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Let's Talk: A Study of Dialogic Feedback in a First-Year Composition Classroom

by

Jenna M. Saunders

A Thesis

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Abstract

Feedback is vital to first-year composition (FYC) students' learning because students use feedback to gain an understanding of the progress they have made as academic writers and the steps they might take to further said progress. Academia has a long history of conversations on best feedback practices and continues to identify strengths and weaknesses of various feedback models. Dialogic feedback, a method of feedback in which the student actively participates in discussion with their instructor, emerges from these conversations as a feedback model that is potentially better for student learning. The dialogic feedback model merits further study, particularly in relation to how FYC students engage with and react to the dialogic feedback process. Exploring dialogic feedback from the perspective of FYC students is an important area of study, as the students' actions during the process and feelings about the process offer insight into the effectiveness of the feedback model. Studying how FYC students engage with and react to a dialogic feedback model reveals that FYC students are capable of undertaking an active role in the feedback process, as they can successfully recognize and discuss important concerns in their own writings, if they are sufficiently prepared to engage in these conversations. The students' active role also allows them to exercise self-regulation and agency, which develops both valuable skills. Furthermore, dialogic feedback makes students feel good about themselves and their writing, which is important, as a relationship exists between how students' feel about the feedback given to them and whether they feel they belong at their educational institution. These FYC students value feedback models that evoke positive feelings and that offer them sufficient and timely feedback. This evidence suggests that dialogic feedback is an effective feedback model for FYC students.

Keywords: dialogic feedback, first-year composition, feedback models, dialogic feedback models, academic writing

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Chapter I: Introduction

Considering the Identity of the New Teacher

The identity of the new teacher lives in a crowded, curious, and unsure place. For a new teacher, every lesson brings a curiosity about what happens in and around the classroom space, but it also brings an uncertainty about the events and experiences that occur in the classroom between both the instructor and the students and the students themselves. New teachers have no tried-and-true methods to lean on and little lived experience to ground decision making in. Instead of the confidence that experience brings, the new teacher has the examples of the professionals around them, the advice of those professionals, the readings and pedagogies they have both been given and have sought out, and a willingness to throw ideas at the wall until something sticks. Yet, the examples and the advice, the readings and the pedagogies, the throwing and the sometimes sticking is at risk of amounting to little if these experiences are not tracked and meaning is not made from them. Thus, in order to make intentional and thoughtful meaning from classroom events and experiences, all new teachers should, at some point, begin to shift their mindset from thinking as someone who is merely curious to thinking as someone who pursues curiosity. The instructor who pursues curiosity is the teacher-researcher.

Glenda Bissex (1986) proclaims that the teacher-researcher is “an observer, a questioner, a learner, and a more complete teacher” (p. 483). Thus, Bissex’s teacher-researcher is called to adopt a mindset that notices the complexities of the classroom ecosystem, the purposefulness of good curriculum, and the intricate and personal process that is learning. Adopting the mindset Bissex describes does not mean the teacher-researcher fully understands how these components of education are functioning within their classroom. Rather, it means the teacher-researcher is

curious about these components and takes action to achieve a better understanding of them. The teacher-researcher begins “with a wondering to pursue,” which means that the teacher-researcher wants to explore questions and curiosities (p. 482). Within their pursuit of questions and curiosities, the teacher-researcher continuously reconsiders both what they have been told about teaching and what they think they know about teaching. The teacher-researcher looks and relooks, considers and reconsiders, until they reach a moment in which they can make a supported teaching decision and can argue the validity of the supported decision. To adopt the teacher-researcher mindset, the new teacher must continue to throw ideas at the wall, but now, they must try to ask themselves *what* they are throwing, *why* they are throwing it, and what it might *mean* if it sticks.

In an attempt to adopt the teacher-researcher mindset and bring intentionality to my own teaching, I am pursuing classroom research in the first-year composition (FYC) classroom that I teach as a graduate teaching assistant. As a graduate teaching assistant, I operate in the dual role of new teacher and graduate student, and both roles are steeped in the learning process. This learning process is what has spurred an investigation into feedback practices in the FYC classroom, as I have continuously found myself struggling to provide the students I teach with appropriate, effective, and timely feedback and, at the same time, have come to understand feedback as an integral and vital aspect of helping students learn. Feedback is vital to student learning because students use feedback to gain an understanding of the progress they have made in their writing and the steps they might take to further that progress. Watching students develop as writers from the direct feedback given to them and experiencing my own growth as a writer

through the feedback given to me has only deepened this understanding of feedback's significance to the composition classroom.

However, providing appropriate, effective, and timely feedback proves incredibly challenging, and the conversations in academic scholarship recognize that providing feedback can be challenging for instructors at all levels of academia and at all experience levels. As a new teacher, one of the challenges with providing students with feedback stems from the fact that I can only utilize the methods that I have both been taught and have noticed as a student. The primary feedback method that I have been taught and have noticed as a student involves an instructor reading and analyzing a student's writing and providing commentary in order to help the student identify weaknesses and make revisions. Although before approaching feedback practices from the mindset of the teacher-researcher this method was unnamed, I can now name this method as the monologic feedback model, which refers to instructor commentary that is understood as input from the instructor to the student (Ajjawi & Boud, 2015). Monologic feedback, however, is not the only method through which instructors can provide their students with feedback, and furthermore, monologic feedback is potentially not the most effective method through which to provide students with feedback. Although numerous methods for providing students with feedback exist, dialogic feedback, which understands feedback as a collective experience in which the instructor and the students work together to discuss writing weaknesses and plan revisions, emerges from the current scholarship as a method that is potentially better for supporting students. Thus, my desire to both make supported teaching decisions and improve the method through which I provide students with feedback drives this classroom research study on dialogic feedback in a FYC classroom.

By detailing this research process from its conceptualization to its conclusion from the perspective of the new teacher, this classroom research project on implementing a dialogic feedback model in a FYC classroom contributes knowledge to both academia's long history of conversations on best feedback practices and academia's need to continuously teach new teachers about teaching. Exploring dialogic feedback in a FYC classroom is important, as feedback helps students learn to improve their writing and helping students learn to improve their writing is the composition teacher's job. Thus, research contributing to the academic conversation on feedback practices is a consistent necessity. Furthermore, detailing the research process as a new teacher is also important, as all new teachers reach a place in their learning process in which they are ready to make some of their own, supported teaching decisions but, perhaps, feel unsure about the somewhat daunting, but certainly important, process of classroom research. Thus, this project aims to speak from the perspective of a new teacher to other new teachers by dividing this research project into four areas of conversation: one, reviewing the already existing literature; two, explaining the study's methods; three, exploring the results of the study; and four, discussing the study's implications.

Chapter II: Literature Review

The current research on what dialogic feedback is and what it potentially does for student learning emerges from academic scholarship that has long explored the purpose of instructor commentary and the teacher's role in supporting that purpose. According to scholars Robert J. Connors and Andrea A. Lunsford (1993), theories on the purpose of teacher commentary have shifted fairly drastically over the course of 100 years. Their historical analysis found that in the 1880s composition scholars widely accepted the idea that the teacher's job was to evaluate student work. Thus, actual commentary on writing was minimal and focused mostly on mechanical issues. The emphasis at this time was on providing students with a grade. From about 1900 to 1925, different rating scales were created to evaluate students' work in what was supposed to be an organized and systematic fashion. Connors and Lunsford note that many of these scales demonstrate early attempts at judging the rhetorical effectiveness of student writing, but these scales were in no way equivalent to the rhetorical commentary that instructors would compose on student writings decades later.

After 1925, instructors started to move away from rating scales and towards discussions on how to create commentary that could help students understand the rhetorical effectiveness of their writing but that did not evaluate the students' writing at the same time. Between 1925 and the mid-1940s, the teacher's role could be described as that of a supporter rather than of an evaluator of correctness. In this time, scholarship worked to highlight techniques for instructors to approach correctness from a place of optimism and support, but by the late 1940s, the emphasis on correctness began to draw criticism. The rise of communication studies helped prompt scholars to argue that the purpose of instructor commentary was to provide students with

an honest reader reaction. At the time, the idea that instructors should position themselves as the audience of student writing was radical. Connors and Lunsford name John Fleece's 1951 argument for why writing instructors should position themselves as the true audience of student writing as central to this revolutionary movement. Fleece's argument acknowledges that writing teachers are *technically* already the audience of student writing, and therefore, teachers should position themselves as such and then comment on the content of student writing from that perspective. Fleece argues that commenting in such a manner will strengthen the relationship in which the teacher fills the role of the "real" reader. Fleece's idea led to instructors composing "long and personal comments" on their students' writing that, for many years, were assumed to be effective in helping students understand their own writing (p. 204). Eventually, though, the assumption that instructor commentary was effective by default would be explored and criticized.

The 1980s mark a clear moment in the history of academic scholarship on teacher commentary where scholars still identify the teacher's role as the reader of student work but now question how successful the teacher is at fulfilling that role (Sommers, 1982; Robertson, 1986). At this time, evidence emerged showing that teacher commentary was often vague (Sommers, 1982; Robertson, 1986), tended to distract students from their own writing purposes (Sommers, 1982), and potentially came off as cold and unfeeling to students (Robertson, 1986). Scholars began providing suggestions for how instructors could create commentary that was specific, appropriate, and personal (Sommers, 1982; Robertson, 1986; Connors & Lunsford, 1993). Scholars also began to suggest that involving the students in the commentary process would remedy many of the previously identified issues (Charles, 1990; Cresswell, 2000). Dialogic

feedback is one of the ideas that eventually emerged from this questioning of the effectiveness of instructor commentary.

Reviewing the historical context situates dialogic feedback as a discussion that emerges from a larger conversation on instructor commentary. The dialogic feedback discussion can then be divided into two important conversations: what is dialogic feedback, including defining the term, understanding its various models, and recognizing its necessary conditions; and what does dialogic feedback do, including valuing student intentions and writing concerns, supporting students in enacting feedback, recognizing the impact of student emotions, considering time, and promoting students' self-regulation and agency.

What *is* Dialogic Feedback?

Although the current scholarship on dialogic feedback tends not to point to a singular, unified definition of the term, the scholars who discuss dialogic feedback describe processes with similar characteristics. Anna Steen-Utheim and Anne Line Wittek (2017) explain dialogic feedback as a type of discussion that emphasizes student learning in which students learn “about and from” feedback while making their own meaning through interpretation (p. 4). Their explanation is grounded largely in David Carless’s 2012 definition that explains dialogic feedback as a series of

interactive exchanges in which interpretations are shared, meanings negotiated and expectations clarified ... Dialogic feedback is facilitated when teachers and students enter into trusting relationships in which there are ample opportunities for interaction about learning and around notions of quality. (p. 90)

The idea that dialogic feedback is a meaning-making process, in which the instructor partners with the students as they make their own meaning, is further supported by Rola Ajjawi and David Boud's scholarship (2015). The scholars describe dialogic feedback as a "social act" that supports students in developing their ability to "monitor, evaluate, and regulate their [own] learning" (p. 2). The description provided by Ajjawi and Boud frames dialogic feedback as a collective experience that works not only to improve the students' ability to engage with the assignment but also to improve learner autonomy.

Furthermore, Steen-Utheim and Wittek (2017) recognize a difference between standard dialogue and dialogic encounters. Any conversation can be a dialogue, but only the conversations that frame meaning making as an intentional and purposeful act can be considered dialogic. Through intentionality, dialogic encounters generate opportunities for students to transform their ideas that exist as internal utterances into concrete, observable writing that exists outside of themselves. Since the students' ideas become both external and concrete through the dialogic encounter, the students and the instructor become collaborators, as both the students and the instructor have access to the students' ideas. In their collaboration, the students engage in their own meaning making by reshaping, reacting to, and teasing apart their ideas, and the instructor supports the students in this process by encouraging and redirecting them when necessary. Although the difference Steen-Utheim and Wittek describe between dialogue and dialogic is a seemingly small distinction, their argument is important, as it allows scholars to acknowledge that while all dialogic encounters are a dialogue, not all dialogues are dialogic.

Although the dialogic feedback characteristics described by these scholars are certainly similar, the structure of a dialogic feedback model can vary widely, and the current scholarship

describes a broad range of dialogic feedback models. For instance, instructors can structure the dialogic feedback model as a verbal dialogue (Steen-Utheim & Wittek, 2017) or a written dialogue (Charles, 1990; Cresswell, 2000; Bardine & Fulton, 2008; Parrott & Cherry, 2014; Ajjawi & Boud, 2015). Instructors might weave dialogic encounters throughout an entire assignment (Charles, 1990; Cresswell, 2000; Parrott & Cherry, 2014), or they might plan for their dialogic encounter to occur at the end of an assignment (Steen-Utheim & Wittek, 2017; Bardine & Fulton, 2008; Ajjawi & Boud, 2015). Instructors might also create a reflective writing assignment during the process to deepen the students' understandings of the dialogic experience and their writing process in which the students respond to questions about the writing process, the feedback exchange, and the essay itself (Bardine & Fulton, 2008; Parrott & Cherry, 2014; Ajjawi & Boud, 2015). Thus, while the major characteristics of dialogic feedback are consistent, the variety of dialogic feedback structures offer instructors a number of potential dialogic feedback models to implement in their classrooms.

A number of scholars also argue that certain conditions should be established by the instructor before the students can successfully engage with a dialogic feedback model (Cresswell, 2000; Bardine & Fulton, 2008; Parrott & Cherry, 2014; Carless, 2012; Steen-Utheim & Wittek, 2017). Although what constitutes as "successful engagement" varies from scholar to scholar, one might identify success by describing the degree to which students are willing and able to discuss relevant global writing concerns in their dialogic encounter (Cresswell, 2000; Bardine & Fulton, 2008). In "Self-monitoring in Student Writing: Developing Learner Responsibility," Andy Cresswell found that, without sufficient preparation, his students' writing concerns tended to revolve around lower order concerns, such as grammar and mechanics, and

therefore, he suggests that students be given some kind of preparation to help them discuss relevant global writing concerns. Cresswell found that preparatory instruction helps students to focus on higher order concerns (HOC), such as content and organization, in the revision process, and develops students' ability to articulate their writing concerns in the dialogic feedback process. Moreover, both Bryan Anthony Bardine and Anthony Fulton (2008) and Heather Macpherson Parrott and Elizabeth Cherry (2014) further support the idea that students better engage in the dialogic feedback process with some preparation. In both works, the scholars argue that students are more successful in dialogic feedback experiences if they have the opportunity to participate in the dialogic experience on multiple occasions throughout the semester. Thus, preparation and repetition are conditions that aid in the implementation of dialogic feedback in the classroom.

Another condition that is necessary for the implementation of dialogic feedback in the classroom is trust between the students and the instructor. In "Trust and its Role in Facilitating Dialogic Feedback," Carless defines trust as "one's willingness to be vulnerable to another based on an investment of faith that the other is open, reliable, honest, benevolent and competent" (2012, p. 91). His definition implies that the students' sense of trust can be measured both by how vulnerable they can be with their instructor and by the type of characteristics they ascribe to their instructor. Since dialogic feedback requires a certain level of vulnerability, as students might feel negative emotions, such as anxiety, during the feedback process, trust between the students and the instructor is instrumental. If the students believe their instructor is a respectful and knowledgeable contributor to their dialogue, they can trust their instructor and can be vulnerable with their instructor. If students cannot trust their instructor during this vulnerable

time, they might shut down or reject the assignment. Thus, the absence of trust “seriously constrain[s]” the students’ ability to learn from dialogic feedback (Carless, 2012, p. 90).

Steen-Utheim and Wittek (2017) enrich Carless’s argument for establishing trusting relationships with their discussion on power in the classroom. The two scholars argue that the instructor must be willing to reduce the power imbalance that exists between the students and the teacher. Although a power differential will always exist between instructors and students, as instructors possess the power to evaluate the students’ work, reducing the power differential is essential for facilitating dialogic feedback. If the imbalance is not reduced, the students might recognize the instructor’s contributions to the dialogue as a threat and be unable to experience the vulnerability this meaning-making process requires. Likewise, the instructor may not recognize the students’ contributions as valid, which would erase the students’ voices from the dialogic encounter. Instructors might reduce this power differential by first recognizing the relationship between power and agency, which “refers to the capacity of individuals to act independently and to make their own free choices” (Bhaskar, 2011, p. 8). Power and agency are related, as students cannot exercise their ability to make and enact choices without first feeling empowered enough to act independently. Thus, instructors must begin by helping the students recognize their already existing agency, as they might not realize they have their own agency in their learning environment, and although instructors cannot give students agency, they can evoke the students’ agency by creating opportunities for the students to use their agency, which then empowers the students in their learning environment. The act of bringing the arguments made by Carless and Steen-Utheim and Wittek together presents trust, vulnerability, power, and agency as intertwined concepts, in which both the establishment of trust and of students’ power and agency

can lead to the students allowing for the necessary feelings of vulnerability during the dialogic feedback exchange. Therefore, instructors must set conditions in both the classroom itself and their interactions with the students that help establish trusting relationships and help reduce the existing power imbalance.

