

EXAMINING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF WRITTEN VS. VERBAL FEEDBACK ON
STUDENTS' WRITING REVISIONS

by

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A Thesis

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates the impact of verbal versus written feedback on fifth-grade students' writing revisions, focusing on the number and quality of revisions and students' perceptions of feedback efficacy. Conducted in a fifth-grade classroom in Northern New Jersey, the research employs a mixed-methods approach, combining quantitative data from a feedback tracker and narrative writing rubric with qualitative insights from student reflections and teacher observations.

The study concludes that written feedback prompts significantly more revisions, particularly lower-order changes such as spelling and mechanics, due to its clarity and reusability. In contrast, verbal feedback is more effective in fostering higher-order revisions, such as improving organization and elaboration, but generates fewer total revisions overall. Students perceive written feedback as more actionable and easier to reference, while verbal feedback is valued for its immediacy and opportunities for clarification.

These findings highlight the complementary roles of written and verbal feedback in supporting student writing development. Written feedback excels in guiding detailed, surface-level corrections, whereas verbal feedback facilitates deeper, more substantive improvements. Educators are encouraged to use both methods to address diverse revision needs and improve writing instruction.

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CHAPTER I

Statement of the Problem

Introduction

The role of feedback in writing instruction has long been recognized as a vital component in fostering student growth and achievement. Feedback helps bridge the gap between a student's current performance and the desired learning goals, making it a crucial part of the formative assessment process (Graham et al., 2015). While written feedback has traditionally been the dominant mode of teacher response in classrooms, recent studies indicate that students often struggle to understand and apply written feedback effectively (Zhang, 2023). This challenge has sparked interest in exploring the potential benefits of verbal feedback, particularly in elementary classrooms, where students' writing skills are still developing.

Fifth-grade students, in particular, are at a critical stage in their writing development. The revision process, essential for improving writing quality, relies heavily on the feedback provided by teachers. However, students frequently fail to engage with feedback, and particularly written feedback, effectively. Written feedback is frequently misunderstood or misinterpreted, leading to student frustration, dissatisfaction, and uncertainty. Many students find written comments unclear, too brief, or unhelpful for guiding future learning, resulting in surface level or non-existent revisions (Agricola et al., 2020). On the other hand, verbal feedback has been shown to significantly enhance students' perceptions of feedback quality and usefulness, as it facilitates interactive dialogue and allows for immediate clarification, helping students better understand how to improve their work (Agricola et al., 2020). This research seeks to explore whether verbal feedback, with its interactive and immediate nature, offers a more effective alternative to written feedback in encouraging substantive revisions.

At the national level, students are struggling in writing. National writing test scores from the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) show that students' writing capabilities need improvement, with the most recent data showing only about 24% of eighth and twelfth graders scoring at the "Proficient" level, meaning they demonstrated solid writing skills necessary for their grade. A majority of students performed at the "Basic" level, indicating partial mastery of writing skills, and a small percentage reached the "Advanced" level (Institution of Education Sciences, 2011). The importance of feedback in the learning process is well-documented. Graham et al. (2015) note that feedback significantly enhances writing quality. However, despite its importance, feedback in writing instruction remains underutilized and often misunderstood. Nationally, there is a growing need to explore the effectiveness of different types of feedback to better support students in their writing development.

In many state education systems, teachers express frustration over students' lack of engagement with feedback, especially written feedback, which is frequently misunderstood or ignored (Edgerly et al., 2018). The New Jersey Student Learning Assessment report for ELA indicates that students also need support in the revision process. Many do not effectively self-edit their work or understand how to incorporate feedback into their revisions, which limits their ability to produce polished, high-quality writing (NJDOE, 2024).

Locally, the issue is particularly evident in my school district, where writing is often sidelined in favor of subjects like reading and math, which are seen as more critical for standardized test performance. In my fifth-grade classroom, students receive limited time to engage with their writing, and when feedback is provided, they rarely make meaningful revisions. This problem extends beyond my classroom, affecting other teachers in third and

fourth grades as well. Students' reluctance to incorporate feedback, combined with time constraints, makes it difficult to foster the revision skills necessary for writing development.

Research Questions

This section presents the primary research questions, which evolved from the challenges identified in the teaching of writing, particularly regarding the feedback process. The problem, as noted above, involves students' difficulty in effectively engaging with feedback, especially written feedback, and applying it to their revisions. This issue is particularly pressing in elementary school classrooms, where students are still developing the necessary writing and revision skills and require clear, actionable feedback to improve. Research shows that while feedback is critical to improving writing (Graham et al., 2015), students often struggle to understand and apply it, especially in its written form (Zhang, 2023; Agricola et al., 2020). Given these concerns, the study's primary research question seeks to explore the comparative impact of verbal and written feedback on student writing revisions. The primary research question is:

- What is the impact of verbal versus written feedback on the *number* of revisions fifth-grade students make in their writing?

In addition to this main question, two more questions will be investigated to provide a comprehensive understanding of the feedback process. These questions are:

- What is the impact of verbal versus written feedback on the *quality* of revisions fifth-grade students make in their writing?
- How do fifth-grade students perceive verbal and written feedback in terms of support for revising their writing?

These questions are designed to shed light on both the objective outcomes of feedback (in terms of revision frequency and quality) and students' subjective experiences with different types of

feedback. By addressing these questions, this study aims to contribute to the broader conversation on effective feedback practices in writing instruction.

Definition of Terms

This section gives a definition of terms that will be used throughout this research study. This research study will be designed to answer the research questions, *What is the impact of verbal versus written feedback on the number of revisions fifth-grade students make in their writing?*, *What is the impact of verbal versus written feedback on the quality of revisions fifth-grade students make in their writing?* and *How do fifth-grade students perceive verbal and written feedback in terms of support for revising their writing?*

For the purpose of this study these terms are defined as follows:

Written feedback: In this study, written feedback refers to written comments provided by a teacher on a student's draft, including suggestions for improvement, corrections, and other guidance on aspects such as content, organization, and mechanics.

Verbal feedback: In this study, verbal feedback is defined as real-time oral feedback given by a teacher, typically during one-on-one conferences.

Revision: In this study, revision refers to the process by which students make changes to their writing based on feedback received. Revisions may include adjustments to content, structure, word choice, or sentence clarity.

Quality of revisions: In this study, refers to the effectiveness of the changes made during the revision process, particularly in terms of improving idea development, coherence, and writing style.

Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD): A concept from Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory that describes the range of tasks a learner can perform with the assistance of a more knowledgeable other (Vygotsky, 1978).

Theoretical Framework

This section presents the theoretical framework selected based upon the research question. The research questions are *What is the impact of verbal versus written feedback on the number of revisions fifth-grade students make in their writing?*, *What is the impact of verbal versus written feedback on the quality of revisions fifth-grade students make in their writing?* and *How do fifth-grade students perceive verbal and written feedback in terms of support for revising their writing?* These questions were used to identify the theoretical framework. This framework includes the following theories: the Cognitive Process Theory of Writing and Sociocultural Theory.

The first theory that supports this research is the Cognitive Process Theory of writing. This theory discusses how writing is made up of thinking processes which follow a model that takes place in a hierarchal structure (Flower & Hayes, 1981). In particular, the different steps of the process, such as brainstorming or revision, may occur at any time during the writing process (Flower & Hayes, 1981). Flower and Hayes (1981) describe the different parts of the writing process as making up the writer's tool kit and describe that when using one of these tools, "the writer is not constrained to use them in a fixed order or in stages" (p. 376). Specifically in relation to revision, this tool is one in particular which can be used at any point during the writing process (Flower & Hayes, 1981). Verbal and written feedback would play a role in shaping students' internal planning and decision-making during the revision process. By examining how different feedback types impact these cognitive processes, the study would

explore how feedback can enhance or inhibit the revision stage of writing. The cognitive process theory highlights the dynamic and recursive nature of writing, where feedback can trigger cognitive processes that lead to improvements in writing quality.

The second theory that supports this research is Sociocultural Theory, emphasizing the importance of social interaction in learning, particularly through dialogue. According to Vygotsky's theory, learning occurs within the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), where learners can accomplish tasks beyond their current ability with guidance from more knowledgeable others (Vygotsky, 1978). In this research, verbal feedback can be seen as a form of scaffolding that teachers provide to help students make more effective revisions. The immediacy and dialogic nature of verbal feedback allows for real-time clarification and adjustment, which written feedback may not offer. This real-time interaction enables teachers to adjust the level of support to match the student's immediate needs, helping narrow the gap between what the student can do independently and what they can achieve with assistance.

Verbal feedback also fosters collaborative meaning-making, which is key to the sociocultural approach. Through teacher-student interactions, students can construct and discuss the meaning of feedback, helping them internalize revision strategies. This aligns with Vygotsky's notion that learning is a socially mediated process, where knowledge is co-constructed through active participation. Perry (2012) emphasizes that writing is a socially mediated process, shaped by the interactions between students, teachers, and peers. The opportunity to ask questions, seek further explanation, and express their understanding during verbal feedback helps students engage more deeply with the revision process, making it a more active and transformative learning experience. This suggests that verbal feedback, which engages students in conversation, is more aligned with sociocultural principles than written feedback,

which may lack the interactive component crucial for scaffolding students' understanding and skills. Sociocultural theory posits that learning is not just the transmission of information but a collaborative process in which students co-construct knowledge with their teachers (Vygotsky, 1978). By actively participating in the feedback exchange, students are better able to internalize the revision strategies provided by their teachers, leading to higher-quality revisions. In this way, verbal feedback utilizes the ZPD more effectively than written feedback by enabling shared meaning-making, real-time adjustments, and active co-construction of knowledge. In this study, verbal feedback may allow for deeper engagement with the revision process by allowing students to actively participate in the feedback exchange, leading to higher-quality revisions.

