather from the conferences will be the data. I will take notes on each conference in the reflection journal. This will be qualitative data because it is a conversation similar to an interview with the student and there is no quantitative data to be measured.

Research Participants

I am the participant-observer of this study. I am currently in my third year of teaching. I have been teaching English 9 ICR and English 10 Enriched for three years. The participants of the current study are limited to the English 9 ICR class. I obtained my undergraduate degree at The Pennsylvania State University in Secondary English Education. I am now in the process of obtaining my M.Ed. in Teaching of Writing P-12 from William Paterson University of New

Jersey. I was enrolled in a mentorship program my first year teaching with a senior teacher in the English department as my mentor. I have been provided professional development opportunities in mental health, curriculum development, collaboration, etc.

The participants of this study are a group of eight students in my English 9 ICR class. The students are all in the same class period. The students were selected by their responses to the pre writing questionnaire aforementioned. The students reported that they either did not like writing or did like writing but felt intimidated by it. The students do not have IEP's or special services. Although, they are in the lower level English class.

Data Analysis Procedures

This section presents the data analysis procedures conducted in this study. This study was designed to answer the research questions: "How is student motivation impacted by teacher feedback?" and "how is this feedback impacting their writing?" There were five data sources analyzed. These included: a pre feedback evaluation, a symbolism chart, a writing assignment, rubrics with feedback, and a writing conference reference sheet. In addition, I kept a reflection journal to keep track of observations throughout the study. The study was conducted during a four week span. The data sources were updated and analyzed.

Observations will be made intentionally and throughout the research. During the qualitative observation, I will look, listen, reflect and assess (Efron & Ravid, 2020). The observation protocol includes field notes, which I will take in the reflection journal. I will take descriptive notes describing who is in the setting, when the group meets, where the meeting takes place, what is happening and how the situation is organized (Efron & Ravid, 2020). I will utilize the sample observation protocol form (Efron & Ravid, 2020).

The next form of data was the pre evaluation writing questionnaire. This questionnaire was administered to the entire class. Students were handed a hard copy and filled it out independently during class time. The questionnaire was used to determine which students I would focus on in the research study. The questionnaire asked students about their motivation to write, their attitude towards writing, how they feel when presented with a writing prompt and other questions of similar nature.

An additional data source was “The Scarlet Ibis” symbolism chart. I used this data to determine how students use feedback on mechanics like integrating quotes. Students were given three main symbols from “The Scarlet Ibis” and were instructed to find six quotes from the text to support each symbol. Prior to filling out the symbolism chart, I conducted a mini lesson on integrating and citing quotes from a text. Therefore, the feedback that I provided on the symbolism chart commented on the integration and citing of quotes. Students handed this in once for a grade, but were instructed to use the written feedback on the following writing assignment. My role in the research was to determine if students properly used the written feedback in order to correct mistakes. The symbolism chart will serve as quantitative data because I will be able to see how many times students’ accurately format quotes.

Next, I assigned students a formal writing prompt. The writing prompt was first turned in as a draft. In the first draft I looked for correct citing of quotes as mentioned above. I graded the drafts using a literary analysis rubric. The rubrics categories were: controlling ideas, evidence/support for topic, mechanics of writing, and formatting. I printed out the rubrics and wrote directly on them because in the writing questionnaires I received feedback from my students that they prefer printed versions of feedback. Once students handed in their first draft and received the rubric and paper with written feedback, they had a change to make the

revisions. Once revisions were complete, students handed in the final draft. The final draft was graded with the same rubric in order to ensure consistency. Students were then graded both on content and quality of writing. Therefore, the writing assignments are quantitative data.

Then, I held post writing conferences with the students. Students filled out a writing conference reflection sheet after the conference. I assessed students' responses to determine the effectiveness of my feedback and how it impacted student motivation. This conference is qualitative data. After the conference I will reflect on the process and the conversation (Efron & Ravid, 2020).

Validity and Reliability

This section presents the validity and reliability for this study. This study was designed to answer the research questions: "How is student motivation impacted by teacher feedback?" and "how is this feedback impacting their writing?" The data in this study will be reliable because the tools that will be used to collect the data will be consistent (Efron & Ravid, 2020). One way to ensure reliability is to administer the same test more than once. I will use the test- retest approach (Popham, 2017). When students complete their first draft of The Scarlet Ibis Writing Assignment, I will use the same literary analysis rubric as when they complete their second and final draft of the assignment. Therefore, reliability is ensured. The instruction will be natural and took place in the regular classroom. Both instruction and research will be conducted by me.