What Does Dialogic Feedback *Do*?

No matter how instructors decide to structure the dialogic feedback model or how instructors decide to set classroom conditions for its potential success, they tend to argue that, in general, dialogic feedback furthers student learning in a number of ways. Their conversations often contrast dialogic feedback with its assumed opposite, monologic feedback. The structure of monologic feedback has a one-way relationship, and because monologic feedback has a one-way relationship and dialogic feedback has a two-way relationship, the two types of feedback are often contrasted in scholarship. Academics contrast these two types of feedback in order to demonstrate that dialogic feedback is “better” than monologic feedback for student learning, and they engage in this comparison by focusing on five areas of conversation.

Area One: valuing student intentions and writing concerns. Scholars who are interested in dialogic feedback often argue that good feedback should know, consider, and value the students’ writing intentions and writing concerns (Charles, 1990; Cresswell, 2000; Bardine & Fulton, 2008; Parrott & Cherry, 2014). Maggie Charles (1990) recognizes that students sometimes struggle to convey their writing intentions in their essays. She acknowledges that students might not have the skills to accurately convey their writing intentions to others, and therefore, they might need an opportunity outside of their essays to discuss the ideas they want to convey but that might not be apparent to a reader. They need an opportunity to explain,

articulate, and define the intentions they have for their ideas. When students do not have this opportunity, their instructor can easily misunderstand the ideas presented in the essay and craft feedback that is ultimately misguided because of their misunderstanding. Charles argues that misguided feedback is problematic because the students might read the misguided feedback and consider it completely irrelevant.

Charles also recognizes that writing instructors and their students might very well have “mismatched” writing concerns (p. 287). By “mismatched,” Charles means that the instructor might have one set of concerns that they believe to be most important to identify, but the students might have a completely different set of concerns that they have questions about. If the students do not have opportunities to call attention to their own writing concerns, the instructor does not know to discuss the concerns with the students. By not discussing the students’ writing concerns, the instructor might make the students feel that their questions have been ignored or that their questions are unimportant. Thus, good feedback should have some type of system to balance the time devoted to discussing both the students’ and the instructor’s writing concerns.

Rosalyn H. Zigmond’s 2012 research study on how writing students “perceive” the commentary given to them by instructors shows evidence for Charles’s argument (p. 111). Zigmond surveyed the approximately 200 students in her undergraduate writing courses and found that, while 43% of her students agreed with most, if not all, of her commentary on their writing, 23% of the students disagreed with the commentary all together. Her work lends credence to Charles’s (1990) argument that instructors need to know more about the students’ ideas and the students’ concerns in order to create meaningful commentary that is valued by the students. Dialogic feedback thus becomes a potential solution to these problems because the

nature of a dialogue does create these opportunities for students to both explain their writing intentions and discuss their own writing concerns (Charles, 1990; Cresswell, 2000; Bardine & Fulton, 2008; Parrott & Cherry, 2014).

Area Two: supporting students in enacting feedback. Additionally, scholars who argue in support of dialogic feedback tend to argue that good feedback should support students in their efforts to enact the revisions suggested to them in the feedback process (Ajjawi & Boud, 2015; Nicol & Macfarlane-Dick, 2006). Ajjawi and Boud (2015) argue that because monologic feedback shapes feedback as “telling,” monologic feedback does not guarantee students will read, comprehend, or enact the feedback given to them by their instructor (p. 3). Furthermore, David J. Nicol and Debra Macfarlane-Dick (2006) describe a false assumption that the instructor’s messages are effortlessly decoded by the students and that the students are able to put the decoded messages into action without issue. Zigmond’s (2012) study supports these claims; she also found that 24% of her undergraduate writing students did not know how to enact the written commentary she provided for them and wanted more explanation of her comments.

All five scholars thus acknowledge that students might be unable to enact feedback in their own writing without further assistance and support. Because monologic feedback is a one-way “telling,” the student cannot ask for support in enacting the feedback (Ajjawi & Boud, 2015, p. 111). Dialogic feedback, on the other hand, can provide this support because it creates a two-way relationship, which encourages the students to both voice their intentions and concerns and ask for support and clarification.

Area Three: recognizing the impact of student emotions. A third area of conversation deals with the relationship between the students’ emotions and learning. Nicol and Macfarlane-

Dick (2006) argue that current research reveals a relationship between feedback and whether the students feel positively or negatively about themselves and the writing they have created. One study that demonstrates the existence of this relationship is Sam Shields's 2015 investigation into the emotional reactions that feedback can evoke in students. Shields conducted "24 semi-structured interviews" with first-year undergraduate writing students (p. 4). His research found connections between the emotions evoked by feedback and the students' previous educational experiences, the level of significance they connect to the feedback, and how they associate the feedback to their confidence in their abilities as students. Moreover, his most substantial finding was that students use feedback to affirm whether or not they belong in their current educational setting. Positive feedback, which can evoke confidence, tells students that they belong, and negative feedback, which can evoke self-blame, tells students that they do not belong at their school. The students who draw these connections are mistakenly understanding the commentary on their writing as commentary on themselves as learners and as people. Therefore, the emotions created during this time have a huge impact on students' feelings of self-confidence and their ability to learn from the feedback.

Nicol and Macfarlane-Dick (2006) argue that the monologic feedback model does not consider the implications of research like Shields's study. However, dialogic feedback might better consider the relationship that feedback has with emotion. In a 2017 ethnographic research study, Steen-Utheim and Witteck analyzed dialogic feedback that was structured as oral communications conducted in a private room with only the student and instructor present. They determined that the feedback they observed provided the students with emotional support, opportunities to express themselves, and the opportunity to grow as individual learners. Thus,

research shows that dialogic feedback might better consider the relationship feedback has with students' emotions.

Area Four: considering time. A fourth and practical area of conversation brought up by numerous scholars is that of time (Sommers, 1982; Connors & Lunsford, 1993; Charles, 1990; Nicol & Macfarlane-Dick, 2006; Zigmond, 2012). In 1982, Sommers writes that “[m]ore than any other enterprise in the teaching of writing, responding to and commenting on student writing consumes the largest proportion of our time” (p. 148). Her statement, which has been echoed by others for decades, argues that the composition of feedback on students' papers is more time consuming than grading, lesson planning, or any other responsibility held by writing teachers. Considering the amount of time that it takes for instructors to compose commentary on students' writing highlights two realities about feedback and student learning. The first is that instructors, at all levels of academia, are overworked. Even though instructors care about supporting their students and their students' learning processes, the reality is that each day has only so many hours. Thus, numerous scholars have joined the hunt for feedback that both supports student learning and can be composed by instructors in a timely fashion, and yet, despite how important this question is, there does not seem to be a definitive answer for just how time-consuming dialogic feedback is for instructors. Charles (1990) argues that dialogic feedback takes no more time than monologic feedback, but other scholarship seems not to address this aspect of the conversation.

The second reality about feedback and student learning is that students value and benefit from timely feedback, which, here, refers to feedback that is provided relatively quickly after the student submits the assignment in question. Grant Wiggins (2012) argues that timely feedback is

one of the seven keys to effective feedback, and Shields (2015) found a relationship between timely feedback and anxiety. Shields determined that students identified feelings of anxiety between the time that they submitted an assignment and the time that they received feedback.¹ These feelings of anxiety then affected how the students adjusted to college life and affected whether they felt they belonged in college. This research highlights a real need for types of feedback that fit into the instructor's schedule and that can be returned to the students relatively quickly.

Area Five: promoting students' self-regulation and agency. The last area of conversation is concerned with the relationship that feedback can have with how students develop self-regulation and agency, which is the area most frequently discussed by scholars. Self-regulation, which is a process in which students establish their own learning and, then, control their behaviors in order to meet their learning goals, involves the students using the assignment itself, the context of the classroom, and the teacher's expectations to establish their goals and perform their behaviors (Nicol & Macfarlane-Dick, 2006). Within the self-regulation process, the students are continuously providing themselves with internal feedback by comparing where they are in their work to where they want to be in their work, which allows the students to begin adjusting goals, understandings, and behaviors. Agency, which involves making and acting upon decisions, can be further developed when instructors place students in environments where they are prompted to exercise their already existing agency (Klemenčič, 2015). By exercising their already existing agency, students further develop agency through practice and experience.

¹ Shields (2015) found that students were more anxious as they waited for feedback if they were waiting for feedback on the first assignment of their collegiate experience.

Thus, self-regulation and agency can be understood as intertwined and related concepts, as the learning opportunities in which students act independently, and thus develop agency, are also the learning opportunities in which students are prompted to examine their own learning behaviors and, thus, develop self-regulation.

Scholars argue that good feedback can be the learning opportunity that provides students with the chance to act independently and examine their own learning. Good feedback can prompt students to make and shift goals, reconsider their own ideas, and make progress on their assignment (Charles, 1990; Cresswell, 2000; Nicol & Macfarlane-Dick, 2006; Ajjawi & Boud, 2015; Steen-Utheim & Wittek, 2017). Good feedback can position students to actively engage in the conversations about their work, and these conversations can provide ample opportunities for students to negotiate meanings, expectations, and goals. Ajjawi and Boud provide evidence to support the idea that the dialogic feedback model is one of these good feedback models. In their 2015 research study into the interactions between students and tutors in an online medical education certificate program, they determine that dialogic feedback supports student learning and assists students in developing self-regulation.

To understand how and why monologic feedback is not one of these good feedback models, as it does not provide students with these learning opportunities, one might turn to Paulo Freire's (1970) *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. In *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, Freire describes curriculum that prompts students to undertake passive roles in their own learning as following the banking model of education. According to Freire, under the banking model of education, teachers are subjects. A subject is capable of and responsible for action. On the contrary, students are objects under the banking model of education. An object is not capable of or responsible for

action. An object is capable of and responsible for only receiving actions put on to them by a subject. Freire argues that under the banking model education has “become an act of depositing” (p. 244). By “act of depositing,” Freire means that education under the banking model is grounded in the belief that good teachers give students information and that good students receive and store the information given to them by their teachers. Thus, the model discourages students from engaging in meaning making and from exploring their creativity because both the act of personal meaning making and the act of exploring one’s creativity require action, which objects are not capable of. Since monologic feedback assigns the student the role of “information receiver,” one can argue that it follows the banking model of education and that the feedback model cannot provide students with important opportunities to develop self-regulation and agency.

Because the dialogic feedback model frames feedback as a collaborative dialogue, dialogic feedback falls, not under the banking model, as monologic feedback does, but under what Freire (1970) calls problem-posing education. Problem-posing education rejects the understanding of teachers as subjects and students as objects and, instead, sees teachers and students as beings who act together in order to create knowledge. Freire writes,

[t]hrough dialogue, the teacher-of-the-students and the students-of-the-teacher cease to exist and a new term emerges: teacher-student with students-teachers. The teacher is no longer merely the-one-who-teaches, but one who is himself taught in dialogue with the students, who in turn while being taught also teach. They become jointly responsible for a process in which all grow. (1970, p. 249)

Freire is essentially arguing that active communication allows power to blur, which in turn blurs the role of the instructor and of the student. He argues that the instructor takes on some of the students' role by listening and learning from the students, and the students take on some of the instructor's role by sharing their thoughts and ideas with the instructor. Because of this merging of roles and responsibilities, the students and the instructor become partners, and they share in the learning process. Dialogic feedback, with its communication-focused characteristics, falls under this problem-posing model.

It is important to recognize that the power structure Freire implies does not accurately describe how power operates in the class that I teach, as my position as a graduate teaching assistant and as a new teacher complicates the teacher-subject and student-object relationship. This position creates a gap between how Freire describes power and how I experience the power of the instructor. Both my instructor power and my conceptualization of my instructor power are neither what Freire describes nor how my own students understand the power of the instructor, as, although I do possess power as the evaluator of student work, I cannot ignore, forget, or separate myself from my status as a beginner, as a teacher who is constantly learning so much about what it means to teach. The graduate teaching assistant and the new teacher always operate in the dual role of the student and the teacher. Recognizing the dual role is essential for understanding how power, which seeps into everything, operates in the class that I teach. Furthermore, this recognition is essential for understanding how power is complex and situational. Thus, the feedback models implemented in the class that I teach are tied, not to the power structure implied by Freire, but to a power structure complexified by this dual role. The monologic and dialogic feedback model implemented in this class will be inherently

complexified because the class is both taught by a new teacher and taken by FYC students, who are generally experiencing the challenges of college writing for the first time. Thus, the commentary generated by this study will be tied to this very specific situation.

Chapter III: Methods

Study Purpose and Research Questions

The current scholarship seems to support the hypothesis that dialogic feedback is a better feedback model than monologic feedback. The scholars indicate that good feedback needs to serve students in five different areas, including giving them an opportunity to express and clarify their writing concerns and intentions (Charles, 1990), supporting them in understanding and enacting revisions (Ajjawi & Boud, 2015; Nicol & Macfarlane-Dick, 2006), making them feel positive about themselves as learners (Nicol & Macfarlane-Dick, 2006; Shields, 2015), offering them feedback in a timely manner (Wiggins, 2012; Shields, 2015), and prompting them to act independently (Charles, 1990; Cresswell, 2000; Nicol & Macfarlane-Dick, 2006; Ajjawi & Boud, 2015; Steen-Utheim & Wittek, 2017). Therefore, it is important to understand how FYC students engage with a dialogic feedback model, as their engagement reveals three aspects of dialogic feedback for composition instructors to consider: one, what FYC students need from the structure of a dialogic feedback model; two, how successful prepared FYC students are in participating in a dialogic feedback experience; and three, the ways in which dialogic feedback both allows and prompts students to exercise their own self-regulation and agency. Furthermore, understanding how FYC students react to a dialogic feedback model is important, as their reactions reveal three additional aspects of dialogic feedback for composition instructors to consider: one, what the students' value in a feedback model; two, what the students believe the dialogic feedback model offers them; and three, how the dialogic feedback model impacts the students' emotions.

Considering student engagement and student reaction together reveals what the dialogic feedback process is like from the perspective of a student, which is important because the ultimate purpose of writing feedback is to offer students information that they can use to improve their writing. Thus, because feedback is for students, their actions during the process and their feelings about the process are of the utmost importance for understanding the effectiveness of a feedback model. With this importance in mind, three primary research questions direct this study:

1. What themes emerge when students identify their own writing concerns?
2. Do the writing concerns students identify shift throughout the drafting process?
3. How do students react to a dialogic feedback experience, especially when they contrast the experience with a monologic feedback experience?

Participants

After the study received exempt review status from the Institutional Review Board (IRB), the 24 undergraduate students learned about the research study being conducted in their classroom (see Appendix for IRB protocol form). Since the objective of the course is to introduce students to the theory, principles, and processes of effective written communication typically encountered in college courses, the class is primarily designed for FYC students. Of the 24 students enrolled in the class, 10 are freshman, 4 are sophomores, 2 are seniors, and 8 are Post-Secondary Education Option students (PSEO), who are high school students who take college courses for both high school and college credit. In the class, 22 students are domestic students and 2 students are international students. Of the 24 students in the class, 8 consented to participate in this research study. In keeping with IRB standards, the work completed by the

eight consenting students has been stripped of all identifiable information, and the eight students are referred to using pseudonyms.

Study Procedure

Recruitment. The students learned about the nature and the purpose of the classroom research study at the beginning of the semester via a recruitment script, and they considered participating in the study (see Appendix for the recruitment script). In keeping with IRB standards, the students learned that their participation was completely voluntary and that all of their information would remain confidential should they choose to participate. The students accessed the appropriate informed consent forms and had one week to decide whether they wished to participate (see Appendix for the informed consent forms). After considering participation, the consenting students gave their forms to my faculty mentor. Asking my faculty mentor to collect the students' informed consent forms allowed me to remain unaware of who consent to participate in the study until after all the students received grades for the assignments associated with the study, thus minimizing the possibility of unfair grading practices. The six-week study began in the third week of the academic semester and was conducted in two phases: Phase One and Phase Two.