Educational Significance

The purpose of this study is to examine the research questions *What is the impact of verbal versus written feedback on the number of revisions fifth-grade students make in their writing?*, *What is the impact of verbal versus written feedback on the quality of revisions fifth-grade students make in their writing?* and *How do fifth-grade students perceive verbal and written feedback in terms of support for revising their writing?* This research is significant for several reasons. First, it addresses a critical gap in the literature regarding the comparative effectiveness of verbal and written feedback in elementary writing instruction. While written feedback has been the traditional method of response, recent studies have highlighted its limitations, particularly in younger students who may struggle to interpret and apply feedback independently (Zhang, 2023). Verbal feedback, on the other hand, offers the potential for real-time clarification and interactive dialogue, which may better support students in making meaningful revisions to their writing (Agricola et al., 2020).

Second, this study has practical implications for classroom instruction. In many elementary classrooms, writing is often de-prioritized, and students receive limited time for revision. By identifying the most effective feedback methods, this research could help teachers maximize the impact of the feedback they provide, even within the constraints of a busy school day. For fifth-grade students, who are at a pivotal stage in their writing development, the ability to engage meaningfully with feedback is crucial for their continued growth as writers. As Graham et al., (2015) note, feedback from teachers, peers, and even digital platforms can significantly enhance writing quality when delivered effectively.

Finally, this research contributes to the broader conversation about the role of feedback in formative assessment. According to Edgerly et al., (2018), feedback should be timely, specific, and consistent to help students understand where they are in their learning and what steps they need to take to improve. By exploring the impact of verbal and written feedback, this study aims to provide insights into how teachers can refine their feedback practices to better support student learning and achievement.

CHAPTER II

Review of the Literature

Overview

This chapter reviews the literature relevant to the research question: *What is the impact of verbal versus written feedback on the number of revisions fifth-grade students make in their writing?* The studies are organized into themes related to general feedback, written feedback, and verbal feedback. The research covers various aspects of feedback practices and their impact on writing development, providing insights into how different feedback methods can be applied to improve writing outcomes.

General Feedback Practices

Research on feedback in writing emphasizes the importance of providing clear, specific, and timely feedback to improve student writing across all educational contexts. Graham et al. (2015) conducted a meta-analysis to examine the impact of formative assessment on student writing. The study synthesized findings from numerous research articles to determine how formative feedback from various sources—teachers, peers, self-assessment, and computers—affected writing outcomes. The central research question was whether formative feedback meaningfully improves the quality of student writing and how different types of feedback contribute to writing improvement across educational settings. The meta-analysis included studies from elementary school settings in different geographic locations. The participants in the studies ranged from early elementary to middle school students, representing a broad range of grade levels and learning environments. The meta-analysis employed quantitative research methods, analyzing effect sizes to measure the impact of formative assessment on writing

performance. The research tools included standardized writing assessments, teacher feedback forms, and self-assessment practices, and the studies reviewed were conducted over various timeframes, generally lasting from a few weeks to an entire school year.

The results showed that feedback significantly enhanced writing quality, with teacher feedback having the strongest effect. The meta-analysis underscored that effective feedback practices positively influence both writing skills and general academic performance. Graham et al. (2015) concluded that feedback should be actionable, varied, and integrated into daily classroom activities to maximize its impact, providing a foundation for all students to engage in meaningful revisions. The authors recommended that teachers incorporate various forms of feedback into their writing instruction to provide students with multiple avenues for improvement. The meta-analysis suggests that further research should explore how feedback can be integrated more effectively into daily classroom activities and how different forms of feedback can be tailored to meet the needs of individual students.

The next study is a systematic review by Charalampous and Darra (2023), which examined the role of teacher feedback across different educational levels, including K-12 settings. The review focused on understanding the various factors that contribute to effective feedback practices, including the timing, specificity, and delivery mode of feedback. The central research question was to identify how different feedback approaches impact students' ability to make meaningful revisions. The literature review encompassed studies from multiple educational settings, ranging from elementary to higher education, and included a wide range of student populations. The review incorporated both qualitative and quantitative studies, providing a comprehensive analysis of the factors influencing feedback effectiveness. The studies reviewed

varied in length, with some examining short-term feedback interventions and others focusing on longitudinal effects.

Their findings indicated that specific, timely, and constructive feedback was most effective in promoting meaningful revisions. Charalampous and Darra (2023) also found that the mode of feedback delivery—whether written, verbal, or digital—impacted how students processed and applied the feedback they received. The researchers recommended using interactive feedback practices that allow students to seek clarification and engage in dialogue with teachers, enhancing their ability to revise effectively. Charalampous and Darra (2023) suggest that future research should focus on how feedback can be tailored to individual student needs and integrated into diverse instructional practices.

Written Feedback

While written feedback is one of the most commonly used methods for providing students with guidance on their writing, studies have shown that it may not always be effective in facilitating meaningful revisions. Zhang (2023) explored the challenges students face when interpreting teacher-written feedback in an English as a foreign language (EFL) writing course. Zhang (2023) explores how students' reflections impact their understanding and application of teacher-written feedback. The study's primary focus is on how reflection serves as a mediational tool that enables students to better comprehend and utilize feedback for writing improvement. Zhang's (2023) research is grounded in the idea that written feedback, while beneficial, often falls short when it comes to facilitating student understanding, particularly when teachers' comments lack clarity or when students have limited prior knowledge. The study examines how reflective practices, such as written responses to feedback, help students internalize the

suggestions provided by their teachers and apply them to their writing. The study was conducted with 18 students enrolled in an English as a foreign language writing course at a university in China. The research included a variety of students who were asked to reflect on the written feedback they received and then revise their writing. Using a qualitative approach, Zhang collected data through student reflections and follow-up interviews to gauge how students processed and acted upon the feedback. The study spanned several writing assignments, allowing the researcher to assess the impact of reflection over time. Zhang's (2023) findings reveal that many students struggle to understand written feedback, particularly when it is vague or lacks context. However, students who engaged in reflective practices were better able to bridge this gap, using reflection to make sense of the feedback and incorporate it into their revisions. The study highlights that written feedback alone may not be sufficient for meaningful student revision, suggesting that post-feedback reflection can serve as a valuable tool to enhance comprehension and application. Zhang (2023) concludes that integrating reflection into the feedback process can significantly improve students' ability to revise their writing based on teacher comments. The implications of this study point toward the need for further research on how reflective practices can be systematically integrated into classrooms. Zhang suggests that educators consider pairing written feedback with guided reflection exercises to help students better understand and engage with the feedback they receive, especially in younger learners who may need additional scaffolding.

Similarly, O'Sullivan Sachar's (2020) case study examines how metacognitive strategies can enhance the revision process and improve writing outcomes. The study focuses on the use of metacognition in helping students reflect on their writing choices and the feedback they receive, encouraging them to make more thoughtful revisions. The research aims to determine whether

incorporating metacognitive practices into writing instruction leads to improved writing quality and student achievement. The study was conducted in a high school setting with a small group of students, making it a case study focused on a specific classroom context. The participants were high school students who engaged in metacognitive activities, such as self-assessment and reflective writing exercises, before and after receiving teacher feedback. The study used qualitative research methods, including classroom observations, student reflections, and analysis of writing samples, over the course of one semester. The findings revealed that students who used metacognitive strategies made more meaningful improvements to their writing, as reflecting on their strengths and weaknesses enhanced their understanding of the feedback's purpose. O'Sullivan Sachar (2020) concluded that combining written feedback with reflective practices could significantly improve writing instruction across different educational levels by promoting a deeper engagement with the revision process.

Endley and Karim (2022) investigated the impact of focused written feedback on the development of explicit and implicit knowledge in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) writing. The researchers sought to determine whether targeted feedback on specific language errors would lead to improvements in both the accuracy and fluency of student writing, and whether these improvements would extend beyond explicit rule-based knowledge to include more implicit language skills. The study was conducted in an EFL classroom setting with university-level students who were learning English as a foreign language. The participants, numbering around 60, were divided into experimental and control groups. The experimental group received focused written feedback on language errors, while the control group received general comments on their writing. The study used a mixed-methods design, combining quantitative measures of writing accuracy and fluency with qualitative data from student interviews. The research was

conducted over a semester, with pre- and post-tests to measure changes in language knowledge. The researchers found that targeted written feedback improved the accuracy of students' writing, particularly in correcting specific language errors. However, there was limited evidence of transfer to more implicit language skills, highlighting the potential limitations of written feedback in fostering deeper language acquisition. These findings imply that, while written feedback can help students make surface-level corrections, it may not always lead to the substantive revisions needed for significant improvements in writing quality. For elementary students, combining written feedback with other strategies, such as verbal explanations, could help bridge the gap in understanding and encourage more meaningful engagement with revisions.