The data collected for this study will also be valid, this will be ensured through the use of triangulation research. I will use triangulation research because multiple data sources will be used (Efron & Ravid, 2020). I will be testing multiple students using a variety of methods. Eight students will be participants of the study and they are aware that they are part of the study. The data that will be collected will measure what it is intended to measure, which is the way that

teacher feedback impacts student motivation and writing (Creswell & Miller, 2000). This data will be confirmed using various sources, so validity is apparent. A conference will be administered at the end of the study to gain student perspective on the way that feedback has impacted their motivation and writing. This data will gain student perspective in addition to mine as the researcher and teacher (Creswell & Miller, 2000). All data points will be analyzed and taken into account in an equal manner. Validity will also be ensured through the use of thick description. Thick description will be used in the detailed and rich account of the research. Similarly, the writing conference will be a representation of the students' perspectives in their own words. Therefore, this study is both reliable and valid.

Limitations

This section presents the limitations of this study. The research questions of this study were: "How is student motivation impacted by teacher feedback?" and "how is this feedback impacting their writing?" A limitation of this study was time. The data was collected over eight weeks. The study aims to answer the question surrounding student motivation towards writing and how feedback affects quality of writing. Eight weeks is not a long time to measure the quality of student writing. A longer time period could warrant more results.

Another limitation could be the participant group. The group was restricted to 8 students in an English 9 ICR class. A larger group from a different class may have different results. In addition, the participants in this study were all non-classified students. Therefore, students with an IEP may have responded differently to feedback. A larger research group may result in different findings. Due to the time and amount of students studied, limitations were prevalent.

Chapter IV: Findings

This mixed-method study was done to address the problem surrounding writing motivation in high school students and the way that teacher feedback impacts writing. The research questions were: `` The data supports the following findings. Students are more motivated to write a creative writing piece than a literary analysis. This was determined through a questionnaire and students' scores on writing assignments. I also found that feedback impacts writing motivation. Feedback was provided verbally, through rubrics and written both virtually and physically. Students preferred verbal feedback. Also, formatting and mechanics have an impact on student motivation. It can be determined, from the data, that students are adverse to editing formatting and mechanical errors. Another theme that was identified is the importance of verbal conferencing.

Data Collection

Through the course of this study, my students engaged in a variety of writing assignments and questionnaires. Throughout these various writing assignments, I (researcher and teacher) provided students with different types of feedback. At the start of the study, I administered a pre-writing questionnaire in order to determine which students I would choose for my study. I chose 8 students based on their responses. I administered this questionnaire a second time at the end of the study.

In addition, throughout the entirety of the study I administered writing mini lessons according to my lesson plans. Mini lessons were composed of instructions led by me surrounding writing techniques. Students then participated in a whole class activity after I modeled the task. Then, the students worked individually on the assignments described in the study.

Students wrote an alternate ending to the “Cask of Amontillado” by Edgar Allan Poe. This was a creative writing assignment. I provided verbal feedback and feedback on a rubric for this assignment. Taking note of students' motivation to write the alternate ending allowed me to determine how different writing assignments impact student motivation. I also recorded students' scores on the assignment.

Students also completed a symbolism chart for “The Scarlet Ibis.” This assignment followed lessons in quote integration and how to properly integrate a quote. Therefore, feedback was focused on quote integration and formatting. This allowed me to determine the way students react to feedback regarding mechanics and grammatical errors. I recorded this information in a chart below.

Next, students completed a literary analysis of “The Scarlet Ibis.” I provided comments directly on students' Google Docs and used a rubric to grade the first draft. Students were then instructed to use the teacher provided feedback when editing and writing their final drafts. Students printed out their final drafts on which I provided written feedback. I chose to provide feedback virtually for the first draft and on paper for the final draft in order to determine which form students prefer.

To conclude the study, I held post writing conferences with each student. The writing conferences allowed me to engage in an open dialogue with each student. During the conference, we reflected on the writing process, discussed the various types of feedback used and assessed future motivations toward writing.