Phase One. Phase One occurred over three weeks and provided the students with a monologic feedback experience. Phase One had the following structure:

1. The students wrote a short essay, which we informally referred to as Essay One, that explored the literacy narrative of poet Jimmy Santiago Baca (see Appendix for the "Unit 1: Jimmy Santiago Baca's Causal Argument Essay" assignment sheet). The assignment required the students to explore Baca's literacy narrative in the form of a causal

argument, and the students needed to cite from both an excerpt from Baca's memoir and a documentary on his life in order to support their argument. The students both read the excerpt from the memoir and watched the documentary in class in the weeks before being assigned the essay.

2. The students had five days to compose a first draft of their essays. The students submitted their first drafts as Word documents to our course's D2L Brightspace (D2L) page.²
3. The students received feedback on Essay One that followed a monologic feedback model. Each student received three comments through Word's Comments feature: one comment that highlighted a writing strength and two comments that highlighted an area for improvement. The students received this monologic feedback two days after they submitted their first drafts.
4. The students engaged in an in-class peer review of a classmate's draft. The students followed a handout containing sixteen questions that focused on the content, organization, and style of their peer's essay.
5. The students revised their draft and submitted a final draft for evaluation.
6. The students composed a short reflective essay in which they explained their writing process, described how they reacted to the written comments on their draft, and outlined how they implemented aspects of those comments in their essay (see Appendix for the "Unit 1: Reflection One" assignment sheet). The reflection gave the students an opportunity to critique the effectiveness of monologic feedback and gave them a chance

² D2L Brightspace is the university's cloud-based learning management system.

to ask any additional questions that had not been addressed through either the monologic feedback process or the class's lectures and activities.

Three Purposes of Phase One. The most obvious purpose of Phase One was to provide the students with a monologic feedback experience so that they could later compare monologic feedback to dialogic feedback. However, Phase One had two other purposes that are not obvious in the discussion of the structure of Phase One. Because the current scholarship advocates for instructors to both prepare their students for engaging in dialogic feedback (Cresswell, 2000) and establish trusting relationships with their students (Carless, 2012), classroom activities and interactions occurred during Phase One that intended to establish the two conditions. It is important to further explore both student preparation and the process of establishing trusting relationships, as the structure of Phase One does not clearly show the classroom activities and interactions that contributed to these conditions.

Cresswell (2000) identifies three major concepts that instructors should teach their students in order to prepare them to engage in a dialogic feedback experience: one, the value of global writing concerns; two, the importance of revisions between drafts; and three, the idea that the writing process is recursive. The first lesson that introduced the students to the value of global writing concerns was a lesson that is informally referred to as the Orange Activity. The Orange Activity is essentially a brief lecture on the difference between HOC and lower order writing concerns (LOC) in which the differences are illustrated through a metaphor about shopping for and eating oranges. The lesson began by having the students discuss how they shop

for oranges in the supermarket.³ The students, as expected, primarily spoke about looking at the orange's skin in order to determine if they wanted to buy it or not. After establishing that the orange's skin is important for buying an orange, the students had to discuss how they eat the orange.⁴ They, unsurprisingly, explained that they peel the orange's skin and section apart the individual fruit slices. The students seemed to find the entire discussion amusing, and they quickly caught on to the fact that the discussion was not truly about buying and eating oranges. The Orange Activity established that, although the orange's skin is important because it attracts the buyer to the orange, the orange's fruit is substantially more important because the buyer consumes the orange's fruit.

In the orange metaphor, the orange's skin represents LOC and the actual fruit represents HOC. Through the Orange Activity, the students acknowledged that there are writing concerns that one can consider to be the fruit of the essay, and there are writing concerns that one can consider to be the skin of the essay. Both parts of the orange are important to the buyer, just as both types of writing concerns affect the experiences of the reader, yet it is the orange's fruit that will sustain and nourish the buyer, just as it is the HOC that will interest and challenge the reader. The class made a list of HOC and of LOC, which allowed them to have discussions about where each concern belonged and also gave them an opportunity to continue practicing with composition terminology. The Orange Activity was a valuable early lesson in HOC and LOC

³ In an effort to create a fun and memorable atmosphere, the students also got to eat mandarin oranges during the lesson.

⁴ The students also answered a question about whether they ever eat the orange's skin. They shook their heads, and a few of them even cracked a smile!

because the students could refer to the discussion and the lists throughout the rest of the semester.

In addition to the Orange Activity, the students learned about the value of global writing concerns through peer review and the essay's grading rubric. Peer review reinforced the value of global writing concerns because the peer review questions focused on the content, organization, and style of their peer's essay, and the students were specifically instructed to wait to comment on concerns like formatting and mechanics until after they addressed the HOC. Giving the students concrete instructions and explaining the assignment expectations clearly helped them to analyze their peer's draft. Part of the purpose of peer review is to allow the students to practice analyzing a similar essay so that they are more prepared to analyze their own essay later. The peer review experience helps the students learn how to prioritize HOC in the revision of their own draft. Moreover, the essay's grading rubric further highlighted the value of global writing concerns by assigning higher point values to the HOC than the LOC. Although the essay's grading rubric is not a classroom lesson or activity, the reality of an evaluation is a powerful motivator for the students. Thus, while lessons like the Orange Activity and the peer review taught the students about the difference between HOC and LOC and the value of global writing concerns, materials like the grading rubric motivated the students to take these lessons seriously and encouraged them to focus on these lessons as they revised their work.

Phase One also introduced the students to the importance of revisions between drafts (Cresswell, 2000). A revision policy outlined in the course policy statement was an early indication for the students that revising between drafts is important, as the policy requires the students to revise between drafts in order to successfully complete the class. The revision policy

requires that the students submit all the drafts for a single writing assignment in order to receive a grade on their final draft. Failure to submit even one draft automatically results in a zero on their final draft. Additionally, the policy requires that each draft submission be a revised version of the previous draft, which requires the students to demonstrate that they engaged in the revision process. The revision policy is meant to both motivate the students to revise their work and show them that engaging in the revision process is a valuable use of their time. The course policy motivates the students in a similar manner as the essay's grading rubric because both deal with the realities of an evaluation. Although explaining this course policy is generally enough to motivate most students to engage in the revision process, this semester the students also had the opportunity to explore Word's Compare function as a class, which allows a user to compare two drafts. The software highlights the differences between the drafts so that the user understands and remembers the changes they made. Showing the students Word's Compare function both helped them understand that this course policy is taken seriously, as all drafts are processed through Compare before evaluation, and gave them a tool to use themselves to observe their revision choices.⁵

Furthermore, the students engaged in lessons and activities to help them understand the importance of revisions between drafts. These lessons and activities reinforced the course policy and gave the students tools to support their attempts to revise between drafts. Some of these lessons showed the students a specific writing concern that they could address in revision. The

⁵ This was both the first semester that I explained Compare to students and the first semester that all the students submitted all required drafts. Although the high submission rate is likely due to a number of combined factors, at the time of the discussion some of the students expressed their surprise that such a tool existed and that it would be used to review their work. Their responses seem to suggest that the conversation was at least helpful in showing them that a reliable system is in place to police the policy.

lessons taught the students about the specific writing concern and gave them the opportunity to attempt revising the writing concern in class so that they could receive support from others in the room. Lessons like the ones described in this section provided the class with an opportunity to discuss the value of revisions between drafts and provided the students with specific tools with which to approach these revisions. Other activities asked the students to reflect upon how their writing changed between drafts. These reflective writing assignments asked the students to explain both their writing process and if they thought their writing improved between drafts. The reflective writing assignments gave the students the opportunity to acknowledge to themselves that engaging in the revision process helped improve their writing.

Because Cresswell's (2000) final suggestion for preparing the students to engage in dialogue is that the students learn that writing is a recursive process, Phase One included discussions about what the writing process is. In order to better understand what the writing process is, the students read and discussed "Why Teach Writing?" by Sharon Crowley and George Redman. Crowley and Redman's 1975 article⁶ promotes the idea of process writing and contrasts the idea of process writing with the idea of product writing. In the article, the scholars argue that when writing instructors teach their students that the purpose of a writing assignment is to produce a specific product, the students cannot develop an intellectual or emotional connection to their writing, which prevents them from developing a distinct and meaningful voice. Crowley and Redman argue that these students tend to produce writing that feels detached and that is of poor quality. The scholars also introduce and define terminology that is useful for

⁶ Although the intended audience of Crowley and Redman's (1975) article is composition scholars and teachers, the article is written in such a manner that a FYC student can understand the argument with instructor support.

discussing the idea of writing as a process. In particular, the terms *invention*, which means “having something to say,” and *expression*, which means “saying it so that it has meaning for others,” are helpful for identifying both the purposes of brainstorming and drafting and the purpose of revising for an audience (p. 279). Exposing the students to “Why Teach Writing?” allowed them to further understand the value of the writing process and gave them a common vocabulary to utilize in describing the writing process.⁷

The purposes of the various lessons explored in this section were to both prepare the students to engage in a dialogic feedback experience and meet the standards set by Cresswell (2000). However, another aspect of preparing the students for a dialogic feedback experience that Cresswell does not explicitly discuss is the process through which the students are taught what dialogic feedback is and through which they learn what actions they will take in the dialogic feedback experience. FYC students need concrete instructions and clear expectations in order to understand and complete assignments, especially when the assignment is an entirely new experience, which, for some of the students, dialogic feedback might be. Although the students had an assignment sheet that covered both what dialogic feedback is and what they are expected to do during the process, any instructor knows that there will always be those students who either forget to refer to the assignment sheet or find it unnecessary to refer to the assignment sheet (see Appendix for the “Unit 1: Dialogic Feedback for Essay Two” assignment sheet). Thus, in order to expose the students to this information through an additional avenue, the students both

⁷ In addition to acting as an avenue through which to discuss the writing process and composition terminology, Crowley and Redman’s (1975) article was also an avenue through which to discuss the rhetorical situation. These conversations allowed the class to both better understand the situation that the reading exists in, which helps them comprehend Crowley and Redman’s argument, and better understand the rhetorical situation, which is a rhetorical concept we return to throughout the semester.

listened to and took notes during a five to ten-minute lecture about the dialogic feedback assignment. The lecture contained a PowerPoint presentation based largely on Charles's 1990 "Responding to Problems in Written English Using a Student Self-Monitoring Technique" and Carless's 2012 "Trust and its Role in Dialogic Feedback." The students learned about Charles's article because her dialogic feedback model is similar to the model the students would be following in their own dialogic feedback experience, and they learned about Carless's article because he provides a fairly concrete and approachable definition for what dialogic feedback is. This lesson was designed as a PowerPoint presentation because PowerPoints have a visual component, and thus, the students got to see a chart of the steps in the dialogic feedback model. The assignment sheet alone would not have provided the students with these visuals. Thus, the purpose of having both a PowerPoint presentation and an assignment sheet was to make the students feel prepared for the dialogic feedback experience.

The third and final purpose of Phase One was to establish trusting relationships within the classroom. Carless (2012) argues both that trust must be established as a classroom condition and identifies the three specific types of trust that he argues most impact the facilitation of the dialogic feedback process. Phase One hoped to establish each of the three types of trust with the students. First, Phase One needed to establish frequency of communication (Carless, 2012). Frequency of communication is a type of trust that is established through repeated and regular interactions. Thus, this type of trust demonstrates that time is a crucial ingredient for those who hope to establish trusting relationships. In fact, one might think of frequency of communication as the foundation of all trust. Although Phase One itself lasted only three weeks, the class was two weeks into the academic semester when Phase One began. Therefore, the class had five

weeks to regularly amass frequency of communication trust. During those five weeks, the class met a total of nine times, and in those nine meetings, the students learned what to expect from their classroom interactions. Time and regular interactions then created a sturdy base that supported Carless's remaining two types of trust, competence trust and communication trust.

Competence trust refers to one's "ability to carry out a task efficiently and effectively" (Carless, 2012, p. 92). Carless's definition indicates that, within the classroom, the students must be able to trust that the instructor is a knowledgeable and capable professional. Phase One, therefore, provided opportunities for the students to have their instructor expectations met. At the beginning of the semester, the students completed an in-class reflective writing assignment in which they detailed their expectations and assumptions for the class. The majority of students described how they expect instructors to answer their questions, have a positive attitude, respond to their emails within the same day, be understanding, and return grades quickly. Although how each individual student conceptualizes these expectations certainly varies, the expectations identified by the students demonstrate that competence trust can be established through relatively small and routine activities. Thus, competence trust is established when the instructor demonstrates their ability to teach the course content and manage the affairs of their classroom. Further examples of relatively small and routine tasks that demonstrate these abilities include lecturing on course content, assisting the students in locating and using course materials, and beginning and ending class on time. Although these actions might sound mundane or expected, they are important in working towards Carless's definition of competence trust. Phase One provided ample opportunities to complete tasks like the ones identified above, thus Phase One built competence trust in the classroom.

Carless's (2012) third type of trust is communication trust, and it is described last because it can be established on only the basis of frequency of communication and competence trust. Communication trust refers to one's "willingness to share information, tell the truth, admit mistakes, maintain confidentiality, give and receive feedback, and speak with good purpose" (p. 92). Traits like empathy and respect are central to establishing communication trust, and communication trust can be established if the students have opportunities to express their thoughts and ideas and if the instructor respects and seriously considers the students' ideas. When the instructor respects the students' ideas, the students learn they are safe in their communications with their instructor. Phase One tried to establish communication trust through small and large group in-class discussions and through the one-on-one interactions that occurred in either a face-to-face setting, such as when the students asked a question after class, or in an online setting, such as when the students sent emails asking questions. Therefore, by the time the class progressed into Phase Two, trusting relationships were beginning to form in the classroom, and ideally, these conditions prepared the students for the dialogic feedback experience in Phase Two.

Phase Two. Phase Two occurred over the course of three weeks and provided the students with a dialogic feedback experience. Phase Two had the following structure:

1. All the students wrote an essay, which we informally referred to as Essay Two, on the impact that language has had on their own lives (see Appendix for the "Unit 1: Personal Causal Argument Essay assignment sheet). Essay Two was also structured as a causal argument, and the students needed to draw on the readings that they read earlier in the semester to support their argument.

2. For one week, the students composed a first draft of their essays.
3. The students used class time to analyze their first draft for areas of concern and to compose a minimum of three questions or comments on their own work.
4. In keeping with the dialogic feedback model, I answered the students' questions and comments. The responses aimed to continue the conversations the students started by either asking the students a question about their writing that they could then respond to or providing them with a specific writing task they could complete. The students received this response two days after they submitted their initial set of comments and questions.
5. The students reviewed the response in class and answered the questions posed to them or completed the writing task they were instructed to try. The students uploaded their work for review.
6. The students received a final response to their work. The dialogic feedback process for the students' first drafts occurred over the course of five days and contained four conversation exchanges.⁸ We referred to this part of the dialogic feedback process as Round One.
7. The students revised their first draft and submitted a second draft.
8. We repeated the entire dialogic feedback experience for the second draft. The dialogic feedback process for the second draft also lasted one week, and we referred to this part of the process as Round Two (see Figure 1 for a visual representation of both rounds of the dialogic feedback process).

⁸ The students composed exchanges one and three, and I composed exchanges two and four.

9. The students engaged in an in-class peer review of a classmate's second draft. The students followed another peer review handout that prompted them to focus their peer review on the content, organization, and style of their peer's essay. The peer review process was the same as the peer review process for the essay in Phase One, but the questions were slightly different to account both for the essay's different content and for the new skills the students learned between the first and second essays.
10. The students revised their second draft and submitted a final draft for evaluation.
11. The students composed a short reflective essay in which they responded to questions about the writing process, the dialogic feedback process, their personal reactions to the dialogic feedback process, and the differences between their experiences writing an essay in Phase One and in Phase Two (see Appendix for the "Unit 1: Reflection Two" assignment sheet).