Lira-Gonzales and Nassaji (2020) investigated the prevalence and perceived usefulness of written corrective feedback in various educational contexts and levels. The study aimed to identify whether the amount and nature of written feedback differ across educational settings, and how students at different levels perceive its usefulness for improving their writing. The research sought to provide insights into best practices for delivering corrective feedback across diverse instructional contexts. The study encompassed multiple educational settings, including high schools, language schools, and universities in different countries. Participants included approximately 150 students from a range of grade levels and academic programs, as well as teachers who provided written feedback. The research employed a mixed-methods design, using surveys to collect quantitative data on the frequency and types of feedback provided, and interviews to gather qualitative data on student and teacher perceptions. The study was conducted over several months, allowing for an in-depth exploration of feedback practices.

Lira-Gonzales and Nassaji (2020) found that written feedback was more commonly used in higher education settings and was generally perceived as more beneficial by older students. However, there was considerable variation in the quality and amount of written feedback provided, with some students receiving minimal comments that did not address specific issues in their writing. The researchers concluded that the effectiveness of written feedback depends on factors such as clarity, specificity, and timing, suggesting that these aspects must be carefully considered when using written feedback to support elementary students' writing development.

Verbal Feedback

Verbal feedback, as an alternative or complement to written feedback, offers several advantages in promoting meaningful revisions, particularly through its dialogic nature. Agricola et al. (2020) conducted a study to investigate how feedback request forms and verbal feedback affect higher education students' perceptions of feedback, self-efficacy, and motivation. The central focus of the study was to determine whether verbal feedback, which allows for immediate dialogue and clarification, would be perceived more positively than written feedback forms. Additionally, the researchers explored how these feedback methods impacted students' confidence in their ability to improve their work (self-efficacy) and their motivation to revise. The study took place in higher education classrooms in the Netherlands and involved 69 students aged 18 to 25. Using a mixed-methods design, the researchers collected quantitative data through surveys that measured students' perceptions of the feedback they received, as well as their levels of self-efficacy and motivation. Qualitative data was gathered through interviews, which provided deeper insights into how students processed and responded to the feedback. The study was conducted over the course of one semester. The findings revealed that verbal feedback was perceived much more positively than feedback delivered through written forms. Students

reported higher levels of self-efficacy and motivation when they received verbal feedback, as it allowed for two-way communication where students could ask questions and receive clarification in real time. Written feedback forms, on the other hand, were often seen as too brief or unclear, leading to frustration and misunderstanding. Results from the study underscored the importance of dialogue in the feedback process, as students who engaged in verbal feedback conversations felt more supported and motivated to revise their work. Agricola et al. (2020) suggest that further research should explore how verbal feedback can be integrated into different educational levels, especially in larger classroom settings where individualized feedback may be more challenging to deliver. The study also raised questions about how digital tools could be used to enhance the dialogue between students and teachers in feedback exchanges.

Pedersen's (2018) study focuses on the use of questioning as a dialogic tool during the feedback process, exploring how teachers can encourage deeper revisions by prompting students with open-ended questions. The central research question of the study was whether framing feedback as a dialogue, rather than a one-way critique, would lead to more engaged and thoughtful revisions from students. Pedersen was particularly interested in how question-based feedback might foster student ownership of the writing process. The study took place in secondary school classrooms in the United States, involving high school students enrolled in various writing courses. Using qualitative research methods, Pedersen observed teacher-student writing conferences and analyzed how teachers used questions to guide student revisions. Data was also collected through interviews with both students and teachers to gather their perspectives on the effectiveness of question-posing in the feedback process. The study spanned an entire academic year, with multiple writing assignments being revised based on dialogic feedback. The researchers found that when teachers used open-ended questions to guide students through the

feedback process, students were more likely to take ownership of their writing and make thoughtful revisions. By treating feedback as a dialogue, rather than a one-way critique, teachers encouraged students to explore new ideas and approaches to their writing. This method of dialogic feedback aligns with the needs of elementary students, who may benefit from more interactive and supportive feedback practices that foster deeper engagement with the revision process.

Van den Bergh et al. (2014) examined the impact of a professional development program designed to improve teachers' feedback practices in active learning environments. The study's main focus was to assess whether targeted professional development could enhance the quality and frequency of teacher feedback and, in turn, improve student outcomes in classrooms where active learning was emphasized. Active learning environments require teachers to provide real-time feedback that guides students in their learning process, and this study sought to explore how professional development could help teachers become more effective in delivering such feedback. The study was conducted in primary and secondary schools in the Netherlands, with 30 teachers participating in the professional development program. The program included workshops and coaching sessions focused on strategies for providing specific, actionable feedback that would support students' autonomy and engagement. The researchers collected qualitative data through classroom observations, teacher surveys, and interviews with teachers to assess changes in their feedback practices. The study spanned one academic year, allowing for an in-depth analysis of how teachers implemented the strategies they learned. Findings showed that professional development significantly enhanced the quality of verbal feedback provided, leading to improved student understanding of learning goals and better writing outcomes. The results suggest that verbal feedback, when delivered effectively, can be a powerful tool for

guiding students through the writing process, especially when teachers are trained in strategies to maximize its impact.

Cavaleri et al. (2019) explored the effectiveness of recorded audio-visual feedback as a tool for providing academic language support. The study aimed to determine whether feedback delivered through audio and visual recordings could help students better understand and apply feedback to improve their academic writing. The research focused on the potential benefits of integrating multimedia feedback to enhance traditional written feedback practices. The study was conducted at a university in Australia, involving undergraduate students who received recorded audio-visual feedback on their writing assignments. The participants, numbering approximately 50, were from diverse academic backgrounds and included both domestic and international students. The research used a mixed-methods approach, with quantitative data collected through surveys measuring student perceptions of the feedback's usefulness and qualitative data from focus group discussions. The study took place over one academic term. The researchers found that combining verbal and visual elements helped students better understand feedback. The multi-modal nature of audio-visual feedback allowed students to hear their instructor's tone and see annotations simultaneously, resulting in a clearer understanding and more substantive revisions. These findings imply that incorporating verbal feedback with additional supports, such as visual aids or digital tools, could further enhance its effectiveness for younger students who may need multiple forms of input to fully grasp the feedback provided.

Summary of the Literature Review

This section summarizes the findings of the literature reviewed, with a focus on the impact of different feedback methods—general, written, and verbal—on writing revisions. The

studies analyzed explore how feedback can shape student writing across various educational settings, including K-12 education, higher education, and English language learning contexts. These studies provide a comprehensive view of the ways in which feedback practices affect the number and quality of revisions students make in their writing, and offer insights that inform the research question: *What is the impact of verbal versus written feedback on the number of revisions fifth-grade students make in their writing?*

Several common threads emerge across the studies, particularly regarding the benefits of specific, actionable feedback and the role of interaction in enhancing student engagement with the revision process. For instance, Graham et al. (2015) found that formative assessment significantly improved writing outcomes when feedback was clear and actionable, a finding supported by Charalampous and Darra (2023), who emphasized that feedback effectiveness increases when it is timely and constructive. Similarly, Pedersen (2018) and Agricola et al. (2020) noted that dialogic feedback, such as verbal interactions and questioning, fostered a deeper level of student engagement, allowing students to take ownership of their writing revisions. Verbal feedback's advantage in promoting real-time interaction was also observed by Cavaleri et al. (2019), who found that audio-visual feedback, which combined spoken comments with visual elements, enhanced students' understanding and resulted in more meaningful revisions. Zhang (2023) and O'Sullivan Sachar (2020) suggest that written feedback, when paired with reflective or metacognitive practices, can enhance the quality of revisions by helping students better comprehend the feedback. These studies collectively suggest that feedback, when delivered in a way that allows for dialogue and immediate clarification, can significantly improve the quality of student revisions.

While commonalities exist, there are also notable contrasts in the studies, particularly in the effectiveness of written versus verbal feedback across different contexts and student populations. For example, Zhang (2023) found that written feedback alone often fell short for EFL students who struggled to interpret vague or context-lacking comments. This aligns with Endley and Karim's (2022) findings that written feedback improved explicit language knowledge but did not significantly contribute to implicit language development. In contrast, Agricola et al. (2020) and Pedersen (2018) demonstrated the advantages of verbal feedback in promoting deeper engagement and facilitating immediate comprehension, even in higher education and secondary school settings. Additionally, Lira-Gonzales and Nassaji (2020) observed that written feedback was more prevalent in higher education and perceived as more useful by older students, suggesting that age and educational context might influence the effectiveness of different feedback modalities.

The differences across the studies highlight the potential limitations of relying solely on one type of feedback and suggest the need for further research on feedback approaches. While written feedback provides a permanent record that students can revisit, it may not always be sufficient to prompt substantive revisions, especially for younger students who may struggle to understand abstract comments. Conversely, verbal feedback allows for real-time clarification and interactive support.