Data Analysis

This study was designed to answer the research questions: “How is student motivation impacted by teacher feedback?” and “how is this feedback impacting their writing?” There were five data sources analyzed. These included: a pre feedback evaluation, a symbolism chart, a writing assignment, rubrics with feedback, and a writing conference reference sheet. In addition, I kept a reflection journal to keep track of observations throughout the study. The study was conducted during a four week span. The data sources were updated and analyzed.

I used triangulation research to ensure validity. I used triangulation research due to the mixed-method study. Multiple data sources were used and analyzed; therefore, triangulation was necessary. I used a reflection/observation journal to take note of students' motivation and classwork. I used the journal after class to record what I heard, watched and noticed among my students. I also used the journal while grading writing assignments, taking note of anything that stood out to me.

The pre-writing questionnaire was administered during class time on paper. Students worked independently to complete this. I used this data to determine which students would be a part of the study. I also used this data to determine how students feel towards various aspects of writing. It was noted earlier that this questionnaire would be administered twice, once at the beginning of the study and once at the end. It should be noted that I made the decision not to determine the questionnaire a second time. After conferencing with the students, I was able to ascertain that a second round of this questionnaire was not necessary.

An additional data source was “The Scarlet Ibis” symbolism chart. I used this data to determine how students use feedback on mechanics like integrating quotes. Students were given three main symbols from “The Scarlet Ibis” and were instructed to find six quotes from the text to support each symbol. Prior to filling out the symbolism chart, I conducted a mini lesson on

integrating and citing quotes from a text. Therefore, the feedback that I provided on the symbolism chart commented on the integration and citing of quotes. Students handed this in once for a grade, but were instructed to use the written feedback on the following writing assignment. My role in the research was to determine if students properly used the written feedback in order to correct mistakes. The symbolism chart will serve as quantitative data because I will be able to see how many times students' accurately format quotes. A change that can be noted here is that I also used the symbolism chart as qualitative data. I recorded in the reflection journal the fact that students were visibly demotivated and irritated when instructed to go back and correct the citation errors.

Next, I assigned students a formal writing prompt. The writing prompt was first turned in as a draft. In the first draft I looked for correct citing of quotes as mentioned above. I graded the drafts using a literary analysis rubric. The rubrics categories were: controlling ideas, evidence/support for topic, mechanics of writing, and formatting. I printed out the rubrics and wrote directly on them because in the writing questionnaires I received feedback from my students that they prefer printed versions of feedback. Once students handed in their first draft and received the rubric and paper with written feedback, they had a change to make the revisions. Once revisions were complete, students handed in the final draft. The final draft was graded with the same rubric in order to ensure consistency. Students were then graded both on content and quality of writing. Therefore, the writing assignments are quantitative data.

Then, I held post writing conferences with the students. Students filled out a writing conference reflection sheet after the conference. I assessed students' responses to determine the effectiveness of my feedback and how it impacted student motivation. This conference is qualitative data.

Findings

This section will present the findings for this research study. In analyzing the data, four themes emerged. The themes are the following: feedback impacts writing motivation, usage of formatting and mechanics, impact of assignment on writing, and importance of verbal conferencing.

Feedback impacts writing motivation

Feedback impacts writing motivation. What this means is that teacher feedback impacts student writing motivation. Students react differently to different types of feedback, which in turn affected writing motivation. When providing various types of feedback, students expressed that they preferred written feedback to rubrics. The alternate ending assignment was graded exclusively with a rubric. Verbal feedback was given in class if students presented their stories, but presenting was optional and did not affect students' scores on the assignment. In my reflection journal I was able to note that, "I can see on Google Classroom that 5 out of 8 students did not check the rubric for the Cask of Amontillado alternate ending assignment once I returned it (date:10.20.23)." This shows that students do not value feedback provided by rubrics. As stated earlier, student motivation is affected by feedback. Therefore, when teachers provide feedback using rubrics students are not motivated to utilize this feedback. In addition, the pre-writing questionnaire explicitly asked students how they feel about rubrics. The following are typed responses of students. It should be noted that the original questionnaire was provided on paper; for the purpose of reporting the data I typed up the responses. The following are typed responses:

Sample 1

Q: When it comes to rubrics, do you find them helpful or overwhelming?