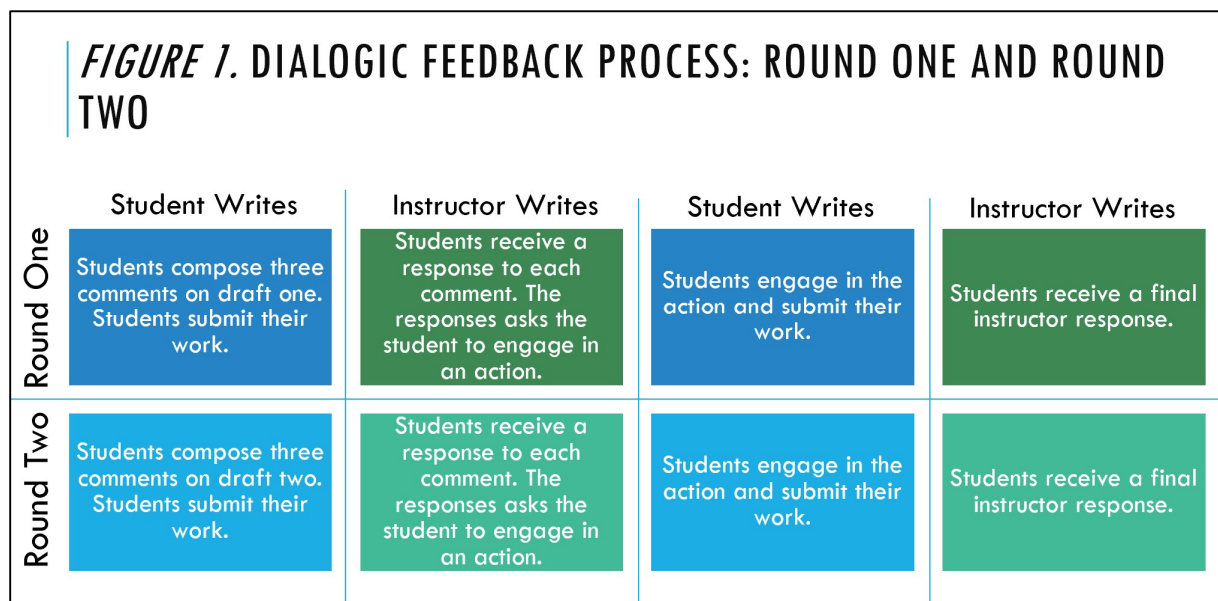


Figure 1. Steps in the dialogic feedback process.

The Purpose of Phase Two. The primary purpose of Phase Two was to provide the students with a dialogic feedback experience, but this does not mean that the conditions established in Phase One ceased to progress and develop. Trust, as previously discussed, grows stronger with time, and all of the activities and interactions described in relation to trust in Phase One continued to occur in Phase Two. Furthermore, the students continued to engage in preparatory instruction in which they continued to learn about the importance of revisions between drafts. In Phase Two, they completed both an activity that focused on using direct quotations in academic writing and an activity that focused on developing academic voice. Because preparing the students to engage in the dialogic feedback process so closely parallels the learning objectives for an introductory composition course, this process of teaching the students the value of global writing concerns, the importance of revisions between drafts, and the value of understanding writing as a recursive process is a truly semester-long endeavor.

Beyond merely providing the students with a dialogic feedback experience, Phase Two involved both monitoring the facilitation of the dialogic feedback experience and making adjustments to the experience based upon both my own observations and on data from the students. Although this was the first time our class had attempted both a dialogic feedback experience and an assignment with so many moving parts, Round One went considerably well. Almost all of the students submitted their work for the assignment, and almost all of the students submitted work that aligned with the assignment guidelines. Despite these positive indications, I worried the design of the dialogic feedback model was too complex because, in order to complete the assignment, the students needed to make multiple D2L submissions and use features in Word that they were unfamiliar with. Perhaps, these complexities were interfering

with the students' learning. Therefore, to better understand the situation, the students anonymously responded to a short, informal survey between Round One and Round Two.

In the survey, the students had two minutes to answer two questions: what was the muddiest, or most confusing, part of the dialogic feedback assignment; and, what was the clearest part of the dialogic feedback assignment? The structure of this informal survey was based on Thomas A. Angelo and K. Patricia Cross's (1993) Classroom Assessment Techniques (CATs). CATs are "simple tools for collecting data on student learning in order to improve it" (p. 25). Angelo and Cross's definition of CATs highlights some of the key characteristics of the assessment technique. CATs are student centered, which means that the focus of the assessment is on improving student learning, instead of improving teaching.⁹ Furthermore, CATs are formative, which means that their purpose is not to evaluate students. Rather, their "purpose is to improve the quality of student learning." Thus, CATs are usually anonymous and are generally not graded.

Although there are multiple forms of CATs, the informal survey the students responded to generally follows the structure of a Muddiest Point CAT. The Muddiest Point is one of the simplest assessment techniques, as it requires only a brief response from the students and can be conducted and analyzed by the instructor rather quickly. Although CATs are generally intended to better understand what the students learned and what the students need more instruction on,

⁹ When Angelo and Cross (1993) say that the focus of CAT is on improving student learning, rather than improving teaching, they mean both that the focus of the observation should be on the students and that the goal of the assessment should be to help students to understand and to think about their own learning processes. The purpose is not only to adjust how the teacher is teaching, but also to adjust how the students are learning and thinking about learning. Thus, both the students and the teacher adjust in the process.

the purpose of our Muddiest Point assessment was to understand if components of the dialogic feedback model were unnecessarily complex and, therefore, making the process unnecessarily difficult for the students. Although there are 24 students in the class, only 20 students responded to the informal survey. At the time of administering the survey, I simply read through the student responses and gained a general understanding of what the students reported as being muddy and what the students reported as being clear. Figures 2 and 3 contain the results of a more thorough analysis that happened after the fact.

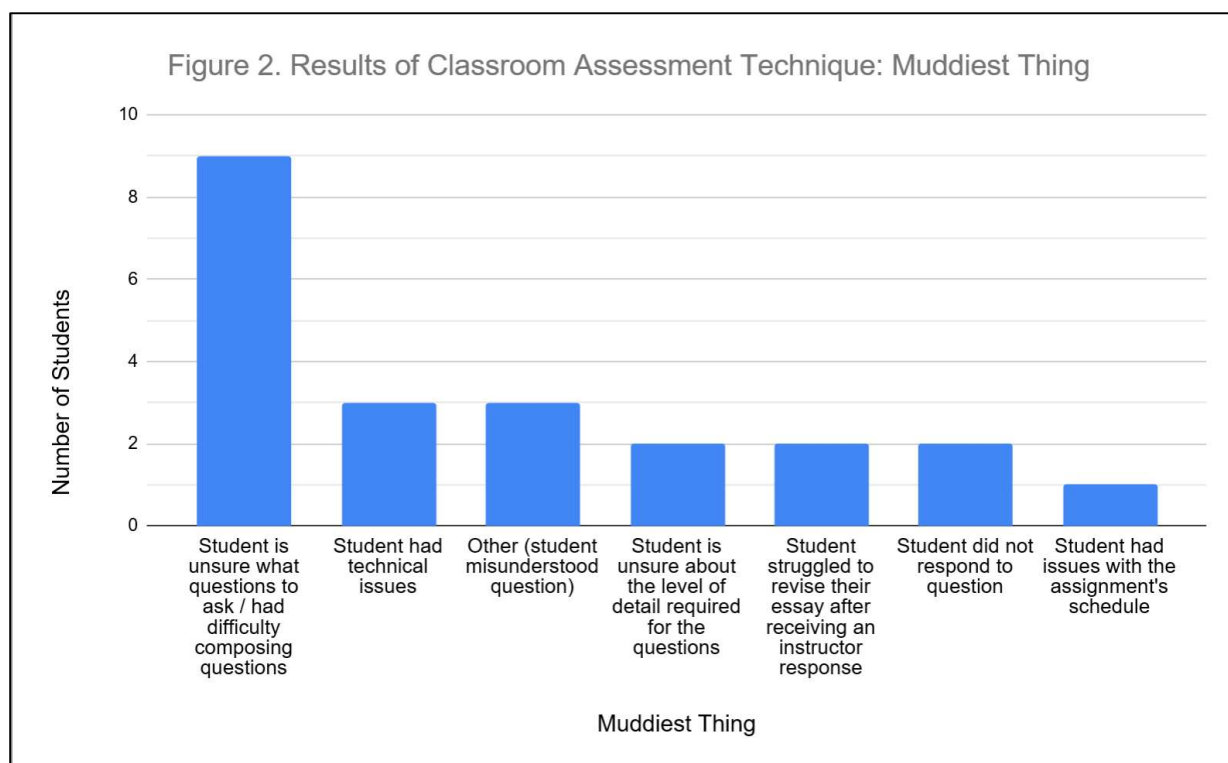


Figure 2. Student responses to “muddiest thing” CAT question.

Surprisingly, almost half of the students responded to the “muddiest thing” question by discussing the difficulties that they had with composing questions on their drafts. These nine students wrote about being unsure about which questions to ask. Their responses were surprising

because the majority of the students initiated thoughtful and relevant discussions in Round One. From an instructor perspective, the students did not need additional instruction in or assistance with developing questions for their dialogic feedback encounters. However, their expressions of confusion indicated that they, at the very least, needed reassurance of their question composing capabilities.

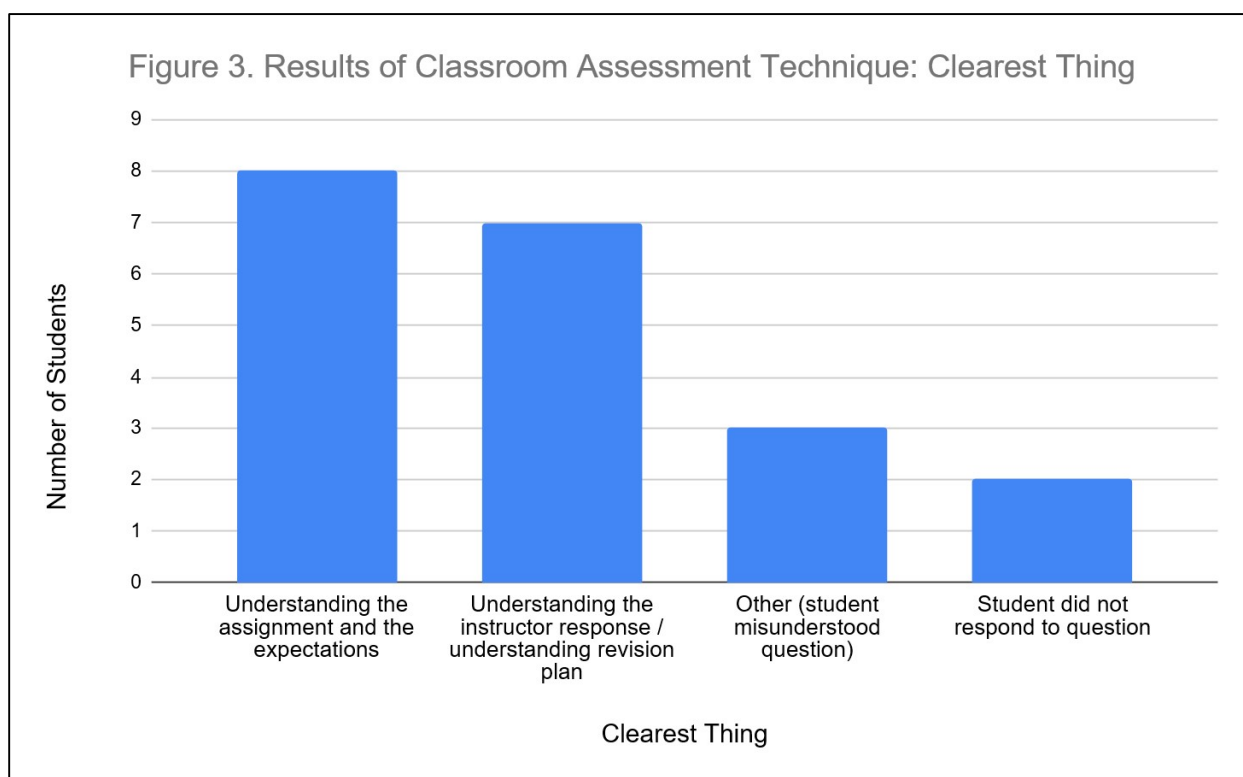


Figure 3. Student responses to “clearest thing” CAT question.

Additionally, it was surprising to learn that almost half of the students reported that the clearest part of the dialogic feedback assignment was the structure of the model. There were eight students who wrote that understanding the assignment itself and understanding my expectations were the clearest part of the dialogic feedback assignment. Furthermore, only three students said that the muddiest part of the assignment was their own technical issues, and only

one student identified the assignment's schedule as being problematic. The results of the CAT indicated that my initial concerns were misplaced. The complexities of the assignment did not seem to be impeding student learning. Rather, their uncertainties about the question-posing process were potentially impeding student learning.

In response to the data gathered by the CAT, we had a classroom discussion about the question-posing process. In the discussion, the students identified the questions they asked during Round One, and we constructed a list of questions one could potentially ask about a piece of writing. In addition to identifying the questions they already asked, the students also identified questions they *could* ask in future conversations in order to develop a more complete list. The students created a fairly developed, albeit messy, list. Thus, I reorganized the list by categories. The list then had a HOC (Fruit) category and a LOC (Skin) category, and each of the categories had subcategories. Examples of HOC subcategories include content, organization, and style, and examples of LOC subcategories include delivery and grammar. The students were then able to access this list as they composed their questions for Round Two. By using CATs to explore the situation, I attempted to push the purpose of Phase Two beyond merely providing the students with a dialogic feedback experience and towards providing the students with a *quality* dialogic feedback experience. Additionally, although the student perspective of Phase Two can be better explored only through the complete analysis of the students' reflective writings, from an instructor perspective and from the analysis of the CAT data, Phase Two seemed to be a fairly smooth and positive experience for all of us.

Materials

The dialogic feedback model used in this study was created by using components of already existing models but is most heavily based on the model described by Charles in her 1990 “Responding to Problems in Written English Using a Student Self-Monitoring Technique.” Although Charles never explicitly uses the term “dialogic feedback” in her work and instead refers to her model as a “self-monitoring technique,” the characteristics of dialogic feedback are emphasized in her model, as her work highlights the importance of facilitating a dialogue between the instructor and the students. Furthermore, the practical characteristics of dialogic feedback are present in her description of the model. She writes that self-monitoring is a process in which students “annotate their drafts with comments or queries on their problem areas, before handing their texts in to the teacher” (Charles, 1990, p. 286). Charles’s self-monitoring technique is attractive because the design of her model is both easy to replicate, as her model is a four-step process that she clearly labels and describes, and appropriate for the purposes of this study, as her model is student focused and writing based.

The dialogic feedback model used in this research study also contains a reflective writing assignment. The reflective writing assignment was developed largely from Parrott and Cherry’s 2014 “Process Memos: Facilitating Dialogues about Writing between Students and Instructors,” in which they ask their students to respond to questions about the writing process, their comments, and the essay. The scholars argue that their reflective writing assignment, which they name process memos, contributes to the best writing teaching practices and helps further a dialogue about student writing. Like Charles’s self-monitoring technique, Parrott and Cherry’s process memos are attractive because the design of the reflective writing assignment is both easy

to replicate, as examples of the memos are included in the article and clearly described, and appropriate for the purposes of this study, as the memos are student focused and writing based. The reflective component was included in this dialogic feedback model for two primary reasons. The first reason for including the reflective component in this dialogic feedback model is that research supports the idea that the practice of self-reflection helps students develop self-regulation (Nicol & Macfarlane-Dick, 2006). Because the development of self-regulation is one of the potential benefits of dialogic feedback, it seems logical to include an additional component to the experience that helps facilitate this potential benefit. The second reason for including the reflective component in this dialogic feedback model is that the reflective writing assignment serves as an additional opportunity for the instructor to gain insight into how the students react to the dialogic feedback experience. Thus, the reflective writing assignments will be analyzed for the purpose of exploring questions about students' reactions.

Analysis

The coding process, which refers to the method through which a researcher organizes and sorts qualitative data, began two days after the data collection process concluded and occurred over the course of approximately four weeks (Stuckey, 2015). The coding process closely followed David R. Thomas's (2003) description of the general inductive approach, which he introduces as an organized method for analyzing qualitative data in which specific objectives are used to guide the coding process. In the general inductive approach, the researcher approaches their data set without predetermined codes and reads their data through the lens of their research questions, which allows significant themes to emerge. Thomas's description of the general inductive approach is attractive and fitting both because the inductive approach focuses on

allowing frequent and significant themes to emerge in order to create a supported and comprehensive narrative of the data and because Thomas's description avoids technical language in order to focus on outlining a clear process. Thomas outlines the following five steps: one, clean the data by giving the data consistent formatting; two, read the text in detail to achieve an understanding of its themes; three, begin by defining major themes and sorting those themes into categories; four, recognize data that can be coded into multiple categories or cannot be coded; and five, analyze each major category for subcategories. Thomas's five steps were used to code the two major data sets, including the students' initial¹⁰ dialogic feedback comments and the students' informal reflective essays.¹¹

To accomplish step one, cleaning the data, the initial dialogic feedback comments were pulled from the students' first and second drafts and copied into a single Word document,¹² and the reflective essays were also copied and put into a single Word document.¹³ In order to first build an understanding of how the students' engaged in the dialogic feedback process, as it

¹⁰ Initial dialogic feedback comments refers to the first comments the students made in Rounds One and Two of the dialogic feedback process in which they identified writing concerns for discussion. Although the students wrote a second comment during both Rounds, in which they continued our discussion by answering a question or completing a writing task, those later comments were not coded, as the research question is concerned with only the writing themes that emerged from the students' comments and the writing themes emerge in the initial comment.