Together, the literature raises important questions about the most effective ways to deliver feedback to young writers. The mixed findings suggest that while both verbal and written feedback have their strengths, their combined use may offer a more comprehensive approach to supporting students during the revision process. These considerations lead to the central research question of this study: *What is the impact of verbal versus written feedback on the number of*

revisions fifth-grade students make in their writing? Addressing this question will help determine which feedback practices best support the developmental needs of elementary students in writing instruction.

CHAPTER III

Research Design

Introduction

Feedback is an essential element of writing instruction, significantly influencing students' ability to revise and enhance their work. This study will examine the effects of written versus verbal feedback on fifth-grade students' writing revisions over a five-week timeframe. The research addresses the following questions: *What is the impact of verbal versus written feedback on the number of revisions fifth-grade students make in their writing? What is the impact of verbal versus written feedback on the quality of revisions fifth-grade students make in their writing? and How do fifth-grade students perceive verbal and written feedback in terms of support for revising their writing?* This chapter will outline the study's qualitative and quantitative approach, emphasizing the teacher-researcher's dual role as both a participant-researcher and a facilitator of the feedback sessions. Data analysis will identify patterns across multiple data sources, such as student reflections, writing samples, and feedback tracking. As a hypothesis-generating study, this research aims to explore emerging insights regarding the effectiveness of different feedback types in supporting student writing and revisions.

Research Setting

This section presents the setting for this research study. This study is designed to answer the research question *What is the impact of verbal versus written feedback on the number of revisions fifth-grade students make in their writing?* This research study is set in a school district located in Northern New Jersey. As of the most recent estimates, the population is around 26,000 residents, characterized by a generally affluent socio-economic status, with a median household income above the national average. According to the 2020 Census, the town has a population of

26,504 with a median household income of \$159,077, and a high rate of educational attainment, with 95.3% of residents age 25 or older holding at least a high school diploma, and 68.4% possessing a bachelor's degree or higher. The town is predominantly White (75%), with growing diversity reflected in its Asian (13.3%), Hispanic or Latino (11.6%), Black or African American (3.7%), and multiracial (3.8%) populations. Of residents age 5 or older, 25.5% speak a language other than English at home, reflecting the town's multicultural composition (U.S. Census Bureau).

The school district in which the study takes place has a student population of approximately 4,500 across six schools, including four elementary schools, one middle school, and one high school. The elementary schools serve approximately 1,800 students in grades K-5. Each elementary school enrolls around 400-500 students, with around 90 students in the 5th grade at each school and class sizes averaging 18-22 students per teacher. There are approximately 200 certified teachers across the elementary level, providing a strong foundation in core subjects, special education, and enrichment programs.

The elementary school which the study takes place in serves approximately 470 students in grades K-5. The school has around 40 certified teachers, resulting in an average class size of about 18-22 students, which supports individualized instruction. The school offers a range of programs, including special education services, gifted and talented enrichment, and English as a Second Language (ESL) instruction, speech therapy, occupational therapy, and resource programs for students with learning disabilities. Additionally, the school offers extracurricular activities like art, music, physical education, and technology classes, along with after-school programs such as clubs and sports.

The study took place inside the participant-researcher's fifth grade classroom. This

classroom had 20 general education students, with 8 girls and 12 boys and one teacher. Six students received in class Tier 2 support for reading and writing. Students each had their own desk with their own personal district provided laptop device which traveled to and from school with them, as well as a writing notebook and folder. Students received all general education in this classroom, including reading, writing, grammar and spelling. Fifth grade classes were provided with a 120-minute block in which to receive instruction in reading, writing, spelling and grammar. This district utilized both Lucy Calkin's Units of Study for writing, as well as Jennifer Serravallo Writing Strategies and Writing Progressions and followed the Writing Workshop Model, which involves targeted minilessons with modeling and direct instruction, teacher conferencing and student independent and collaborative work time. Students most frequently utilized their device to type on, using the Microsoft Word program. Students are given pre- and post-assessments for each unit of writing and have established benchmarks for each grade and unit. During this study, students focused on creating a realistic fiction narrative with a complex main character and problem, including dialogue, description, action, and a strong opening and conclusion with minilessons and small groups used to introduce and support development of these skills.

Research Participants

This section discusses the participants in this study. As the participant-researcher in this study, I bring a background in elementary education and English, with a bachelor's degree in these fields. I have been teaching elementary-aged students for the past four years, focusing specifically on this age group, and have accumulated six years of experience working in education at the elementary level. This experience has provided me with a solid understanding of the developmental and academic needs of young learners, as well as insights into effective

instructional strategies for improving student writing. My familiarity with the curriculum and assessment methods allows me to approach this research with both practical classroom knowledge and a commitment to enhancing student learning through evidence-based practices.

Twenty general education students participated in this study. They are 5th graders who took part in a narrative writing unit and received verbal and written feedback from the teacher. The students participating in the study cover a range of demographics, including two students who are former English Language learners with their first language being Spanish. Four of the students involved in the study receive Basic Skills Instruction in English Language Arts twice a week. Two of the participants exceed the grade level writing expectations on the district unit writing pre-assessment, while the remaining students meet or approach grade level writing expectations.

Data Sources

This section discusses the data sources that will be used in the study. This study employs a mixed-methods research approach, which combines quantitative and qualitative data collection techniques. This approach enables a comprehensive investigation of the effects of different feedback types on student writing by collecting numerical data related to the number of revisions students make in response to each type of feedback, and descriptive data about students' experiences (Efron & Ravid, 2019).

To address the research questions comprehensively, several data collection tools will be utilized to gather both quantitative and qualitative data:

Feedback and Revision Tracker: This tool (Appendix) will document the type of feedback provided each week (written or verbal) and record the number of revisions made by students. The tracker will categorize revisions into higher-order changes (e.g., adjustments in

organization, development of ideas, and craft) and lower-order changes (e.g., transitions, spelling, punctuation, and grammar). This categorization will help distinguish between substantive content revisions and surface-level corrections, providing a deeper understanding of how different feedback types impact the quality of revisions. The tracker will allow for the identification of patterns over time, comparing the effects of verbal and written feedback on the frequency and nature of revisions.

Narrative Writing Rubric: A narrative writing rubric (Appendix) will be used to assess the quality of revisions made in response to feedback. The rubric will evaluate key elements of narrative writing, such as character development, plot structure, setting description, coherence, and use of language. By applying the rubric consistently across student writing samples, the study can objectively measure changes in writing quality over time, based on revisions made following the receipt of each feedback type. This will directly address the second research question about the quality of revisions, enabling an analysis of which type of feedback leads to more meaningful improvements in student writing.

Student Reflections: At the conclusion of the study, students will complete a reflection form (Appendix) consisting of open-ended questions that explore their experiences with both written and verbal feedback. The reflection questions will ask students to indicate which type of feedback they found more helpful, which motivated them to revise more, and which was easier to understand. These reflections will provide qualitative data that offer insights into students' perceptions and preferences regarding feedback. This data source will address the third research question by identifying themes related to the perceived supportiveness of different feedback forms for their writing.

Teacher's Research Journal: Throughout the study, the teacher will keep a research

journal to document observations, thoughts, and emerging patterns related to how students respond to feedback. The journal entries will include reflections on the feedback sessions, noting any differences in student engagement, challenges faced during revision, and anecdotal evidence of how students interact with the feedback they receive. This qualitative data will supplement the findings from student reflections, providing additional context for understanding the impact of different feedback types on the revision process.

Student Writing Samples: Student writing samples will be collected throughout the study to document the revisions made across different feedback conditions. The original drafts, along with each subsequent revision, will be analyzed to assess the nature and depth of changes. Writing samples will serve as concrete evidence of how feedback influenced revisions, providing a direct measure of both the number and quality of changes. Analyzing these samples will allow for a detailed comparison of the impact of written versus verbal feedback on specific elements of narrative writing, such as plot development, character elaboration, and use of descriptive language.

Data Analysis Procedures

The data analysis for this study will involve both qualitative and quantitative methods to provide a comprehensive understanding of the effects of verbal versus written feedback on fifth-grade students' writing revisions. The constant comparison method will be used to identify patterns and themes within and across various data sources, such as student reflections, teacher observations, writing samples, and the feedback and revision tracker. This approach allows for the examination of recurring ideas, differences, and trends related to how students respond to different feedback types.

Quantitative analysis will include counting the number of revisions students make in

response to verbal and written feedback, categorizing these revisions into higher-order (e.g., organization and content development) and lower-order changes (e.g., grammar and punctuation). The data will be tracked using a feedback and revision tracker, enabling comparisons of revision frequency and type across feedback conditions. The quality of revisions will also be assessed using a narrative writing rubric to evaluate improvements in areas such as idea development, coherence, and style.

Qualitative analysis will focus on understanding students' perceptions of feedback through their reflections and the teacher's observations. Student reflections will be coded to identify recurring themes regarding which type of feedback students found more helpful, motivating, or easier to understand. The teacher's observations will provide contextual information and anecdotal evidence, supplementing the patterns identified in the quantitative data. Together, these methods aim to generate hypotheses about the impact of verbal and written feedback on student writing, offering insights into the most effective practices for supporting revision.