Student 4: “Sometimes overwhelming”

An English 9 student reports on rubric use. The student simply responds that they are sometimes overwhelmed by rubrics. This is consistent with other student responses to the same question.

Sample 2

When it comes to rubrics, do you find them helpful or overwhelming?

Student 1: Overwhelming

This student reports that rubrics are overwhelming. This student does not specify why or how often.

Sample 3

When it comes to rubrics, do you find them helpful or overwhelming?

Student 5: It goes both ways

Similarly, students noted that they do not typically read the feedback provided to them when it is on a rubric. The following samples are from the same students noted above.

Sample 4

Question: When you receive your writing back from the teacher, do you read the comments on the rubric?

Student 6: “No if it is a rubric”

Sample 5

Question: When you receive your writing back from the teacher, do you read the comments on the rubric?

Student 2: “No”

Sample 6

Question: When you receive your writing back from the teacher, do you read the comments on the rubric?

Student 8: “Yes to see what I could improve on. It confuses me tho”

Lastly, on the questionnaire students were asked, “when it comes to rubrics, do you find them helpful or overwhelming?” 6 out of the 8 students sampled circled “overwhelming.”

Usage of formatting and mechanics

The second theme of this study was that students are adverse to making corrections to formatting and mechanical errors. This was determined by both my observations and student scores on “The Scarlet Ibis” symbolism chart. The chart was given to students following days of instruction on how to correctly cite a quotation. However, students still cited incorrectly. The data also shows that students did not fix the citations even though I provided feedback instructing them how to. Five students did not cite correctly post citation lesson on the Scarlet Ibis symbolism chart. In addition, six student fixed their citations as a result of feedback in the first draft. Lastly, two students did not fix citations at all despite feedback. I also noticed in my reflection journal, “I notice that students avoided doing citations for quotes until the last minute or did not do them at all. During today’s lesson I also noticed that the most questions were about formatting citations. Students stared blankly or with apprehension” (taken from journal on 10.27.23). The chart below reports on students’ formatting errors in making citations. Students were to provide in text citations on their Scarlet Ibis Symbolism Chart. I then added written feedback specifically in regards to the formatting of citations. Students were instructed to use this feedback in order to format citations on their first draft.

Impact of assignment on writing

The type of assignment plays a large role in the way that students respond to writing assignments. Throughout the study, I gave students both creative writing and academic writing assignments. Students preferred writing creative pieces and scored higher on these assignments. Alternately, students were averse to academic writing and scored lower. The third theme of my research study found that students respond differently to different types of writing assignments. Students reported that they prefer creative writing to literary analyses or academic writing. The first source of data used to determine this theme was the pre-writing questionnaire. The samples below reflect that students prefer to write creatively.

Sample 4

Question: How can you best describe the feeling you get when you are assigned a piece of writing?

Student 1: “It depends on what I am writing about because if I don’t like the thing I am writing about I am not that interested but when it is something I like I will enjoy writing about it.”

Sample 5

Question: What type of writing do you like best?

Student 2: “I like descriptive because I like having a lot of detail”

Sample 6

Question: What type of writing do you like best?