¹¹ Although the study generated other data points, such as the students' drafts for Essay One, the monologic feedback provided on Essay One, and the students' drafts for Essay Two, this data does not directly pertain to the research questions.

¹² Most of the students' comments could be removed from their original Word document without issue. However, several of the students' comments could not be easily removed from their original Word document because they referred to specific details in the students' draft, and the process of removing the comment made the students' writing concern difficult to understand. In those instances, sections of the students' draft were also copied into the new Word document and labeled for reference.

¹³ All of the students' writings were in the Word documents, including the writings of those students who consented to participate in the study. However, the writings from the consenting students were marked so that they could be pulled aside later during the microanalysis.

seemed understanding the students' engagement would be useful in later understanding their reaction, I first completed steps two through five with the students' dialogic feedback comments. I engaged in step two, reading the data, several times before moving to step three, coding major themes. In order to explore the emerging themes, I uploaded the data into Voyant, an online application that allows users to analyze large bodies of text. The application, which allows users to approach textual analysis from a number of formats, including word clouds, scatter plots, and word maps, revealed each word in the students' comments and revealed how often each word was used. Upon realizing that much of the language shown in the word cloud was the students' questioning language, instead of their writing concerns, I built a stoplist¹⁴ to remove the questioning language, and thus, the word cloud shown in Figure 4 appeared.

¹⁴ A stoplist is a list of words that are removed from the Voyant analysis. Although Voyant automatically generates a general stoplist, the additional language, such as "is it okay," or "do you have any suggestions," had to be removed in order to reveal the students' writing concerns more clearly. Thus, the following terms were added to the stoplist: said, okay, kind, using, suggestions, effective, write, help, end, i'm, hey, strong, just, writing, trouble, way, know, use sure, best, start, going, paper, paragraph, paragraphs, feel, better, life, really, include, make, essay, wondering, change, Jenna, need, good, having, strengthen, want, like, think, add, and communication.

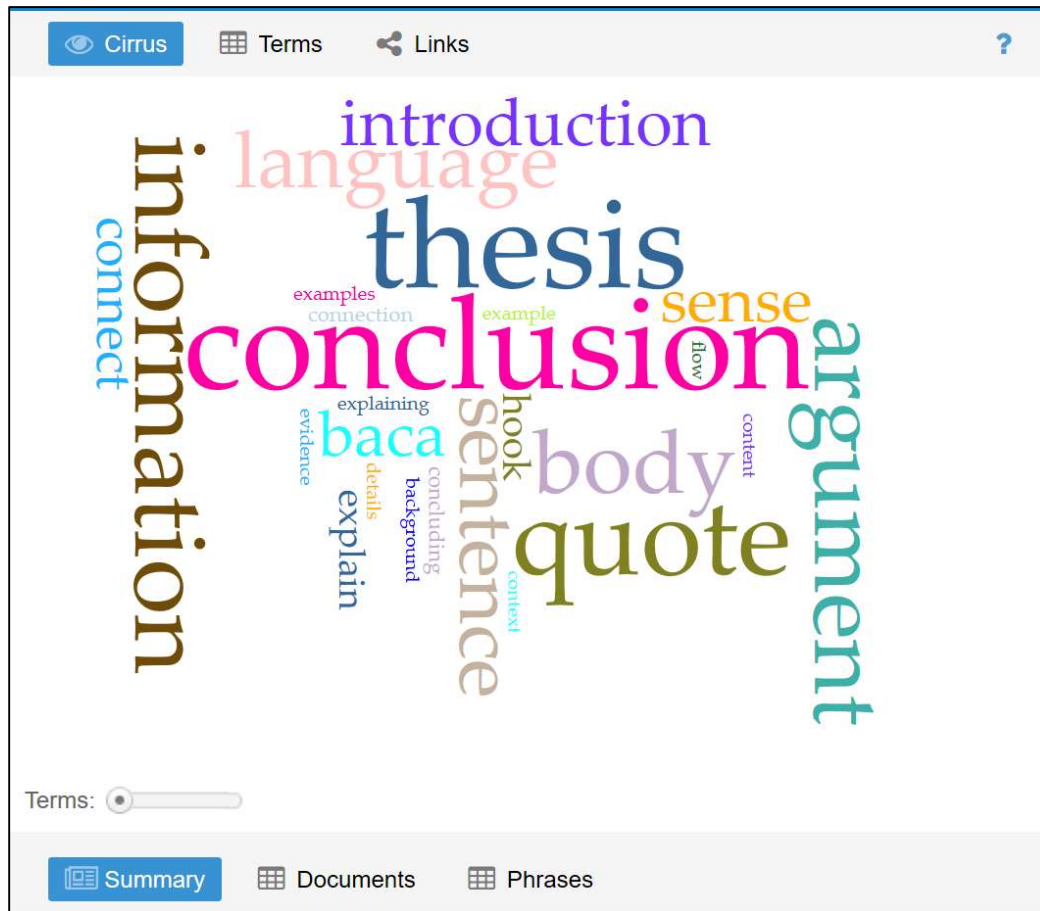


Figure 4. Voyant word cloud of the 25 most frequently used terms in the students' comments.

Voyant provided a new perspective of the data, which both confirmed many of the already emerging themes and complicated my understanding of how the students were expressing their writing concerns. For example, the term “thesis” appears as one of the most prominent terms in the word cloud, but thesis writing concerns did not emerge as a prominent theme. Questioning this disconnect revealed that the students were using the term “thesis” to ask about building connections between the evidence and the thesis, indicating an evidence writing concern. Thus, the Voyant word cloud became a tool for comparing and questioning initial observations.

At this point, three major themes emerged, including evidence, style, and organization. The emergence of these three themes likely stems both from how I was taught to think about writing and how I, in turn, teach my students about writing, as I was taught to prioritize content concerns, writing style concerns, and organizational concerns. During this coding¹⁵ process, terms like “examples,” “details,” and “evidence” were categorized as evidence concerns, and terms like “clarity,” “introduction,” and “conclusion” were categorized as style concerns. Finally, terms and phrases like “topic sentence,” “transition,” and “concluding sentence” were coded as organization concerns. Eventually, smaller themes, including thesis, argument style/structure, citations, and grammar and mechanics, emerged as well. At this point, a collection of comments remained that were more difficult to code, thus signifying step four of the general inductive approach. Ultimately, the remaining comments were placed into one of three categories: rhetorical appeals,¹⁶ basic requests for assistance,¹⁷ and other.¹⁸ In the fifth and final step, analyzing for subcategories, I made passes through the three largest themes, evidence, style, and organization, and coded for subcategories, as these themes were too large and varied to be effectively analyzed as whole units.

¹⁵ The coding process was conducted by hand using colored pens. Later, the information was transferred into the Word document, and the Word document was organized based on the results of the coding process. Each data point was labeled based on its code using Word’s Comments feature. Transferring the information into the Word document made it easier to find specific codes later through Word’s Find feature.

¹⁶ The rhetorical appeals theme was difficult to code, as the comments overlapped with other themes, but they ultimately earned their own category.

¹⁷ The basic requests for assistance theme was difficult to code because, in these comments, the students do not identify a specific writing concern. Rather, they ask for help with a general section of their essay.

¹⁸ The other category refers to student comments I was ultimately unable to code.

After drawing conclusions from coding the students' initial comments, focus shifted to the students' reflective essays, and I returned to general inductive approach step two, reading the data. Since the reflection assignment sheet divided nine questions into three categories, including writing process, feedback, and reaction, on the first passes, I coded large sections of text based on the question category and, then, by individual question. From that point, I focused on only the two questions in which the students were prompted to reflect on how they reacted to the dialogic feedback process,¹⁹ including a question about how they reacted emotionally to dialogic feedback²⁰ and a question about their preference for dialogic or monologic feedback.²¹ The question about emotional reactions was coded first, as their emotional reactions offered some insight into their feedback preferences.

To code their emotional reactions, I returned to step two and read only the descriptions of their feelings in order to gain a better sense of the emotion themes. On the next coding pass, I coded only the words within their responses that related to emotion and eventually began categorizing those emotional utterances as either positive expressions of emotion, such as "comfortable," "confident," and "good," or negative expressions of emotion, such as "intimidated," "nervous," and "anxious." After several passes of coding for positive and negative emotions, two emotional utterances remained without categories, which signified the shift into the fourth inductive approach step. The first term, "fine," was coded as a neutral emotion, and

¹⁹ Some of the prompts on the reflection assignment sheet directed the students to reflect upon experiences that did not pertain to this study's research questions, as they needed to reflect upon their entire writing experience.

²⁰ The question asks, "[h]ow did dialogic feedback make you feel as you wrote the essay? Did it make you feel nervous? Anxious? Comfortable? Supported? Etc."

²¹ The question asks, "[w]as the feedback process in Essay Two (the dialogic feedback process) more helpful, less helpful, or equally helpful to the feedback process in Essay One? Why?"

the second term, “cautious,” was coded as other, as the context surrounding the term made it difficult to understand what the student meant. After coding each utterance into a category, I shifted into step five, searching for subcategories, and realized the emotional utterances were often accompanied by a term that emphasized the strength of the feeling, such as “very,” or “really,” or by a term that understated the strength of the feeling, such as “a little,” or “somewhat.” Furthermore, some of the terms inherently carried a more heightened state of positivity or negativity; for example, both “good” and “excited” are positive emotions, but “excited” denotes a greater degree of positivity than “good.” Thus, I made several passes coding for degree of positivity or negativity. Around this time, a relationship between the students’ emotions and time also emerged, as some students expressed feeling different emotions at different stages of the process. Thus, on later passes, I coded for indications of time and categorized the time of the emotional utterance as before, during, after, or overall.

After building a sense of the students’ emotional reactions to the feedback process, focus shifted to the remaining reflection question, which prompted the students to consider their feedback preferences. The coding process again consisted of returning to step two before moving to step three and making coding passes. The first passes consisted of coding for clear statements of preference, which most students made by identifying a feedback process as “more helpful” or both processes as “equally helpful.” However, when it came time to shift to step four, a collection of unclear student responses emerged that were eventually coded as “unknown.”²² The

²² In unknown statements, the students avoided answering the question. For example, Grant discusses his feedback preferences by stating, “I really enjoyed our monologic feedback in the beginning of essay one and even wrote that in my note... But, because of this essay, I have come to appreciate how throughout the dialogic feedback I was able to watch my own writing grow and ask specific questions about the weak points in my writing.” Grant expresses his initial preference for monologic feedback and explains that he

fifth and final coding step involved creating subcategories for each preference based on the students' reasoning. During these passes, quantity of feedback emerged as a prominent subcategory, as terms like "amount" and "more" were frequently used to describe the students' preference reasoning.

Thomas's (2003) description of the general inductive approach gave this coding process structure through his clear and concrete five step process. Furthermore, following his approach seems to have allowed this coding process to reveal major themes in both sets of data, which then allows for a comprehensive narrative of both the students' engagement with and reaction to the dialogic feedback process to develop. Further exploring the results of this coding process is necessary for outlining the details of the narrative, as a detailed explanation of the results of this study is necessary to provide support for the conclusions drawn during this analysis.

even voiced this during the Muddiest Point CAT yet goes on to explain that he grew to appreciate dialogic feedback in Round Two. However, as Grant does not make a clear statement preference in his reflection, it is unclear if he now equally enjoys monologic and dialogic feedback, now prefers dialogic feedback to monologic feedback, or still prefers monologic feedback but now appreciates dialogic feedback.

Chapter IV: Results

The data collected over the course of this six-week study is analyzed by focusing on two categories: student engagement, including the students' assignment completion rate, the themes in the students' writing concerns, and the ways in which those writing concerns shifted throughout the drafting process; and student reaction, including the students' reported feedback preference and the students' emotional responses to dialogic feedback. Further exploring the results of this analysis unearths what these FYC students did during the dialogic feedback process and how these FYC students report feeling about the dialogic feedback process. The results can then be used to assess the effectiveness of dialogic feedback from a student perspective, which is an important perspective to consider, as feedback is for students' use and, thus, their actions and feelings are an important indication of the feedback model's effectiveness.

Student Engagement

Doing the Work: How many students completed the dialogic feedback assignment?

Understanding how many students completed the dialogic feedback assignment requires an analysis of four separate submissions to D2L that occurred between two Rounds and over the course of two weeks. Moreover, because D2L date stamps when students open feedback from their instructors, the analysis must also consider the act of opening the final instructor response, which refers to the last response the student received from me, whether it be for submission one or submission two.²³ Understanding how many students completed the dialogic feedback

²³ This analysis can comment on only the number of students who are marked by D2L as having *opened* their feedback. Opening the feedback and reading the feedback vastly different actions, and there is no way to definitively say how many students read the opened feedback or how engaged those students were when reading their feedback.

assignment is important for understanding how these students engaged with this dialogic feedback model, as their assignment completion rate can highlight how factors both outside and inside the control of the instructor influence the students' decisions to complete assignments. The factors inside the control of the instructor are particularly important, as they indicate aspects of this dialogic feedback model that could be changed in order to make the model more effective for students in the future. Figure 5 thus illustrates both the number of students who made submissions in Round One and Round Two and the number of students who opened their final instructor response.

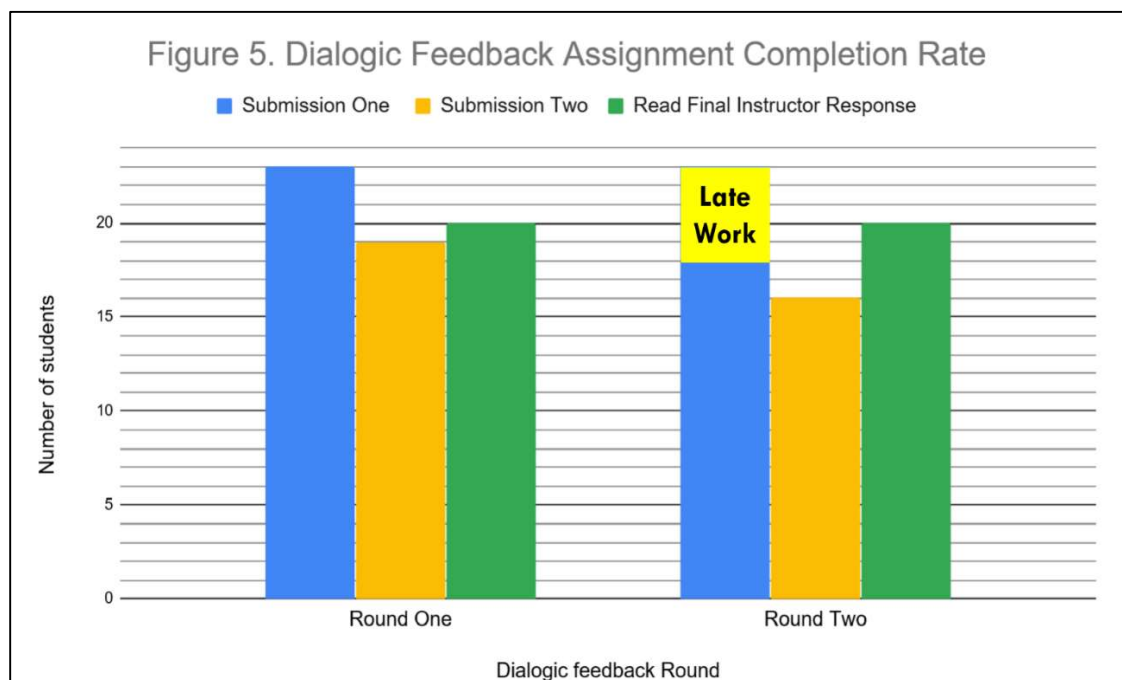


Figure 5. Number of submissions and opened instructor responses in Rounds One and Two.

In Round One, 23 of the 24 students completed their first submission by the assigned due date. There are two students who intentionally²⁴ identified more than three writing concerns, and three students who misunderstood the assignment's instructions, which resulted in them composing comments directed to themselves that essentially functioned as notes about the future revisions they intended to make. These students had the opportunity to review the assignment sheet and resubmit their work for full credit. Although these students did not follow the assignment's instructions, their confusion was genuine, and they are counted among the 23 students who completed submission one. Moreover, although all 23 students received a response to their initial submission that instructed them to complete an action, only 19 of the students completed that action and turned in their second submission, which indicates that 4 of the 23 students opted out of the second half of Round One. Additionally, 20 of the 23 students opened their final instructor response.