Validity and Reliability

This section discusses the validity and reliability of the study. This study was designed to answer the research questions: *What is the impact of verbal versus written feedback on the number of revisions fifth-grade students make in their writing? What is the impact of verbal versus written feedback on the quality of revisions fifth-grade students make in their writing?* and *How do fifth-grade students perceive verbal and written feedback in terms of support for revising their writing?* The data in this study was reliable because there were multiple data sources used to measure the effects of instruction, with five data sources used to compare emerging themes and patterns to answer the research question. Data sources such as the feedback and revision

tracker and the narrative writing rubric, ensure consistent documentation and assessment of revisions across all participants. Repetition of feedback conditions within the multi-week study period allowed for the identification of consistent patterns in student responses. The teacher-researcher's reflective journal also helps maintain reliability by monitoring students' response to feedback and identifying potential inconsistencies. All students engaged in standard classroom curriculum and practices for the duration of the study in their regular classroom setting with their typical classroom teacher.

The data collected for the study was also valid. The validity of this study is supported through the design and multiple methods of data collection that ensure accurate measurement of the feedback's impact on students' writing revisions. Internal validity is strengthened by controlling key variables, such as providing all participants with the same narrative writing tasks and feedback conditions so there is consistency in the instructional context. The use of data triangulation, incorporating various data sources such as feedback trackers, rubrics, student reflections, and teacher observations, provides a comprehensive and multisided view of the effects of verbal and written feedback, reducing the risk of bias associated with a single data collection method.

Limitations

This section discusses the limitations for the study. This study was designed to answer the research questions: *What is the impact of verbal versus written feedback on the number of revisions fifth-grade students make in their writing? What is the impact of verbal versus written feedback on the quality of revisions fifth-grade students make in their writing?* and *How do fifth-grade students perceive verbal and written feedback in terms of support for revising their writing?* This study faces several limitations that could influence its findings. The small sample

size of 20 students from a single school restricts the generalizability of results to other contexts. The teacher-researcher's dual role also introduces potential bias, despite efforts to maintain objectivity through reflective journaling, rubrics and standardized feedback practices. The short four-week duration of the study may not capture the long-term effects of feedback types on writing development that a longer study may reveal. Additionally, differences in individual student engagement, prior writing skills, and responsiveness to feedback may affect the outcomes, creating variability in the data.

Chapter VI: Findings

In this section the findings from the analysis of data described in Chapter 3 are provided. This study examines the effects of written versus verbal feedback on fifth-grade students' writing revisions. The research addresses the following three questions: *What is the impact of verbal versus written feedback on the number of revisions fifth-grade students make in their writing?* *What is the impact of verbal versus written feedback on the quality of revisions fifth-grade students make in their writing?* and *How do fifth-grade students perceive verbal and written feedback in terms of support for revising their writing?*

I have found three major themes emerging from the data collected in this study. First, students tend to make more revisions overall to their writing when receiving written feedback. Second, students tend to make substantially more lower order revisions when receiving written feedback than when receiving verbal feedback and finally, students perceive written feedback to be more helpful in revising their writing.

Data Collection

Throughout the study, I collected both quantitative and qualitative data to track students' progress in narrative writing. Data was collected through multiple sources in order to gather information and answer the research questions. These sources included a Feedback and Revision tracker to monitor the number and type of revisions students made, a collection of student work samples, a teacher observation journal, a narrative writing rubric, and a student feedback reflection form. Students were first introduced to the Narrative Writing Genre and provided with the Fifth Grade Narrative Writing Rubric. The students received minilessons related to different narrative writing skills before having a block of time to work on their writing and revisions. Over the course of four weeks, students were provided with alternating verbal feedback and written

feedback on their narrative writing assignment. Student work samples were collected four times, twice for verbal feedback and twice for written feedback. Near the end of the four weeks, students were provided with the feedback reflection form to reflect on how verbal and written feedback worked for them and their writing revisions.

Data Analysis

The data analysis for this study involves both qualitative and quantitative methods to provide a comprehensive understanding of the effects of verbal versus written feedback on fifth grade students' writing revisions. The data was analyzed using the constant comparison method to identify emerging themes within and across various data sources including student reflections, teacher observations and writing samples.

Quantitative analysis included counting the number of revisions students made in response to verbal and written feedback, categorizing these revisions into higher-order (e.g., organization and content elaboration) and lower-order changes (e.g., grammar and punctuation) and assessing the quality of revisions using a narrative writing rubric to evaluate improvements in areas such as elaboration, craft and conclusion. The teacher's observations provide contextual information and anecdotal evidence, supplementing the patterns identified in the quantitative data.

Findings

When comparing the data collected using the Student Feedback and Revision Trackers, Student Work Samples, and Student Reflection Forms, three themes emerged regarding how verbal and written feedback effects the number of student revisions. First, students tend to make more revisions overall to their writing when receiving written feedback. Second, students tend to make substantially more lower order revisions when receiving written feedback than when

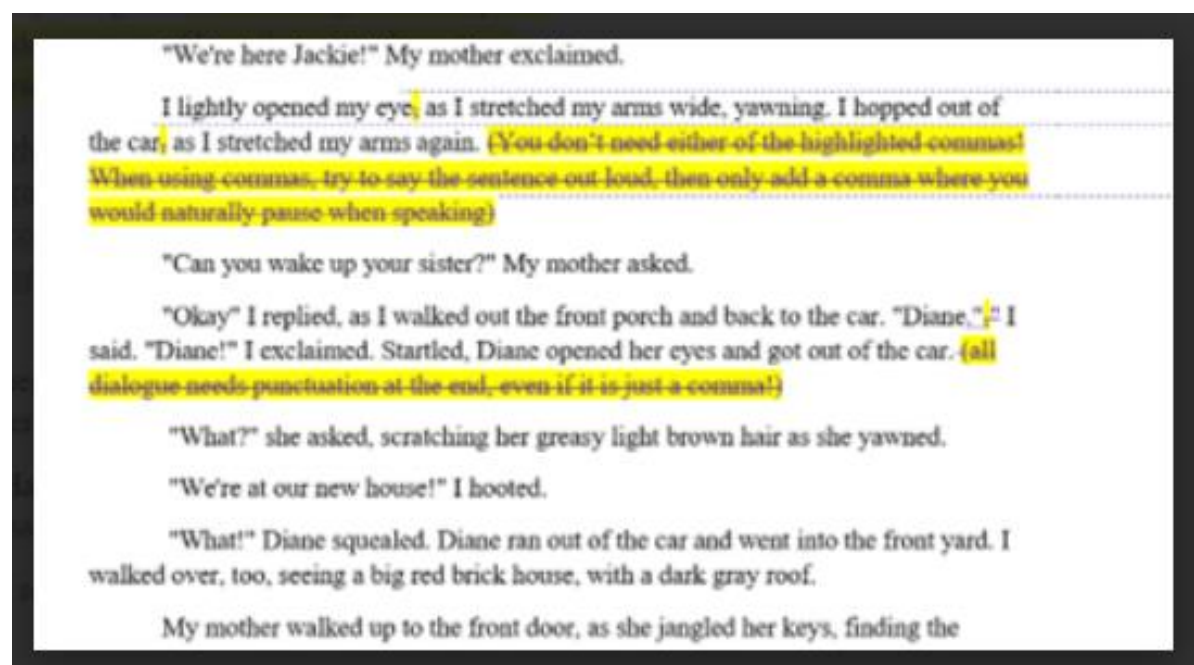
receiving verbal feedback and finally, students perceive written feedback to be more helpful in revising their writing.

Finding One: Students Make More Revisions Overall with Written Feedback

The first theme is that overall students tend to make more revisions to their writing when receiving written feedback as opposed to verbal feedback. The data in Table 1 illustrates a clear pattern in the effectiveness of written feedback compared to verbal feedback in prompting student revisions. Across all cases, students tended to make notably more revisions in response to written feedback, with an average of 5.2 revisions made in response to verbal feedback, while an average of 14.7 revisions were made in response to written feedback. For instance, Student 1 made 30 revisions after receiving written feedback, which is three times the 10 revisions made in response to verbal feedback. Similarly, Student 10 demonstrated a substantial difference, with 26 revisions following written feedback compared to just 6 revisions after verbal feedback. Figure 1 shows an example of Student 1's writing with written feedback provided and the student's corrections in response. In Figure 1, the student received written comments typed directly onto their work addressing both higher order and lower order revisions. The student was able to make changes for each of the comments that were provided, and then delete the comments once the changes had been made.

Table 1*Overall Number of Revisions Made from Verbal and Written Feedback*

Student	Verbal	Written
Student 1	10	30
Student 2	4	17
Student 3	6	15
Student 4	6	23
Student 5	4	7
Student 6	6	6
Student 7	1	1
Student 8	3	13
Student 9	6	9
Student 10	6	26
Mean	5.2	14.7

Figure 1*Student 1's Writing with Written Feedback and Revisions*

kept looking around as a voice interrupted my thoughts. (I'm thinking that this spot is also a good place to add in a little bit more description of how the main character is feeling before she starts her first day at a new school. Is she nervous, excited, worried?)

I closed my eyes and thought. Thought about my new life. *Would I make friends? Would people like me?* I opened my eyes again. Why couldn't I just be back at my old school? Probably reading the new Snoopy comic with my friends on the bus, instead of being here overthinking. I kept on wondering about school, when a voice interrupted my thoughts.