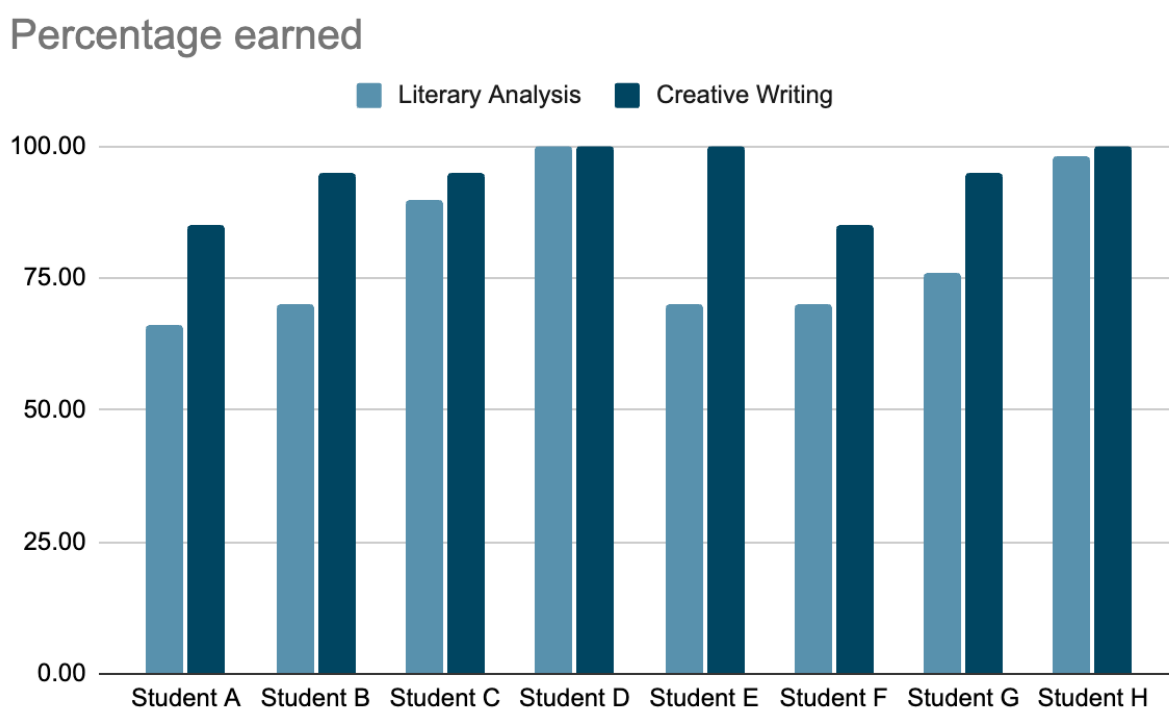
Student 3: “poems cause there short”

The student responses above illustrate that students prefer writing creatively. Students like to write with detail and about topics they are familiar with and enjoy.

In addition, students scored higher on the “Cask of Amontillado” alternate ending than they did on “The Scarlet Ibis” writing assignment. The figure below shows student scores on both

assignments. The data below is reported using percentages because the assignments were graded on different point scales. The mean score of students on the creative writing assignment was 18.87. The mean score of students on the literary analysis was 40. Therefore, when viewing the chart below it is shown that students performed better on the alternate ending assignment.

Figure 2



Importance of verbal conferencing on student writing motivation

The last theme that can be determined is the importance of verbal conferencing. Verbal conferencing is an essential part of the writing process at the high school level. This theme can be shown through the discussions held during the post writing conferences, the pre writing questionnaire and the observation journal. Students explicitly state that they value verbal conferencing. Students had positive reactions to the verbal conferencing as shown in the samples

below. In addition, I was able to note students' reactions to verbal conferencing in the observation journal (figure 3).

The following are notes taken during the post writing conference:

Sample 7

Question: **How did this conference affect your attitude towards writing?**

Student 3: "The writing conference affected my attitude towards writing because it was easier to understand my teacher when she was talking right to me instead of writing on my paper. I sometimes don't want to read what she wrote on my paper"

Sample 8

Question: **How did this conference affect your attitude towards writing?**

Student 7: I feel like I would want to write more now because I can get things explained to me

Sample 9

Question: **How did this conference affect your attitude towards writing?**

Student 1: I still don't like writing but it doesn't seem as hard now

Sample 10

Question: **Did this conference increase your motivation when it comes to writing?**

Student 4: yes I think so

Sample 11

Question: **Did this conference increase your motivation when it comes to writing?**

Student 5: Yes. I would still rather write about what I want to write about though

The data above shows that students are able to understand verbal feedback better than written.

Not only are students able to understand verbal feedback better, but they are hesitant to even read written feedback. This shows that individualized instruction and feedback is extremely important. Students also report that conferences increase writing motivation.

Figure 3 - observation journal

“I noticed that students are more willing to listen to me and face their errors when speaking directly to them. For example, when I commented on one student’s first draft to make the appropriate citation changes, he did not do so. However, when I instructed him verbally in class to make the changes, he did. Similarly, when I commented on two students’ analyses to “add context” on Google Classroom, they ignored the comment. Yet, when I sat with them in a group during class time we worked together to add context and students were more capable than they assumed of themselves.