In comparison, in Round Two, 23 students completed their initial submission. However, five of the students submitted their work late in Round Two, and thus, some of these students did not receive responses before the submission two due date depending on how late their submission was, which meant they could not participate in submission two. There are five students who intentionally identified more than three writing concerns,²⁵ and in this Round, all the students who completed submission one crafted commentary that followed the assignment's guidelines. Only 16 students completed submission two, which means that 7 students opted out

²⁴ Only two students left more than three comments on their first drafts. However, a number of students wrote only three comments, but within their three comments, these students identified multiple writing concerns.

²⁵ The highest number of writing concerns a student ever identified was five writing concerns.

of the second half of Round Two or could not participate due to uploading submission one too late. Only 20 of the students who participated in Round Two opened their final instructor response.

The data from Round One and Round Two demonstrate a decent level of participation throughout the entire assignment.²⁶ Most remarkably, though, the data demonstrate a dip in participation between submission one and submission two, which is particularly interesting because it occurs in both Rounds. Between the submissions, participation dropped by four students in Round One and by seven students in Round Two. Since the students received 30 minutes of class time to compose each of the four submissions, they should have had sufficient time to complete submission two. Yet, participation dropped. Exploring why participation dropped is particularly significant for this group of students because they usually have an incredibly high assignment completion rate.²⁷ No definitive answers for why participation dropped between submissions exist, as the students who did not participate in the entire assignment did not address these inconsistencies in their reflective writing assignment.²⁸ Thus, a multitude of potential explanations exist, and each likely carry some level of truth for these

²⁶ All 24 of the students participated in the dialogic feedback assignment *in some fashion*. The highest level of participation was demonstrated by the students who made all four submissions and opened their final instructor response. The lowest level of participation was demonstrated by the student who made only one submission and did not open the final instructor response.

²⁷ These students are the first class I have taught in which all the students submitted all of their major essays. Furthermore, it is uncommon for more than two or three students in this group to fail to submit even a minor assignment. They are an engaged and responsible group, which is why it is unusual for a group of these students to either submit an assignment late or not submit an assignment at all.

²⁸ There was not a question that directly asked the students to comment on their level of participation. Considering that there was not a question directly asking the students to reflect on their level of participation, it is not odd that these students did not address their inconsistencies in participation.

individual students. Exploring these potential explanations highlights the factors outside and inside the control of the instructor that influence whether students complete assignments:

- Potential Explanation One: One explanation that highlights a possible factor outside of the instructor's control is that these students simply forgot to do their work.
- Potential Explanation Two: Another explanation is that these students did not understand they needed to submit a second response. Potential explanation two is an important explanation to consider, as it highlights the reality that instructors cannot perfectly control how their students interpret assignment instructions. Furthermore, an in-class conversation has led me to conclude that at least one student did not understand the assignment involved a second submission.
- Potential Explanation Three: Additionally, some of these students might have found submission two to be too difficult or too time consuming to complete. An in-class conversation in which one student expressed finding the act of responding to the questions and completing the writing tasks to be too stressful considering their current workload offers some support for potential explanation three. Explanation three highlights both an important way in which outside factors influence whether students complete assignments, as instructors cannot control students' outside commitments, and an important way in which inside factors influence whether students complete assignments, as it could have been productive to provide the students with more class time to complete submission two.
- Potential Explanation Four: The final explanation is that these students might have intentionally opted out of submission two because they found it to be less important than

submission one. The response the students received for submission one could have been enough for these students to begin making revisions on their drafts, which would have made submission two unnecessary from their perspective. Providing a more detailed exploration of explanation four is important, as it highlights a factor of student participation that is inside the instructor's control; namely, the structure of the assignment itself.

Outlining Logan's engagement with this dialogic feedback model is particularly fitting for providing a more detailed exploration of potential explanation four, as Logan is the only student who both consented to participate in this study and did not complete submission two in both Round One and Two. Thus, Logan's comments and essay drafts are rich sources of information for this topic. One example of Logan's comments and drafts comes from submission one during Round Two in which Logan composed the following comment:

Logan: I am having trouble framing my conclusion without sounding repetitive.

Logan's comment was connected to the last line of his second draft, which reads, "[t]he experiences you have in life shape who you are and the type of communicator you become." Logan received the following response in order to help him think about an effective and engaging way to conclude his essay:

I think the reason that you're struggling to conclude your essay is that you don't have a hook to frame to. Without developing a hook, you cannot develop a frame.

The response Logan received continued by explaining the four types of hooks we had covered in class and by asking him to respond in submission two by identifying which type of hook he thought would suit his essay so that we could continue engaging in this conversation about

developing a hook and a frame. Logan, however, did not complete submission two and, thus, never received any further feedback about developing a hook or a frame. Although he did not receive further support, his final draft was revised to include one of the types of hooks we had discussed as a class. The content of his final draft suggests that he took the feedback from submission one and made revisions.

Logan's behavior seems to indicate that he did not need to engage in submission two in order to start revising his essay.²⁹ Furthermore, if Logan did not need to engage in submission two in order to feel confident in making revisions, other students may have felt the same way. Because the dialogic feedback model provided the students with multiple touchpoints, as we repeatedly sent exchanges over the course of two weeks, some students may have felt supported by dialogic feedback but not needed every touch point in the model. This possibility is important, as it reveals that aspects of this particular dialogic feedback model may have been unnecessary for some of the students in the class, which indicates that the dialogic model itself might need to be reconsidered.

Research Question 1: What themes emerge when students identify their own writing concerns? When these FYC students identified their own writing concerns, ten themes emerged from 155 student comments, including evidence (54 comments), style (48 comments), organization (19 comments), thesis (12 comments), argument structure/style (5 comments), citations (5 comments), rhetorical appeals (4 comments), basic requests for assistance (3

²⁹ In an effort to continue the analysis, Logan's engagement with this dialogic feedback model was outlined for only one comment and its associated revision. However, four other instances in which Logan asks a question in submission one, does not continue the conversation in submission two, and, yet, clearly makes revisions based upon the feedback offered during submission one exist. Thus, a total of five instances in which Logan demonstrates not using submission two to make revisions occurred.

comments), “other” (3 comments), and grammar and mechanics (2 comments). Figure 6 illustrates how frequently each of these ten themes emerged from the student-initiated dialogic feedback conversations. In this analysis, the students’ comments from Round One and Round Two are considered together in order to create an understanding of what writing concerns the students identified throughout the entire dialogic feedback process. Analyzing each writing-concern-theme category is important for understanding how the students engage with the dialogic feedback process, as it reveals two aspects of student engagement that composition instructors should consider before implementing a dialogic feedback model in their classroom: one, FYC students use the course’s content to direct their dialogic feedback conversations, which indicates that they can be taught to value global writing concerns (Cresswell, 2000); and two, the dialogic feedback model cannot perfectly reveal all the students’ writing concerns and intentions, which indicates FYC instructors need a plan for effectively handling student comments that are vague (Charles, 1990).

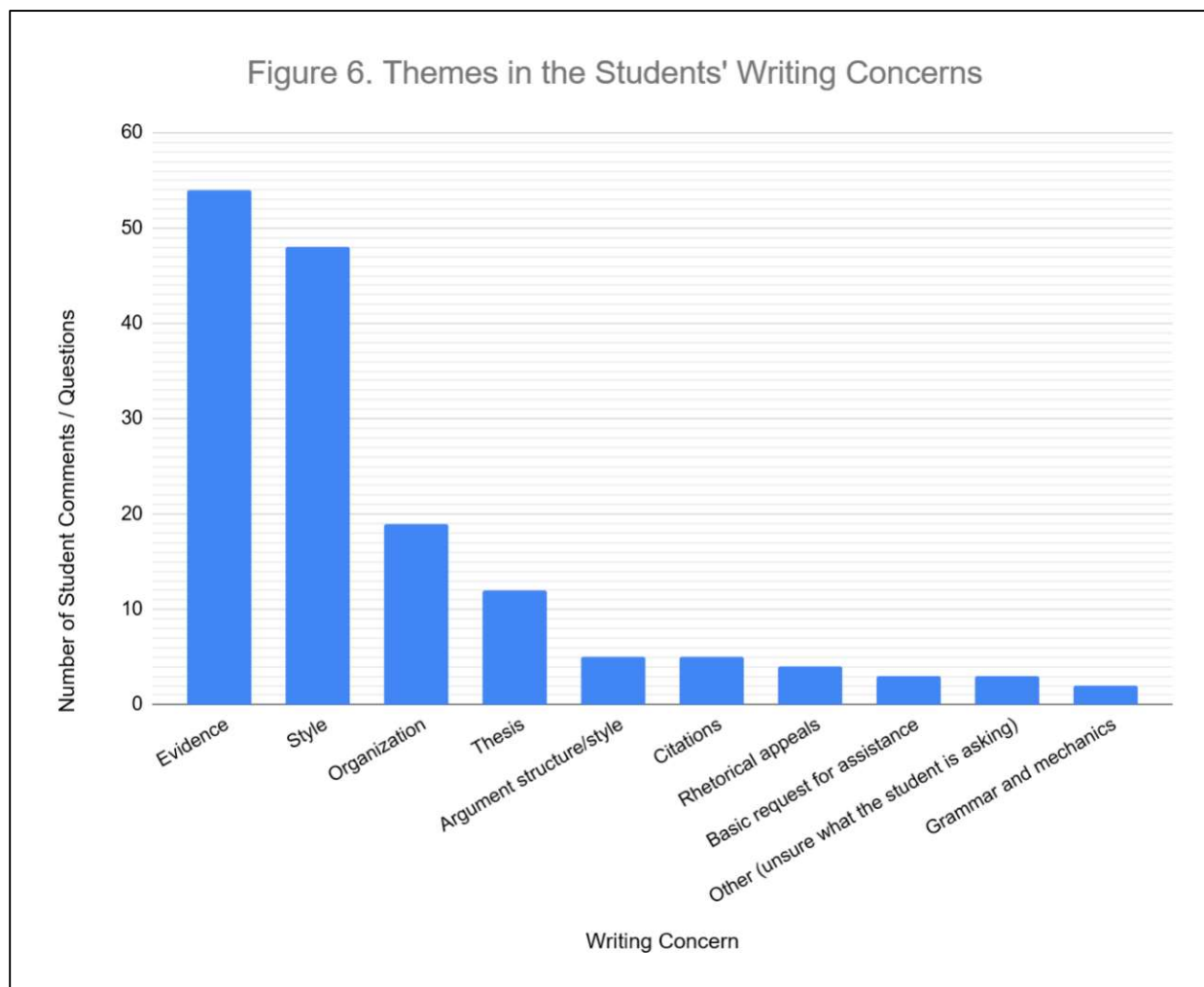


Figure 6. Number of the students' comments organized by writing concern theme.

Exploring the Relationship Between the Students' Writing Concerns and the Course's Content. The analysis of the students' comments reveals a close relationship between the writing themes and the course's content, as the number of the students' comments within most³⁰ of the writing theme categories can be traced to the course's lessons. Exploring the students' writing concerns begins with the evidence theme, as it is the most frequently discussed writing concern.

³⁰ The "other" category is the only category that cannot follow this reasoning, as the students' writing concerns in this category are still unknown.

The evidence theme, which refers to the comments that focus on developing support for the essay's claim and on effectively using outside sources and examples, has four subcategories: questions about using direct quotations (16 comments), questions about creating connections between the evidence and the claim (14 comments), questions about the appropriateness of evidence (14 comments), and questions about how to expand or develop already existing evidence (10 comments). The subcategories better reveal how the students' evidence comments connect to the course's content, and the direct quotation subcategory in particular reveals this relationship because learning how to effectively use direct quotations in arguments was a learning objective for this unit.³¹ Since understanding how to effectively use direct quotations is both such a specific learning objective and such a specific type of writing, the relationship between the course's content and the students' comments becomes clear. The students do not ask enough questions about the arts of paraphrasing or summarizing for either type of writing to earn their own evidence subcategory. However, they do ask enough questions about the use of direct quotations to merit a direct quotation subcategory, and the evidence suggests that they asked these questions because the course's content directed them to direct quotations, as opposed to paraphrasing or summarizing.

Style, which refers to student questions about developing engaging and clear content for an audience, is the second most frequently discussed theme. The style theme is further divided

³¹ Multiple lessons and activities guided this learning. For example, the students completed both reading responses and an in-class revision activity to learn about using direct quotations in academic writing. The reading responses required the students to complete three steps: identify important quotations in their readings, interpret the quotations, and discuss the quotations by connecting them to other course materials and by evaluating them. The in-class revision activity taught the students about hit-and-run quotations, which refers to quotations that are not effectively introduced or explained. The activity had the students identify and revise hit-and-run quotations in their own writing.

into three subcategories, including introduction (24 total comments), conclusion (22 total comments), and clarity of general statements (2 total comments), and a number of further subcategories, each of which are shown in Figure 7. The relationship between the course's content and the students' style concerns is revealed because the language the students' use in their style comments directly mirrors a sample outline that the students accessed while drafting their essays. The sample outline indicated that the students should have both an introduction with a hook, some contextualizing details, and the thesis,³² and a conclusion with a review of the main argument, some exploration of the argument's significance, and a frame for the essay. It seems unlikely that the students would have composed 46 comments identifying these specific parts of both the introduction and the conclusion without course content guiding them to these specific components and without course content telling them that these particular components are important.

³² Thesis writing concerns are coded differently than the other aspects of the introduction in order to account for and highlight the thesis's central role in academic argumentative writing.

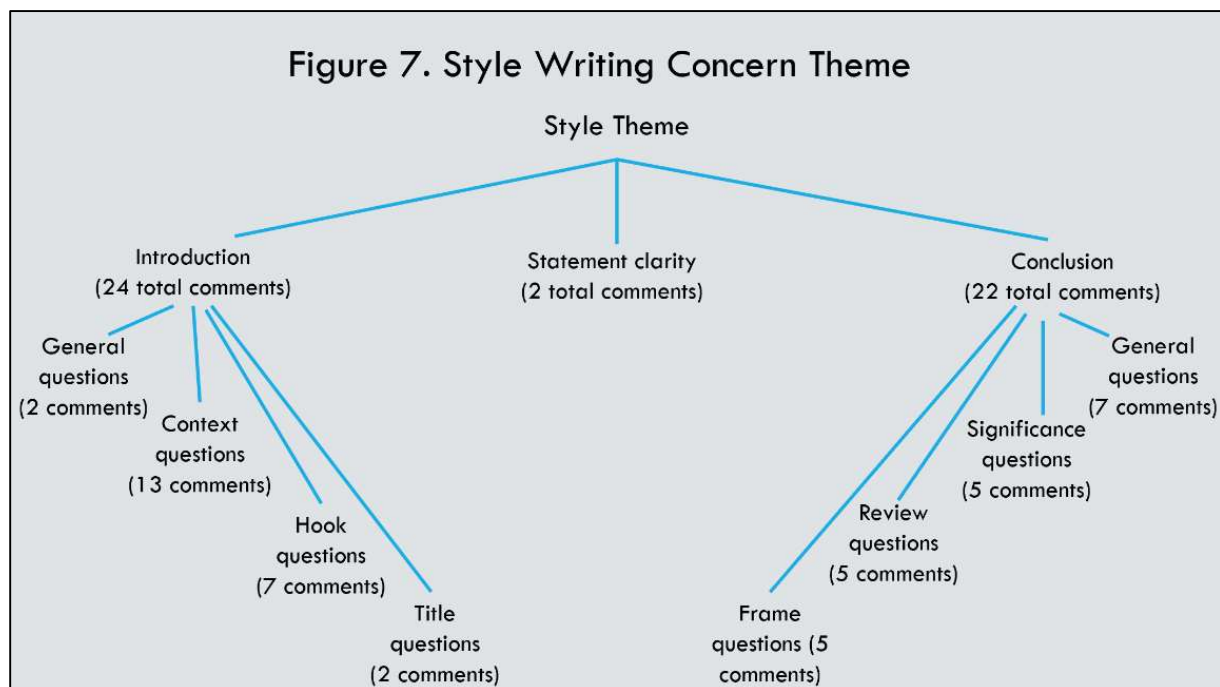


Figure 7. The style writing concern theme organized by subcategories and further subcategories.