"Wack a Jack! We're here!" my father exclaimed, trying to sound like I was going

Finding Two: Students Make More Lower Order Revisions with Written Feedback

A second theme appears to be that students make more lower order revisions in areas such as transitions, spelling and mechanics when they are provided with written feedback, as opposed to when they are provided with verbal feedback on the same area of writing. The data in Table 2 examines the amount of lower-order revisions students made in response to verbal and written feedback across two categories: Transitions and Spelling & Mechanics. It also provides total lower-order revisions for each type of feedback.

On average, Transitions revisions were minimal for both verbal, with a mean of 0.4, and written feedback, with a mean of 0.2, indicating that neither feedback type prompted substantial changes in this category. However, Spelling & Mechanics revisions showed a stark difference: verbal feedback led to a mean of 1.2 revisions, while written feedback resulted in a significantly higher mean of 11 revisions.

Table 2*Number of Lower Order Revisions in Verbal and Written Feedback*

Student	Transitions		Spelling & Mechanics		Total Verbal	Total Written
	Verbal	Written	Verbal	Written		
Student 1	1	0	3	22	4	22
Student 2	1	1	0	13	1	14
Student 3	0	0	2	10	2	10
Student 4	0	0	2	20	2	20
Student 5	0	0	0	4	0	4
Student 6	0	1	2	3	2	4
Student 7	1	0	0	0	1	0
Student 8	1	0	1	12	2	12
Student 9	0	0	2	9	2	9
Student 10	0	0	2	17	2	17
Mean	0.4	0.2	1.2	11	1.8	11.2

On average, students made 1.8 lower order revisions after receiving verbal feedback, compared to an average of 11.2 lower order revisions when receiving written feedback. For example, Student 1 made 22 lower-order revisions in response to written feedback compared to only 4 under verbal feedback. Similarly, Student 10 made 17 lower-order revisions following written feedback, compared to 2 for verbal feedback. Figure 2 shows an example of lower order corrections made after verbal feedback and Figure 3 shows lower order corrections made after written feedback given to Student 10. In Figure 2, the student made minimal revisions to their writing after receiving verbal feedback. In Figure 3, the student made more substantial lower

Figure 3

Student 10's Lower Order Revisions in Response to Written Feedback

"So," asks David. "When we go inside do you mind if you give me a few tips on some of your moves so that I can get the hang of basketball?" (add a question mark instead of a period since David is asking a question)

"Sure," replies Walter. "In fact, I will give you some right now. So, one of them is dribble through your legs, then do a cross over and then pump fake and then you shoot." Walter gave David some more tips like pump faking, dribbling forward, and then shooting, which honestly made him a lot better than he used to be. Walter and David practiced a little bit more, then they went inside to get a snack and then they watched TV. "Hey Walt," asked David. "When you go in for a layup and then a lot of people come charging at you, what do you do?"

"I just don't stop and keep going," answered Walter.

"But my question is how you just get through them all when you are going for a layup, like, how do they get in your way and you still make it?" asked David. (Move your question mark after the words "make it" and put a period after "asked David")

"I just use my shoulder and push them, like I don't just stop just because people come in on you, I don't give up, I use my shoulder and push through them because then they are going to get pushed and they are going to back off and then that give me a free layup so then I just go for it," answered Walter.

"Oh okay, thanks," said David. "Oh, my mom is here, I got to go, it is late."

"Yeah, me too," replied Water. "I will see you at practice tomorrow."

"Okay bye Walter and thanks for the advice," said David.

"You're welcome and bye," replied Walter. That night David goes home, eats dinner and gets ready for bed. When David gets into bed, he thinks about Walter's words. He sits there and is worried that he won't do it. But just then he remembered when Walter said, "I never give up and I keep pushing through everybody." (Nice job adding in David's thoughts!!) The next day when David had to go to practice, they did a few drills and then the coach gave them a pep talk in their huddle at the end of practice.

(Start this dialogue on a new line) "Alright guys," says David's coach Tom. "The game we played on Saturday was our last regular game of the season, and that means that our next game is on Wednesday which is the first round of the playoffs. So, we all must cook up and get ready. Goldeneyes on 3, 1....2....3! Goldeneyes!" (This would be a good time to start a new paragraph)

On the other hand, the data in Table 3 compares the amount of higher-order revisions students made in response to verbal (V) and written (W) feedback across four categories: Lead, Organization, Elaboration, and Craft. On average, verbal feedback prompted more revisions in Lead with a mean of 0.4 and Organization with a mean of 1.3, while written feedback was more effective in Elaboration with a mean of 2.5 and Craft with a mean of 0.9. The overall changes

indicate that students made a relatively similar number of higher-order revisions in response to verbal and written feedback, with written feedback leading to a slightly higher average of 3.9 revisions compared to 3.4 in higher order verbal revisions. For example, Student 1 made 6 higher-order revisions with verbal feedback and 8 with written feedback, while Student 9 made 4 revisions with verbal feedback and 9 with written feedback.

Table 3

Number of Higher Order Revisions in Verbal and Written Feedback

Student	Lead		Organization		Elaboration		Craft		Overall Verbal	Overall Written
	V	W	V	W	V	W	V	W		
Student 1	1	0	0	0	2	5	3	3	6	8
Student 2	0	0	2	1	1	1	0	1	3	3
Student 3	0	0	3	0	1	4	0	1	4	5
Student 4	0	1	1	0	3	2	0	2	4	5
Student 5	1	0	2	1	1	3	0	0	4	4
Student 6	0	0	2	0	2	1	0	1	4	2
Student 7	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
Student 8	1	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	1	2
Student 9	1	0	1	0	2	0	0	0	4	0
Student 10	0	0	2	2	2	6	0	1	4	9
Mean	0.4	0.1	1.3	0.4	1.2	2.5	0.3	0.9	3.4	3.9

Finding Three: Students Perceive Written Feedback to Be More Helpful in Revising

The data reveals a clear preference among students for written feedback, particularly for making changes to their writing. Six out of ten students explicitly stated that written feedback helped them revise their work more effectively. For example, Student 1 mentioned that written feedback allowed her to make her writing more descriptive, as she could revisit the suggestions and fully understand them (Figure 4). Similarly, Student 9 emphasized that written feedback helped her track improvements, as she could read it over to ensure she didn't forget what needed

revision (Figure 4). Written feedback was particularly valued for its specificity in addressing areas of improvement, such as punctuation or descriptive language.

Figure 4

Student 1 and Student 9's Responses on Written Feedback

1. Which type of feedback—verbal (where we talked with each other) or written (where I left a note that you had to read)—do you think helped you make more changes in your writing? Can you give an example?

Ms. Santiago gave me ^{written} feedback on my writing, making it better. One thing she told me to do is to try elaborating my writing. It gave me more (better) changes since my writing became more descriptive, but not confusing.

1. Which type of feedback—verbal (where we talked with each other) or written (where I left a note that you had to read)—do you think helped you make more changes in your writing? Can you give an example?

I think that the 2nd type of feedback—(where I left a note that you had to read) would help me make more changes in my writing. Since I can look back at the note/paper and see what I should improve next so I wouldn't forget the feedback.

In contrast, only one student, Student 6, preferred verbal feedback for revisions, citing the ability to ask clarifying questions and receive immediate feedback (Figure 5), while one other student, Student 8, felt both types of feedback were equally beneficial.

Figure 5***Student 6's Response on Verbal Feedback***

1. Which type of feedback—verbal (where we talked with each other) or written (where I left a note that you had to read)—do you think helped you make more changes in your writing? Can you give an example?

I like when Ms. Santiago talks to me about my feedback in person, because in person, if I don't understand what she means, I could ask her. Also I like it more in person than written!

When it came to motivating students to revise their work, written feedback again emerged as the dominant choice, with six students favoring it. For instance, Student 2 found written feedback motivating because he could see his progress by crossing out completed tasks (Figure 6).

Figure 6***Student 2's Response on Written Feedback***

2. Do you feel more motivated to revise your work after receiving verbal or written feedback? Why?

When I get written feedback I feel motivated. I like to physically cross out what I have completed so I can see I'm getting work done.

On the other hand, two students preferred verbal feedback, often because of the real-time interaction and understanding they received from the teacher. Student 8, for example, found verbal feedback more motivating because it helped make the feedback clearer during the

discussion (Figure 7). One student, Student 6, expressed neutrality, indicating that both written and verbal feedback were equally motivating (Figure 8).