When asked, 4 out of the 8 students responded that they did not check the rubric that was attached to the first draft on Google Classroom. Therefore, students are less likely to read rubrics than they are to respond to verbal feedback. The four students that reported not checking the rubric, responded positively to verbal feedback conferencing.

6 out of 8 students responded that they did view the rubric when it was printed out and returned with their final draft. I asked students why they were more inclined to read the printed out rubric and all 6 stated that they knew we would talk about it in the conferences” (taken from journal 11.14.23)

Summary

The findings of this chapter outline a mixed-method study. Both qualitative and quantitative data were used to prove the themes that emerged through data analysis. The themes were feedback impacts writing motivation, usage of formatting and mechanics, impact of assignment on

writing, and importance of verbal conferencing. Through the use of a pre-writing questionnaire, the Cask of Amontillado alternate ending (creative writing), The Scarlet Ibis symbolism chart (mechanics), The Scarlet Ibis writing assignment (literary analysis), my observations and a post writing conference I was able to determine these themes. Students demonstrated a preferred interest in creative writing over literary analysis writing. Additionally, students demonstrated adverse reactions to formatting and editing citations and other grammatical errors. Also, the research suggests that feedback provided solely on rubrics does not motivate students while more personalized feedback does. Lastly, verbal conferencing is essential to the writing process at the high school level.

Chapter V

Introduction

This chapter discusses the conclusions that can be drawn from the data offered in the previous chapter. The conclusions indicate that student motivation towards writing differs depending on the type of the assignment, various types of feedback affect students differently, and motivators versus demotivators when it comes to student writing. Also, in this chapter I will discuss findings and recommendations. The purpose of this study was to answer the questions: “How is student motivation impacted by teacher feedback?” and “how is this feedback impacting their writing?” And the sub question: “how do students react differently to creative writing as opposed to literary analyses?” From the data analysis, (1) students approach creative writing more openly than academic writing; therefore, they are more motivated to write creative pieces. (2) Students prefer individualized written and verbal feedback to general feedback given on a rubric. (3) Feedback that focuses on formatting and mechanics de-motivates students when it comes to writing.

Conclusion I

Students approach creative writing more openly than academic writing; therefore, they are more motivated to write creative pieces.

Discussion

The data analysis of the findings of the eight-week study showed that students approach creative writing more openly than academic writing. The data proves that students are more motivated to write creative pieces. Students were willing to share their *Cask of Amontillado* alternate ending assignment aloud with the class. Also, for the same assignment, five out of eight

students chose to go over the two paragraph minimum. Students also responded to the pre-writing questionnaire explaining that they prefer to write about subjects they like, descriptive writing, and other assignments that are short (like poems). On the same note, students wrote less than 8 sentences for The Scarlet Ibis writing assignment, which was a literary analysis.

Additionally, only two out of eight students were willing to share their literary analyses with the class. This is a clear juxtaposition to the six students that volunteered to share their alternate ending. Lastly, during the post writing assessment, students responded that they feel they are good at writing about themselves and making up creepy stories.

Philippakos et al., (2023) support the idea that students are more motivated to write when they are confident in what they are writing about. This study was a study to examine and investigate college students in first year composition (FYC) classes' motivation to write. The study found that students are more motivated to write when they feel self-efficacy in what they are writing. Research has found that there is a positive relationship between writing performance and mastery goals. This goes to show that students feel more motivated when they feel sufficient in what they are writing. Self-efficacy is essential to students' intrinsic motivation and the substance of what they are writing. In this way, students need to feel that what they are writing is important to their own lives. This relates to my students stating that they prefer to write about themselves, things they like and topics that they know a lot about.

Wright et al., (2020) conducted a study examining how students' motivation for writing actually differs through the middle school years. A survey called the *Self-Beliefs, Writing Beliefs, and Attitude Survey* (SWAS) was administered to a cross-sectional sample of students. This study surveyed students from two different middle schools and of different ages. My study sampled only my ninth grade students and only from the school I work at. Both my study and

Wright et al., (2020) study focused on student motivation and attitude toward writing. The study (2020) found that the students' attitude and motivation toward writing varied greatly among the different grades. My study found that motivation and attitude differed depending on the type of assignment rather than grade level. However, a similarity between the studies is that both my study and the aforementioned study found that high-stakes academic writing or writing for a test is not desirable to students.