Organization, the third most frequently discussed theme, refers to student questions about creating a coherent structure for an essay. Like the evidence and style themes, the organization theme is further divided into subcategories, including concluding sentences (6 comments), flow (4 comments), topic sentences (3 comments), transitions (3 comments), and major organizational changes (3 comments). The number of organizational writing concerns is considerably lower than the number of the two previously discussed writing concerns. The 35 comment drop between the evidence and the organization writing concerns and the 29 comment drop between the style and the organization writing concerns indicate that the students sought significantly less instructor support for their organizational writing concerns. However, the drop is the component of the organization theme that likely has a relationship to the course's content. This essay's minimum page count was only three pages, and the majority of the FYC students likely felt

comfortable with creating and organizing three pages worth of content,³³ as this is likely similar to what has been expected of them throughout their academic careers. Additionally, the students had access to the sample outline, which helped them make many of their organizational decisions. Thus, the drop between the evidence and style writing concerns and the organization writing concerns reveals that course content can also prompt students to *not* discuss certain writing concerns in their comments. Although these FYC students likely care about the organization of their essay, the course's content allowed them to feel confident in approaching many of these concerns on their own.³⁴

The fourth most frequently discussed theme deals with the essay's thesis statement, which refers to commentary about either the strength of the essay's thesis or the clarity of the essay's thesis. Only 12 comments ask about the thesis statement, and the low number of comments possibly stems from the fact that these students already received feedback on their thesis statement in an assignment that required them to explain their topic and to compose a draft of their thesis statement. This feedback followed a monologic feedback model, which means that the students received a statement that either reassured them that their plan followed the assignment's guidelines or that redirected them to a plan that better followed the assignment's guidelines. Had the students not received this preliminary feedback, they might have felt more of

³³ The decision to require the students to write a rather short essay was an intentional one, as this was the students' first major essay of the semester. The plan for the semester is to slowly increase the page count requirement and to slowly expand the students' level of confidence with approaching essays of longer lengths.

³⁴ It is very possible that the number of organizational writing concerns would increase in assignments that challenged the students to produce more content and order that content on their own.

a need to receive instructor feedback on the strength and clarity of their thesis statement during their dialogic feedback experience.

Student questions about the argument's structure, which refers to the students' questions about how well the essay follows the style of a causal argument, are the fifth most frequently discussed writing concern. The relationship between this writing theme and the course's content actually stems back to the essay the students wrote under the monologic feedback model, Essay One, in which the students practiced extensively with the style of causal arguments. During Essay One, 20³⁵ of the 72 monologic feedback comments focused on the style of causal arguments.³⁶ By the time the students began their dialogic feedback conversations for Essay Two, they were fairly familiar with causal arguments and likely felt capable of approaching this argument structure on their own. In this way, the argument structure/style theme is very much like the organization and thesis themes.

The citations writing theme is the first LOC theme to emerge from the list of student writing concerns and refers to the students' questions about MLA citation style. There are five comments about MLA citation. Four of these comments focus on the use of in-text citations, and one of these comments asks about the construction of a citation on the Works Cited page. In the unit, the students learned about MLA citation, which explains why some students composed

³⁵ The 20 comments that discuss the style of causal arguments includes both comments in which the student received advice for improving the structure of their causal argument and comments in which the student received praise for effectively structuring their causal argument. Combining both improvement and praise comments better reveals the total number of times causal argument style was the focus of feedback.

³⁶ The students also engaged in an in-class discussion about how to improve common weaknesses in causal arguments on the same day they received their monologic feedback comments.

questions about MLA citation style. However, because the students also frequently receive instruction to avoid commenting on the LOC, such as citation, until they feel they have sufficiently discussed their HOC, the course's content clearly steers them away from initiating dialogic feedback conversations that discuss MLA citation. Thus, the repeated instruction to avoid voicing LOC until HOC are addressed likely explains the relatively low number of student comments that focus on citations.

The rhetorical appeals theme, which refers to concerns with how the writing is appealing to ethos, logos, and pathos, is a little different from the previously discussed writing themes because it could be absorbed by other themes. This means that all of the students' comments that discuss rhetorical appeals could likely be organized into other categories. For example, in Round One, Grant writes, "is this a good display of pathos in our [*sic*] opinion?" Grant's comment is written next to and is referencing his essay's hook, and thus, his comment could be coded as a question about the essay's style. However, since our course serves as these students' introduction to rhetoric, it seems appropriate to highlight moments in which the students are attempting to discuss rhetorical concepts using the terminology they learned in class. Thus, even though this writing theme is small in comparison to many of the other themes and also overlaps with other themes, it too demonstrates a relationship between course content and the focus of the students' comments.

The final theme that can³⁷ and should be analyzed in order to explore the relationships between the students' comments and the course's content is grammar and mechanics, which

³⁷ There are two remaining writing-theme categories that do not apply to this discussion about how the course's content directs the focus of the students' writing concerns, the basic requests for assistance

refers to conversations about how sentences are constructed and about how to follow mechanical rules. The students only composed two comments about grammar and mechanics, which is likely connected to both the fact that our course has very few in-class³⁸ lessons that discuss grammar and mechanics and the fact that the students receive repeated instruction to wait to discuss LOC, such as grammar and mechanics, until they have discussed all of their HOC in detail. Although the students are not forbidden from commenting on grammar and mechanics or other LOC, the course's content certainly discourages them from doing so. Thus, the analysis of the students' writing concerns seems to suggest that the course's content influences the students' writing concerns, which indicates that student preparation is essential for the facilitation of a meaningful dialogic exchange.

Exploring the Problems with Basic Requests for Assistance, Vague Commentary, and “Other” Commentary. In addition to exploring the themes in the students' comments and the relationships that these themes have to the course, it is important to explore the students' comments in which it is difficult to understand the students' writing concerns, including the basic requests for assistance, vague student commentary, and “other” comments. All three types of comments reveal aspects of dialogic feedback that composition instructors should know before implementing a dialogic feedback model in their classroom, as these aspects reveal problems that emerge from the dialogic feedback model. Of the 155 students' comments, 3

theme and the “other” theme. Both themes do not reveal a specific student writing concern, and thus, they cannot be part of this conversation and should be discussed separately.

³⁸ The students complete *Connect LearnSmart* models as homework, and the *Connect* models act as the primary source for instruction on grammar and mechanics. Thus, although the students do learn about grammar and mechanics, the focus of the course is not on grammar and mechanics, as this learning takes place outside of the classroom.

comments are coded as basic requests for assistance, which refers to comments in which the students express knowing that something is not functioning effectively within one of their body paragraphs but either they fail to clarify the type of writing concern that they think is causing the problem or they express being unable to put the writing concern into words. Vague student commentary is similar to basic requests for assistance in that the student's expression or description of their writing concern is not explicitly stated but is different in that the student does specifically reference a writing theme.

Finally, three student comments are coded as "other," which refers to the student commentary that I was unable to understand at all and thus could not organize into one of the writing-concern-theme categories. The following example explores an "other" comment from Logan, who provides a fitting example, as his comment is arguably the most difficult "other" comment to understand, in order to explore why these comments are hard to understand:

Logan: Are these good?

Logan's comment is connected to a section of his draft that is written in outline form and that reads, "[t]opic sentence: Another way my communication has improved was by working at [my job]. Explanation of main point supported by evidence: During a shift I would interact and talk to over 1000 guest." Logan's question about whether *these are good* seems to refer to both a topic sentence and a piece of evidence. However, his comment is difficult to understand, as it could be referring to so many different aspects of his writing. Logan might be questioning the quality of his topic sentence and the quality of his evidence separately. He might be questioning how well the two function together. He might be questioning if the topic sentence and evidence

have enough detail for a reader, or he might be questioning if the subject matter he highlights fits the assignment guidelines. Knowing what Logan is really asking is impossible.

The analysis of basic requests for assistance, vague student comments, and “other” comments reveals that instructors need to be prepared to respond to and deal with student commentary that is either vague or unintelligible. Basic requests for assistance and vague comments still received a response with feedback, despite the difficulties with these questions, because both types of comments provide enough material from which to make a supported assumption about how to direct the student. Other comments, however, did not receive a response with feedback, as the comments do not offer enough clues from which to compose feedback.³⁹ If composition instructors are aware that they will likely encounter vague or unintelligible student comments, even if the students are sufficiently prepared for dialogic feedback, they can have a plan or system in place for acting upon vague or unintelligible student comments, which would work to keep the feedback process both fair and functioning.

Research Question 2: Do the writing concerns students identify shift throughout the drafting process? Because there were two Rounds of dialogic feedback, separating the writing concern themes from Round One and Round Two reveals how the students’ writing concerns shifted throughout the drafting process. Figure 8 compares the students’ writing concerns from Round One to Round Two. Although the same number of students participated in both Rounds, Round One has 80 student comments, and Round Two has only 75 student comments, which is a

³⁹ Although I could have made assumptions about Logan’s question, there were not enough clues in either Logan’s comment or in his draft to allow for a supported assumption. Furthermore, it seemed more productive to prompt Logan to explain himself. Thus, he received a response in which he was asked to explain his comment, but he never responded to said request.

result of some students intentionally identifying more than three writing concerns and some students unintentionally identifying more than three writing concerns. Additionally, Figure 8 represents the class's writing concerns as a whole, meaning that the Figure does not recognize how individual student writing concerns shifted throughout the drafting process. Rather, the Figure compares how the writing concerns of the entire class shifted throughout the process. The distinction between the whole class's shift and an individual student's shift is important, as these focuses are two separate ways in which to approach this data set.

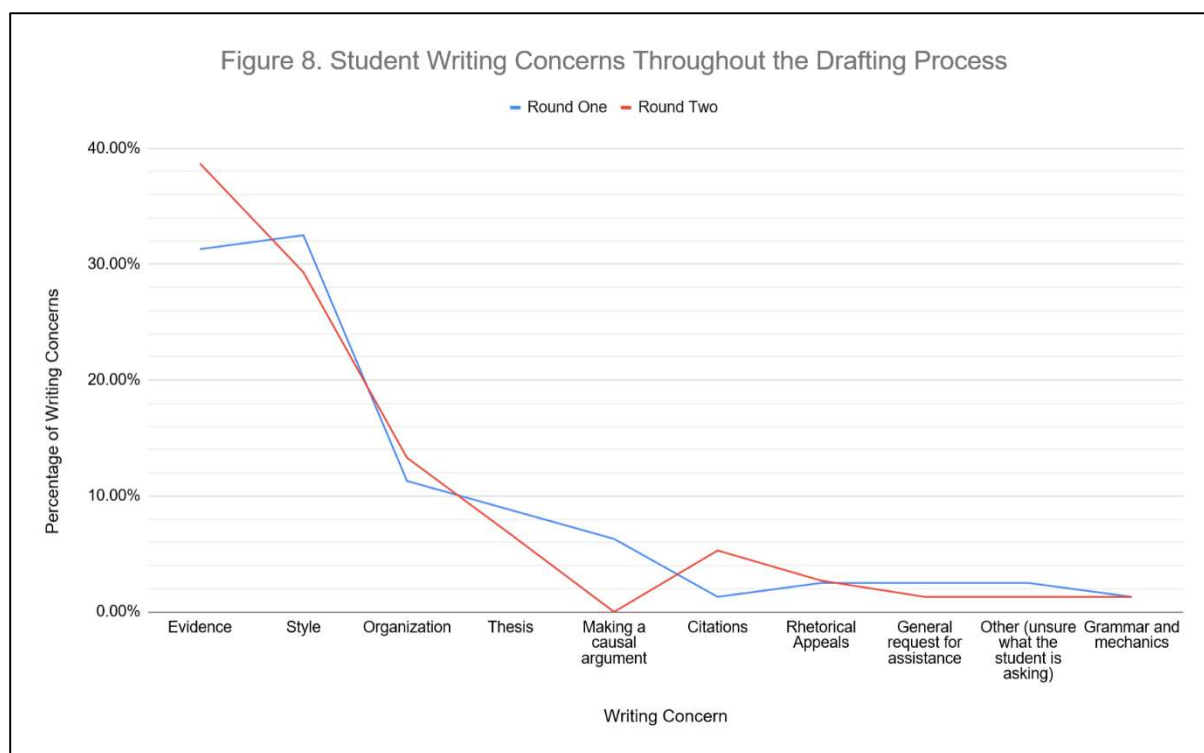


Figure 8. Percentage of students' writing concerns in Round One compared to Round Two.

When the writing concerns of the entire class are considered as a whole unit, the analysis shows how little the students' writing concerns shifted throughout the drafting process. The line representing Round One and the line representing Round Two follow a similar trajectory, and the

differences between Round One and Round Two for each writing-concern theme are small.⁴⁰ The small shifts explain why the two lines in Figure 8 are practically the same, and the similarities between the lines demonstrate that when the students' writing concerns are considered as a whole, very little difference between the two Rounds exists.

When the focus of the analysis turns from the whole class's shift to an individual student's shift, a sharper picture of exactly how the students' writing concerns changed between the drafts emerges. Looking at individual student's shifts reveals two important types of comments: return comments, which refers to dialogic feedback conversations where the student asks a question in Round One and returns to that same question in Round Two; and new comments, which refers to dialogic feedback conversations where the student identifies a new writing concern in Round Two. During this process, three students gave consent and also asked a return question. Of these three students, Abigail's dialogic feedback experience is the most fitting for exploring return questions, as Abigail asked multiple return questions, whereas the others asked only one return question.

Round One

Abigail: Is this a good way to start my paper I'm not sure if it is good?

Abigail's comment addresses the opening line of her essay, which reads "[l]anguage has always been a big part of my life. Knowing how to communicate with others in a way most

⁴⁰ Between the two Rounds, evidence related concerns increased by 7%. Style concerns decreased by 3%, and organization concerns increased by only 2%. Concerns about the thesis statement decreased by 2%, and concerns about argument style/structure decreased by 6%, which means that there were zero concerns about argument style/structure in Round Two. Citation concerns increased by 4%, and concerns about the rhetorical appeals stayed about the same. Both basic requests for assistance and "other" concerns decreased by 1%, and finally, the percentage of grammatical concerns stayed the same.

people can't is something I am proud of." Her comment about that statement highlights her own uncertainties about the effectiveness of her opening line. Abigail received the following response:

Jenna: I think you have a very nice start on composing the contextualizing details your readers will need to understand the essay (the details about you that are relevant to your argument). However, I think you could revise your introduction to compose a more engaging hook. Telling your readers that language has always been a big part of your life isn't the most interesting statement because language is a big part of everyone's life. General statements like that are always less engaging than specific statements.

The response continues by reviewing the different types of hooks we covered as a class and asks Abigail to respond by both identifying a model she wants to try and explaining why she wants to try following said model. Abigail responds with the following:

Abigail: I can try starting off with a question or something that has to do with why I want to be a teacher because a lot of people always ask me why I want to be a teacher and they think it's crazy that I want to teach kindergarten.

Abigail's response indicates that she wants to begin her paper with a rhetorical discussion question because people often ask her why she wants to teach young children. She received a response that provided her with ideas for how she might go about composing such a question.

Round Two

Abigail: Is this a better way to start my paper or should I try and reword it?

In Round Two, Abigail returns to her initial concerns about the effectiveness of her essay's opening line. However, this second draft has revisions based on the conversation we had

in Round One. Her new hook reads, “[p]eople always ask me how I am so good with working with kids and the answer is simple, I know how to communicate with them.” Abigail received the following response:

Jenna: I think you’ve made some positive revisions to your hook! The only other recommendation I have for you is to use something more specific than “people.” What does “people” refer to? Your friends? Classmates? Coworkers? Family?⁴¹

Abigail’s Round Two comment highlights her desire to receive confirmation that she had made an effective revision, which serves as an example of dialogic feedback conversations in which the student composes a return comment. In Abigail’s conversation, and in conversations like Abigail’s, the students ask about a writing concern, make revisions on that writing concern, and then question if those revisions are effective.

However, the number of student comments that address new writing concerns is considerably higher than the number of student comments, such as Abigail’s, that return to the same writing concerns. Of the eight consenting students, only three asked questions that returned to previous writing concerns and the remaining five students did not engage in this type of conversation. Instead they each identified new writing concerns in Round Two. Thus, only three of the eight students engaged in return questioning, and when one considers the number of comments, instead of the number of students, only 4 of the comments are return questions, and 51 of the comments address new writing concerns, indicating that return questioning was practiced significantly less frequently and that most students identify new writing concerns in

⁴¹ In hindsight, it likely would have been more useful to help Abigail understand why her new opening line was more effective, instead of merely offering her a statement of support and a small revision tip.

Round Two. Therefore, the writing concerns of individual students do shift throughout the drafting process. However, because the whole class's concerns shift very little, the evidence suggests that the students' individual writing concerns stay within the same major writing concern themes, including evidence, style, and organization. Furthermore, the students' writing concerns are still heavily focused on HOC, which is notable, as it reveals that the students' writing concerns do not shift to LOC throughout the drafting process.