Figure 7

Student 8's Response on Verbal Feedback

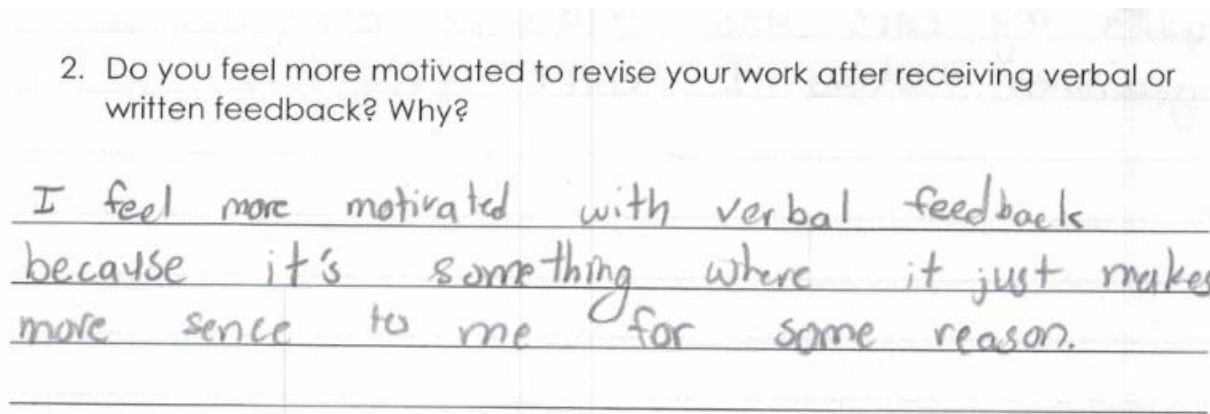
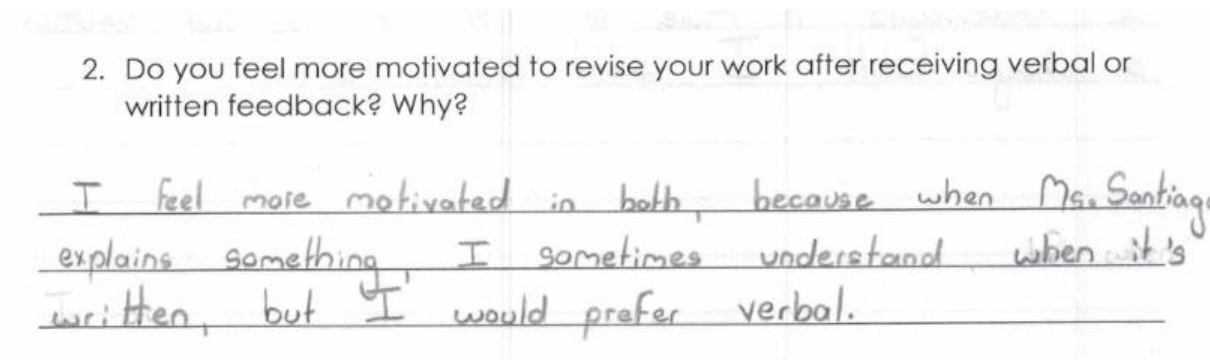


Figure 8

Student 6's Neutral Response



Understanding feedback was another area where written feedback was preferred. Five students reported difficulties with verbal feedback, often citing issues with remembering spoken instructions or finding verbal comments less detailed than written notes. Student 9, for example, stated that verbal feedback was harder to understand, whereas written feedback provided a clearer guide (Figure 9). Six students found written feedback easier to understand, highlighting its ability to be revisited for clarity and guidance.

Figure 9***Student 9's Response on Understanding Feedback***

3. Was there a time when you didn't understand the feedback? Which type of feedback—verbal or written—was easier to understand?

There was multiple times where I could not understand verbal feedback so I would prefer written feedback because I just like to read things over so I can just get it in my head or if I forgot it I could just look back at it.

However, three students preferred verbal feedback in this context, appreciating the opportunity to ask questions and clarify misunderstandings during discussions with the teacher. Student 4 noted that verbal feedback was easier to grasp because she could ask the teacher for clarification (Figure 10).

Figure 10***Student 4's Response on Verbal Feedback***

3. Was there a time when you didn't understand the feedback? Which type of feedback—verbal or written—was easier to understand?

yes I thing verbal is easier to understand because I could talk to her about it and understand it

In terms of future preferences, six students indicated that they would prefer written feedback for their next writing project. They emphasized its clarity, ease of reference, and usefulness in tracking progress over time. For example, Student 2 mentioned that written was better for motivation and easier to understand while Student 3 wrote that feedback helped him remember the changes needed and would be helpful again in the future (Figure 11).

Figure 11

Student 2 and Student 3's Responses on Written Feedback Preference

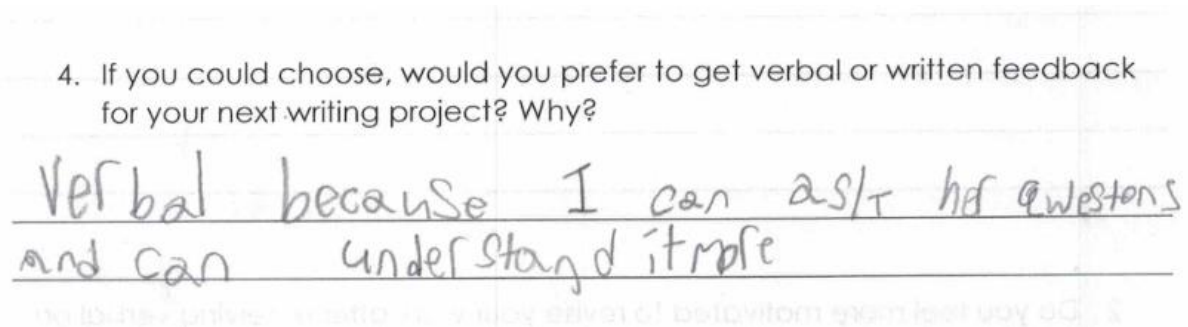
4. If you could choose, would you prefer to get verbal or written feedback for your next writing project? Why?

I would rather have written feedback. I believe this because written is easy to understand, and makes me feel motivated.

4. If you could choose, would you prefer to get verbal or written feedback for your next writing project? Why?

I would choose written feedback because it is easier to understand where I made the mistakes and I can learn from my mistakes. I can also remember my feedback better if it is written.

Meanwhile, four students preferred verbal feedback, valuing the interaction with their teacher and the ability to receive immediate clarification, such as Student 4 (Figure 12).

Figure 12***Student 4's Response on Verbal Feedback Preference*****Summary**

The data analysis for this study involved both qualitative and quantitative methods to assess the impact of verbal versus written feedback on fifth-grade students' writing revisions. The quantitative analysis focused on the number and quality of revisions, categorizing them into lower-order (e.g., grammar, punctuation) and higher-order (e.g., organization, elaboration) changes. The results indicated that students made more revisions in response to written feedback, averaging 14.7 revisions per student compared to 5.2 revisions with verbal feedback. Specifically, students made more lower-order revisions after receiving written feedback (11.2 revisions on average) than verbal feedback (1.8 revisions). However, the number of higher-order revisions was similar for both types of feedback, with written feedback slightly leading (3.9 revisions on average) over verbal feedback (3.4 revisions).

Qualitative data from student reflections and supported these findings. Students generally preferred written feedback. Six students indicated that written feedback motivated them to revise, while three students found verbal feedback more motivating due to the teacher's direct support. Additionally, many students reported that written feedback helped them understand the revisions needed more clearly, whereas verbal feedback often led to confusion, particularly for surface-

level changes like punctuation and spelling. In general, written feedback prompted more revisions, especially in areas like grammar and mechanics, while verbal feedback led to more focused, higher-order revisions related to organization and content. These findings suggest that while both types of feedback support students' revision processes, they do so in different ways, with written feedback primarily addressing surface-level errors and verbal feedback facilitating deeper discussions on writing structure and content.

Chapter V

Conclusions, Discussions, and Recommendations

This chapter presents the conclusions, discussions, and recommendations based on the findings from Chapter 4 of the study. The conclusions address the effect of verbal versus written feedback on fifth-grade students' writing revisions, focusing on the number and quality of revisions and students' perceptions of feedback. The research questions guiding this study were: *What is the impact of verbal versus written feedback on the number of revisions students make in their writing? What is the impact of verbal versus written feedback on the quality of revisions students make? How do students perceive verbal and written feedback in terms of supporting their revision process?* From the data analysis, it is concluded that (1) Students make more revisions in response to written feedback than verbal feedback, (2) Written feedback leads to a higher number of lower-order revisions and (3) Students perceive written feedback as more supportive for their revision process.

Conclusion I

Students make more revisions in response to written feedback than verbal feedback.

Discussion

The data analysis revealed that students made a significantly higher number of revisions after receiving written feedback compared to verbal feedback. On average, students made 14.7 revisions following written feedback, versus only 5.2 revisions after receiving verbal feedback. This pattern suggests that written feedback prompts students to engage more deeply with the

revision process. For example, Student 1 made 30 revisions after receiving written feedback but only 10 revisions after verbal feedback.

The Cognitive Process Theory of Writing (Flower & Hayes, 1981) explains that writing is a dynamic and recursive process, where various cognitive processes occur at different stages of writing. This theory underscores that revision is not a fixed stage but can occur anytime throughout the writing process. Written feedback likely facilitates this cognitive process by offering students a tangible, re-visitable resource that supports ongoing revisions. Students can reflect on written feedback multiple times, triggering further cognitive processes and leading to more extensive revisions.

In contrast, verbal feedback is less permanent, and while it may promote immediate understanding and interaction, it doesn't provide the same opportunity for students to revisit and reflect on the feedback. This aligns with previous studies, which found that written feedback encourages deeper cognitive engagement and more reflective revisions (Charalampous & Darra, 2023). However, verbal feedback could potentially enhance revisions in a more interactive, real-time manner, though this was not observed in this study.