The findings of the present study are aligned with Bandura's (1977) self-efficacy theory. Bandura defines self-efficacy as, "People's judgments of their capabilities to organize and execute courses of action required to attain designated types of performances" (Artino, 2012). Self-efficacy is one's personal belief in their own capability. The students preferred the creative writing assignment to the academic writing assignment because they felt they could and expected to do better on that assignment. The students scored higher on the creative writing assignment when compared with the academic writing assignment, this can be attributed to self-efficacy theory. Students were more motivated to write the alternate ending assignment; therefore, they tried harder and took more pride in their work. Artino explains, "“*Unless people believe they can produce desired effects by their actions, they have little incentive to act. Efficacy belief, therefore, is a major basis of action. People guide their lives by their beliefs of personal efficacy*”" (Bandura, 1997, as cited in Artino, 2012). In this way, the students held more incentive to write about what is perceived as more desirable to them, which in this case was the creative writing assignment. This resulted in the students performing better and scoring higher on the creative writing assignment.

Conclusion II

Students prefer individualized written and verbal feedback to generalized feedback given on a rubric.

Discussion

The data analysis found that students prefer individualized written and verbal feedback to generalized feedback given on a rubric when assessing their writing. Students responded to the pre-writing questionnaire stating that rubrics are often overwhelming. Students also stated that they often do not look when a rubric is given back to them, instead they look at the final score and ignore the rubric. It can be concluded that students avoid looking at the rubric because they find it overwhelming. When checking Google Classroom, I was able to see that five out of eight students did not check the rubric posted for The Cask of Amontillado alternate ending assignment. It should be noted that this was an assignment that students enjoyed and openly participated in; yet, they still avoided the rubric. When students feel overwhelmed or out of control, motivation decreases. Therefore, the type of feedback that teachers give affects student motivation.

Other studies also reported the ways in which feedback affect students at the secondary school level. Sieben (2017) examined “What type of feedback is most effective in secondary students' development as hopeful and competent writers?” She found that there were six main types of effective feedback. While Sieben does not comment directly on rubrics, she does note that it is essential to keep feedback conversational and ask students questions about their own writing. Clearly, rubrics are not conversational and do not leave much room for student inquiry. Her findings suggest that individualized feedback creates a climate in which students feel motivated to write. This aligns with the findings of my research. Sieben (2017) suggests that a strength-based approach is the most effective and meaningful. Lastly, both studies report that a

student centered, differentiated approach are the most beneficial to students' writing motivation.

Latifah et al. (2019) determined that indirect feedback was actually more effective than direct feedback. The researchers found that indirect feedback encouraged students to make their own mistakes. In this way, the learners become more dependent and create their own writing process experience. The students were more aware of their errors using the indirect feedback technique. In my study, I did not attempt to use indirect feedback because my students are ninth graders and part of writing instruction for that level includes direct feedback. The students in the (2019) study were seniors. Therefore, there is more room for indirect feedback because the students already have the foundational writing skills. However, when using direct feedback with my students; for example, fixing a grammar error for them rather than just circling it, I found that students made the correct changes. Whereas when I simply commented on the rubric to change grammatical errors, students did not learn the proper function or skill. In this way, for my present level of students and instructions direct feedback is useful.

The findings from the present study are also aligned with Cognitive Constructivism (Pisget, 1980) and Social Constructivism (Vygotsky, 1968). The two theories work together to create a personal learning process in which the learner and the teacher are in communication. These theories place importance on the students at the center of the classroom. Piaget's theory (1980) explains that students must construct their own knowledge and not be simply handed information. Rubrics are a way of handing information to students and taking the student out of the analysis process. Individualized feedback allows the students to take autonomy in their own learning and revising. These theories guided me in my research as I was finding the best practices for giving feedback. Findings from the present study show that a personal learning process benefits students more than a generalized one.

Conclusion III

Verbal conferencing as a form of feedback is an essential part of the writing process in terms of motivation at the high school level.

Discussion

The data analysis found that student motivation was increased when verbal conferencing feedback was a part of the writing process. Research indicated that students preferred verbal feedback to written feedback. During the post writing conferences, students expressed their liking towards conferencing. Students explained that conferences allowed them to better understand the feedback, feel more confident in their writing and improve their attitudes toward writing. In this way, verbal conferencing and verbal feedback is an integral part of the writing process in order to increase student motivation. During instruction time, students were more willing to make changes to their writing when the instruction came directly from me as opposed to comments written on their work.

Other studies also reported on the impact of teacher feedback. Mewborn et al., (2016) investigated the writing feedback perception of middle and high school students. The study found that students perceive writing feedback in both negative and positive ways. The study reported that students in the older grades are fearful of criticism, bad grades and judgment on their writing. However, my study found that when feedback is given to students verbally and through a conference, they are able to ask questions and respond to feedback. When a two way conversation surrounding writing occurs, students are not automatic to shut down and lose motivation.

Harissi et al., (2023) researched the ways the teachers and students use feedback. The study found that both teachers and students do not take full advantage of feedback. However, an implication of the study is that teachers may be more successful in effective feedback when it is

given orally, especially for rhetorical features. The study also concluded that teachers can improve motivation among students by adapting their feedback technique to meet the needs of the students. In my study, I found that adapting feedback to fit student needs is beneficial for both increasing motivation and perception of feedback. Both studies conclude that oral feedback allows the values of the teacher and the student to have a place in the writing process. In turn, this aids in increasing motivation because students have autonomy in their writing process.

The findings from this research are aligned with self-efficacy (Bandura, 1977) and constructivism (Piaget, 1980) in conjunction with Social Constructivism (Vygotsky, 1968). First, self-efficacy of students is at the forefront of this study because the way students feel about their abilities toward writing are affected by teacher feedback. Self - efficacy explains that when someone has low expectations of how they will perform on something, they are less likely to put effort into doing it or doing it at all. The present study shows that students are averse to making changes when the feedback is strictly written; therefore, verbal feedback was implemented. Self-efficacy affects learning and motivation. The findings from this research also align with Constructivism (Piaget, 1980) and Social constructivism (Vygotsky, 1968) because the student is at the forefront of instruction and feedback. Constructivist learning is student-driven and explains that students also learn from organisms around them. The verbal writing conferences in this study allow students to ask their own questions and also provide explanations for their own beliefs about writing and instruction. The learner has the ability to refer to their own experiences and take control of their writing process. Students go through a process of understanding their own learning.

Recommendations for Further Research

Based on the findings of the study, further research is recommended to examine other

types of feedback. Future studies may conduct research on the effects of peer review and feedback on high school students. The present study focused only on teacher to student feedback. Students may benefit from peer-to-peer feedback. Future research should examine peer feedback compared to teacher feedback.

Additionally, future research should examine different types of instruction in the classroom. Future research should examine different ways of teaching the writing process. The present study required students to write only one body paragraph of a literary analysis. Future research should follow the writing process instruction for an entire five paragraph essay as this is the common type of writing that students will progress to. The instruction will differ from that of the current study.

Finally, future research should focus on a different sample group. The current group is from a general level English 9 class. Motivation tends to run lower in this demographic. Therefore, future research should take place in a different classroom setting where overall motivation is higher. Future research should determine how various types of feedback work for different groups of students. Replicating this study among a different group could produce different results.

Recommendations for Teachers

Based on the findings of this research, recommendations for teachers can be made. Teachers should include both creative and academic writing assignments in their instruction. This is because students prefer to write creative pieces, but must learn to write academic pieces as well. Therefore, including both will improve students' writing in a variety of genres. Including instruction in multiple genres will improve students' self-efficacy and writing motivation. When students have a high sense of self-efficacy, they are more likely to approach new and unfamiliar

assignments more openly.

Additionally, teachers should include writing conferences as part of the writing process. Students value oral communication and find it easier to understand recommendations when they are spoken rather than written. Students are averse to rubrics because they find them overwhelming. So, pairing a rubric with a verbal discussion is a useful tool for writing instruction. This allows students to ask questions and gain a better understanding of recommendations for writing. Having a two way conversation will increase student motivation to write.

Similarly, when writing conferences are not available, teachers should aim to give more individualized feedback. Teachers should write comments on assignments rather than checking off boxes on a rubric. Students are less likely to review a rubric than they are to review individualized comments. Another form of individualized instruction is verbal instruction during class time. Teachers can provide assistance during class throughout the writing process. This will be more beneficial to students.

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