Conclusion II

Written feedback leads to a higher number of lower-order revisions.

Discussion

The study also found that written feedback prompted more lower-order revisions (e.g., spelling, grammar, mechanics) compared to verbal feedback. On average, students made 11.2 lower-order revisions after receiving written feedback, compared to only 1.8 after verbal

feedback. For instance, Student 1 made 22 lower-order revisions with written feedback but only 4 with verbal feedback. This finding suggests that written feedback, with its clarity and permanence, is particularly effective for addressing surface-level issues in student writing.

The Cognitive Process Theory of Writing supports this finding by emphasizing the role of external feedback in guiding cognitive processes during revision. Written feedback serves as a constant reminder of errors to correct, encouraging students to attend to lower-order issues in their writing. As Flower and Hayes (1981) note, cognitive tools like written feedback can guide the revision process, especially when it highlights specific areas for improvement.

Sociocultural Theory, on the other hand, posits that learning is a collaborative, socially mediated process (Vygotsky, 1978). While verbal feedback offers immediate interaction and dialogue, it may not always promote the same level of detailed, surface-level corrections that written feedback can facilitate. This study suggests that verbal feedback may be more effective for higher-order revisions, such as content and structure, while written feedback excels at guiding lower-order revisions. Thus, the combination of both types of feedback may offer the best of both worlds, promoting both depth and detail in revisions.

Conclusion III

Students perceive written feedback as more supportive for their revision process.

Discussion

The study found that students perceived written feedback as more helpful for their revision process than verbal feedback. Six out of ten students specifically noted that written feedback was more useful because it allowed them to review and reflect on the comments at their

own pace. For instance, Student 1 mentioned that written feedback allowed her to revisit the suggestions multiple times, whereas Student 9 appreciated the clarity of written comments.

Sociocultural Theory emphasizes the importance of social interaction in learning, particularly through dialogue. Verbal feedback, as a form of social interaction, can facilitate deeper engagement with the revision process by encouraging students to actively participate in meaning-making. However, in this study, the lack of sustained interaction during verbal feedback sessions may have limited its perceived effectiveness. As Perry (2012) notes, writing is a socially mediated process, and verbal feedback can support this process through real-time clarification and collaboration. However, in this study, the students did not have sufficient opportunities to engage deeply with the feedback in a dialogic manner, which may explain why written feedback was perceived as more supportive.

In contrast, written feedback's clarity and permanence provide students with a resource they can continuously reference, enhancing their ability to internalize the feedback and make more informed revisions. This aligns with Vygotsky's (1978) concept of the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), where students require guidance from more knowledgeable others to accomplish tasks beyond their current abilities. Written feedback provides a scaffold that students can refer to independently, which may help bridge the gap between their current and potential writing capabilities.

Overall, the findings of this study are strongly connected to the Cognitive Process Theory of Writing and Sociocultural Theory. According to Flower and Hayes (1981), writing is a recursive process where different cognitive activities, such as brainstorming and revision, may occur at any point. The findings of this study suggest that written feedback, by offering students

a tangible, re-visitable resource, supports the dynamic nature of revision. Written feedback serves as a cognitive tool that students can return to, triggering cognitive processes that lead to more revisions.

From a sociocultural perspective, the role of verbal feedback in this study was somewhat limited due to the lack of sustained, interactive dialogue. Verbal feedback has the potential to be a more socially mediated form of feedback that engages students in real-time collaboration, as suggested by Vygotsky's theory. However, the study revealed that students' perceptions of verbal feedback were not as positive, perhaps because they did not have sufficient opportunities for deeper engagement with the feedback in a dialogic context. This suggests that for verbal feedback to be as effective as written feedback, it may need to be structured in a way that allows for ongoing, meaningful interaction and collaborative meaning-making.

Recommendations for Future Research

Future research could explore how combining verbal and written feedback impacts the revision process. Additionally, studies could investigate how the timing, structure, and frequency of verbal feedback affect student engagement and revision quality. Research could also explore how the cognitive and sociocultural aspects of feedback differ across age groups or writing levels, with a focus on how students in different developmental stages respond to verbal and written feedback.

Recommendations for Teachers

Based on the results of this study, there are several different recommendations for teachers to increase student revisions through feedback. First would be to combine written and verbal feedback to maximize their complementary strengths, using written feedback for detailed,

re-visitable guidance on lower-order revisions and verbal feedback for fostering discussions on higher-order improvements. Next, provide students with specific, actionable written feedback that they can reference repeatedly, ensuring clarity in addressing areas such as grammar, punctuation, and mechanics. Finally, teachers should incorporate opportunities for real-time verbal feedback to engage students in clarifying questions and interactive discussions, focusing on higher-order writing elements like organization, elaboration, and content development.

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APPENDIX B

Rubric for Narrative Writing – Fifth Grade

	Grade 3 (1 pt)	Grade 4 (2 pts)	Grade 5 (3 pts)	Grade 6 (4 pts)	
STRUCTURE					
Overall	Told the story bit by bit	Wrote the important part of an event bit by bit and took out unimportant parts	Wrote a story of an important moment – It read like a story though it might have been true	Wrote a story with tension, resolution, & realistic characters Conveyed an idea or lesson	
Lead	Chose a way which helped the readers know the characters and setting in the story	Chose a way to show what was happening and where – getting readers into the world of story	Wrote a beginning to show what was happening and where Gave clues to a later problem	Wrote a beginning to set the story or plot in motion/ Hinted at the larger meaning from the start	
Transitions	Told the story in order using phrases – <i>a little later, after that</i>	Showed how much time went by with words/phrases that mark time – <i>just then, suddenly, after a while, a little later</i>	Used transitional phrases to show passage of time present, past, future – <i>meanwhile/at the same time/earlier/later</i>	Used phrases to connect <i>what</i> happened to <i>why: if he hadn't/he might not have/because of/ although/little did she know that</i>	
Ending	Chose the action, talk, or feeling to make a good ending and worked to write it well	Wrote an ending that connected to the beginning or middle Used action, dialogue, or feeling to bring the story to a close	Ending connected to the main part of the story - Used dialogue, action or thought connected to main part – Sense of closure	Ending connected to heart of story – Created a sense of closure by showing a new realization or a change in character or narrator	
Organization	Used paragraphs to separate what happened first to what happened later	Used paragraphs to separate different parts and times, or when a character was speaking	Used paragraphs for parts, times and new speaker – Some parts were longer and more developed	Used paragraphs purposefully, to show time/setting changes, new parts, or create suspense Sequence of events was clear	
DEVELOPMENT (Double the Points)					
Elaboration <i>(double points)</i>	Worked to show what happened to and in the characters (actions and feelings)	Added more to the heart of the story with actions, dialogue, thoughts and feelings	Developed characters, setting, plot, especially at the heart of story/Blended action dialogue, thought, & description	Developed realistic characters Developed details, action, dialogue, internal thinking which added deeper meaning to story	
Craft <i>(double points)</i>	Told the story to get the reader to picture the action and brought the story to life	Included character thinking to explain actions/Slowed down the important parts/Used precise words & sensory details to bring story to life/Used a storyteller voice/Conveyed emotion and tone	Included character thinking and reactions to explain actions Blended storytelling and summary as needed/Used precise details & fig lang to clarify story/Used objects or symbols to create meaning/Varied sentences to set tone and pace	Developed traits & emotions/Used relationships to explain actions, words of character/Wrote internal & external story/ Appropriate pacing/Blended precise language, symbols to picture story, create meaning & develop characters Varied sentences & language to set tone and pace	
LANGUAGE CONVENTIONS					
Spelling	Used knowledge of spelling patterns	Used knowledge of word patterns and word families	Used knowledge of word families and spelling rules	Used knowledge of prefix/suffix and roots to spell words correctly	
Punctuation <i>(grows and develops with each grade level)</i>	(In addition to 2 nd grade) Punctuated dialogue correctly Used end marks for all sentences Used punctuation in ways to help the reader read with expression	(In addition to 3 rd grade) Used commas when writing long, complex sentences	(In addition to 4 th grade) Used commas to set off phrases and introductory parts of sentences	(In addition to 5 th grade) Used punctuation to help set a mood, convey meaning, and or build tension	
1 -11 Points = 1 11.5 - 16.5 Points = 1.5		17 - 22 Points = 2 22.5 - 27.5 = 2.5		28 - 33 Points = 3 (EOY Goal) 33.5 - 38.5 = 3.5	
				39 - 44 Points = 4 (1/2 points awarded in between)	

APPENDIX C

Name: _____ Date: _____

Writing Revision Reflection

Think about the writing you have been working on for the past couple of weeks. Use the questions below to reflect on your understanding of the writing process and revisions made to your writing.

1. Which type of feedback—verbal (where we talked with each other) or written (where I left a note that you had to read)—do you think helped you make more changes in your writing? Can you give an example?

2. Do you feel more motivated to revise your work after receiving verbal or written feedback? Why?

3. Was there a time when you didn't understand the feedback? Which type of feedback—verbal or written—was easier to understand?

4. If you could choose, would you prefer to get verbal or written feedback for your next writing project? Why?