A Notable Exception: Exploring how the entire class's direct quotation writing concerns shifted between Rounds One and Two. While the evidence suggests that the majority of the students' writing concerns stayed fairly consistent between Rounds One and Two, one noteworthy exception exists in which the number of comments about the use of direct quotations dramatically increases between Rounds. In Round One, only 8% of the evidence writing concerns are posing questions about the use of direct quotations, but in Round Two, the number of direct quotation questions skyrockets to 48%. Figure 9 highlights how dramatic this shift is in comparison to the other three evidence-writing concerns.

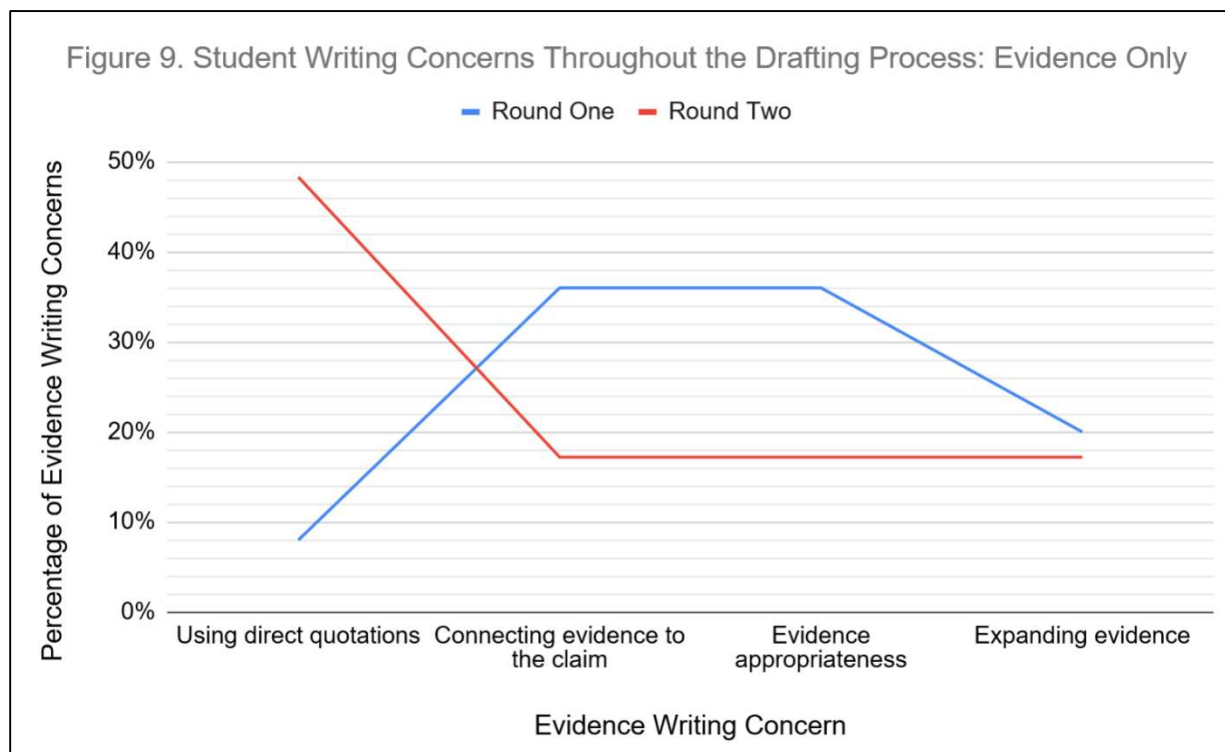


Figure 9. Percentage of student evidence concerns in Round One compared to Round Two.

Exploring the dramatic increase in the number of the students' comments that pose questions about the use of direct quotations is interesting both because it is the only writing concern to experience a significant full-class shift between Rounds One and Two and because the likely reason for its dramatic shift reveals another relationship between the students' writing concerns and the course's expectations. Thus, it is necessary to explore both the situation that these writing concerns emerge from and the course's expectations that relate to the writing concern. As previously discussed, learning how to effectively use direct quotations in academic writing was one of the learning objectives for the unit. Before Round One, the students had completed several reading responses in which they practiced using direct quotations in academic writing, and the students knew that they needed to use and discuss at least two of these readings

in their essay, as the expectation was outlined on the essay's assignment sheet. Thus, I both expected to see some direct quotations in the students' first drafts and expected the students to ask questions about effectively using direct quotations in Round One.

As a whole, the students used very few direct quotations in their first drafts and posed few questions about effectively using direct quotations in Round One. After reading the students' first drafts and responding to their questions in Round One, I came to the realization that the expectation that the students refer to the unit readings in their essays through the use of direct quotations was neither written on the essay's assignment sheet nor clearly expressed to them through some other medium. From the students' perspective, the expectation was that they use and discuss at least two of the unit readings through some undefined method, which is likely why the students did not feel called to incorporate direct quotations into their first draft. Therefore, in order to prompt the students to practice using direct quotations in academic writing, they needed to receive clear expectations, and they needed to be supported in meeting those expectations.

Between Rounds One and Two, three conditions changed that likely prompted the students to compose more questions about the use of direct quotations in Round Two: one, the students engaged in a discussion to clarify why they were practicing with the use of direct quotations in academic writing; two, the students completed an in-class revision activity about using direct quotations; and three, the students received a grading rubric that better outlined the expectations for incorporating the unit readings into the essay. The in-class discussion helped the students understand why, from their perspective, the assignment's expectations changed, which then segued nicely into the in-class revision activity that taught them about revising hit-and-run quotations. Both the in-class discussion and the in-class revision activity created opportunities

for the students to receive help with making these revisions. Furthermore, the students also received access to the essay's grading rubric, which showed that effectively introducing, interpreting, and connecting direct quotations fell under the A-level evidence category. These three changes are what likely caused the students to compose more questions about direct quotations in Round Two, which is significant, as it reveals that these students are self-regulating their own learning and being active participants in their own learning.

Student Reaction

Research Question 3: How do students react to a dialogic feedback experience, especially when they contrast the experience with a monologic feedback experience? After engaging in the dialogic feedback experience and after submitting final drafts of their essays, these FYC students wrote reflective essays in which they considered their writing process, the changes they experienced between Essay One and Essay Two, and the dialogic feedback process.⁴² A total of 23 students completed this reflective writing assignment, which means that only 1 student failed to submit a reflection. The students' reflections can be analyzed in relation to Research Question 3 by separating their writing into two conversations: one, the students' discussions on their feelings throughout the dialogic feedback process; and two, the students' discussions on their feedback model preferences. These two conversations reveal how the feedback process impacted them emotionally, as well as what the students' value in a feedback model and what they believe the dialogic feedback model offers them.

⁴² The assignment instructed the students to think of their reflection as a letter from themselves to me and to focus on what they write, rather than how they write. Thus, their reflections were composed with the understanding that their instructor was their primary audience, and their writing is not overly concerned with sentence structure or grammar and mechanics, although they did need to write in paragraph form.

Exploring the Feelings that Dialogic Feedback Caused. The reflection assignment asked the students to write about how the dialogic feedback process made them feel as they wrote the essay, which is incredibly important for understanding the effectiveness of the dialogic feedback model, as the current research shows a relationship between feedback and how students feel about both the work they create and themselves as learners (Nicol & Macfarlane-Dick, 2006). Shields's 2015 study found a relationship between how feedback makes students feel and the confidence they have in themselves as learners and members of their learning community. Thus, if the dialogic feedback model evokes negative emotions in these students, such as feelings of anxiety or stress, it might not be an effective feedback model to be using with them, as the current research suggests that effective feedback models should evoke positive emotions, such as feelings of confidence and of being supported. These FYC students generated a total of 47 utterances of emotion in their reflections, and Figure 10 highlights these 47 utterances by categorizing them both by how positive or negative the emotion is and by when the student expressed feeling each emotional reaction.

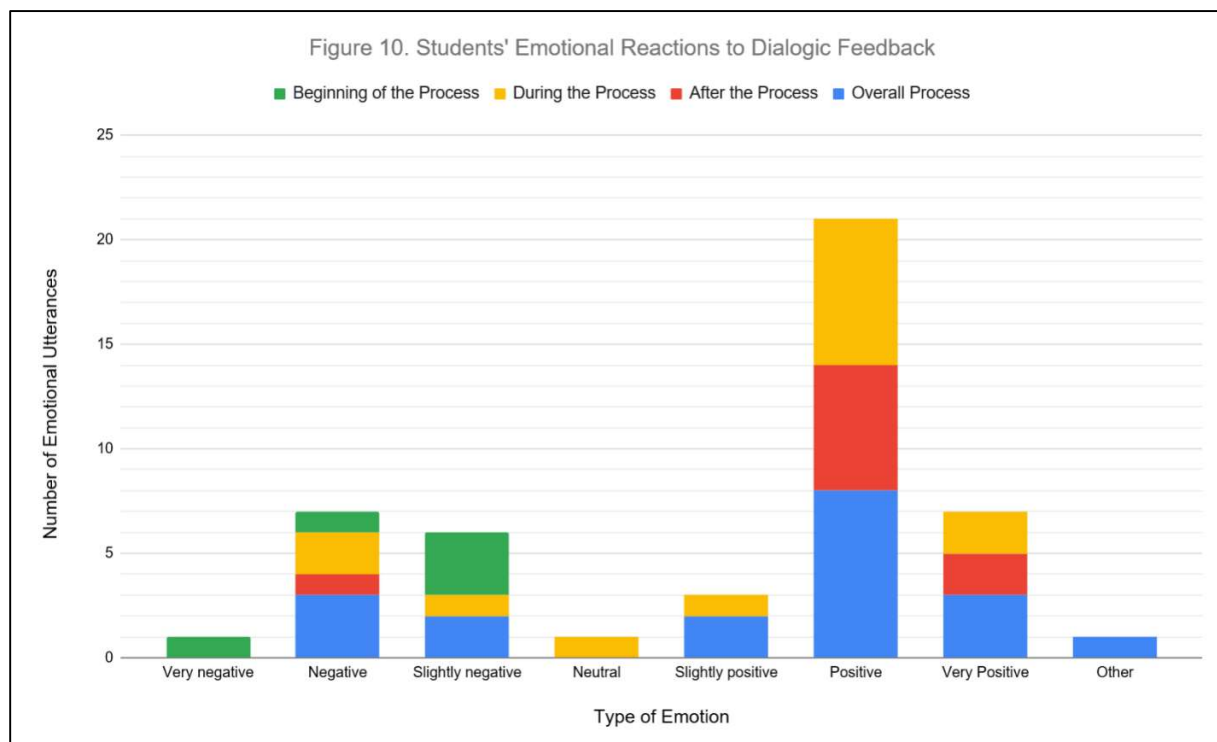


Figure 10. Student emotional response to the dialogic feedback process.

Figure 10 reveals that positive utterances⁴³ of emotion outnumber negative utterances of emotions,⁴⁴ with 14 utterances indicating negative emotions⁴⁵ and 31 utterances indicating positive emotions.⁴⁶ The students generally began to experience positive emotions either during or after the dialogic feedback process, or they understand the overall experience as being

⁴³ It is important to remember that the students generally expressed more than one emotional utterance. Thus, the number of emotional utterances is not equal to the number of students who expressed feeling an emotion. For example, Ashley expressed five emotional utterances in her reflection, two of which were negative and three of which were positive.

⁴⁴ One utterance indicates that the student felt neutral towards the process, and one utterance was expressed in such a way that it was not clear if the student felt positively or negatively towards the process.

⁴⁵ There is 1 utterance that indicates a very negative emotions, 7 utterances that indicate negative emotions, and 6 utterances that indicate slightly negative emotions.

⁴⁶ There are 3 utterances that indicate a slightly positive emotion, 21 utterances that indicate positive emotions, and 7 utterances that indicate very positive emotions.

positive. If students discuss what their feelings were at the beginning of the dialogic feedback process, they indicate feeling a negative emotion. No student expresses feeling entirely positive about the dialogic feedback model at the beginning of the process. However, all five of the negative utterances that reflect the students' emotions at the beginning of their experience are transformed into positive utterances either during or after the dialogic feedback process, illustrating that these students experienced a shift in their emotions. Ashley's writing is a fitting example of this transition, as she is clear in explaining how her emotions developed. She writes that "at first the process was a little intimidating since I didn't know what to expect," but she continues to say that by the end of the experience she "felt more confident and clearer about [her] writing." Ashley thus experienced a transition from feeling intimidated, which is a negative emotion, to confident, which is a positive emotion, throughout the dialogic feedback process.

The remaining nine negative utterances reflect student emotions from either during or after the process or in relation to the process overall, and these nine negative utterances do not transform into positive utterances throughout the students' reflections, which indicates that the dialogic feedback model caused negative emotions in some students throughout the entire process. However, when the 9 non-transitional negative emotions are compared to the 31 positive emotions, the evidence suggests that the majority of the students actually felt positive emotions at some point in the dialogic feedback process. These positive emotions are significant, as the current scholarship argues that good feedback models should produce positive feelings, as there is a relationship between positive feelings produced from instructor feedback and how students understand whether they belong in their current educational setting (Shields, 2015).

Exploring the Students' Feedback Preferences. The reflective writing assignment also asked the students to consider if the dialogic feedback process was more helpful than, less helpful than, or as helpful as the monologic feedback process and to explain their answer. An analysis of their responses is shown in Figure 11 and reveals that 12 of the students declare preferring dialogic feedback to monologic feedback. Only 2 of the students declare preferring monologic feedback to dialogic feedback, and another 4 students declare finding dialogic and monologic feedback to be equally beneficial. Furthermore, 5 of the students did not make a clear statement of preference in their reflection.⁴⁷ The results of analyzing the students' statements of preference suggest that dialogic feedback is half of the students' preferred feedback model.

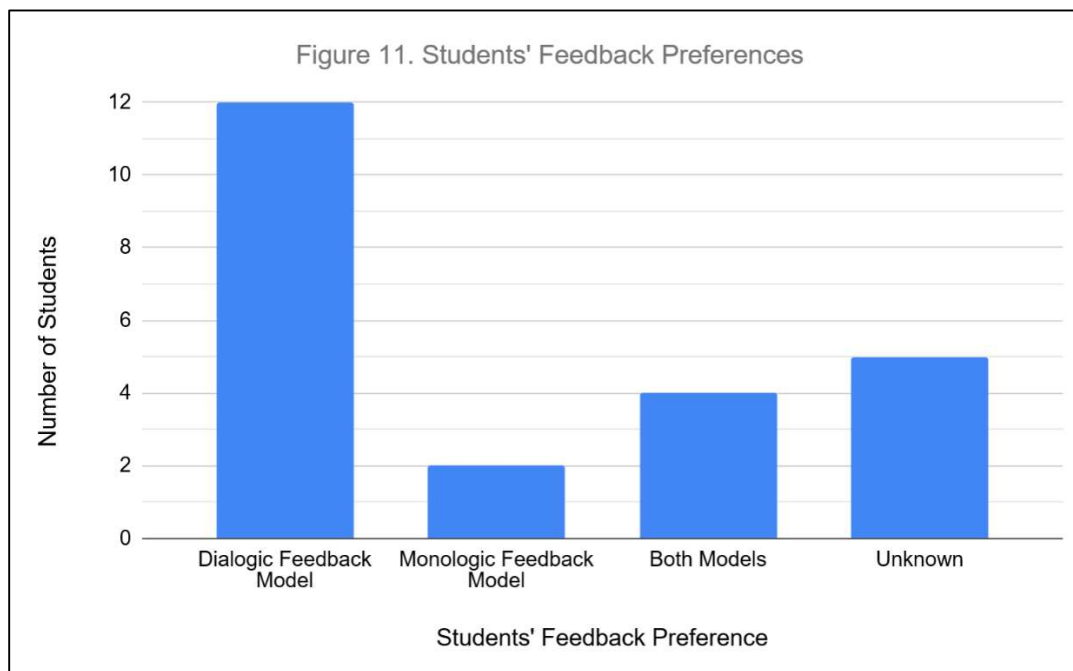


Figure 11. Distribution of students' feedback preferences.

⁴⁷ There were five students who either did not answer the question at all or answered the question in such a way that it is not possible to definitively assess their feedback preferences.

However, these results change considerably when the students' reasons for preferring dialogic feedback are outlined. Although 12 students make a clear statement in which they declare preferring dialogic feedback to monologic feedback, 7 of those students say that their reason for preferring dialogic feedback is that they believe dialogic feedback provides them with a greater amount of feedback, which complicates the analysis because the students experienced two Rounds of dialogic feedback and only one round of monologic feedback. The decision to have the students participate in dialogic feedback twice stemmed from a desire to give the students additional practice with dialogic feedback, as the current research suggests that students do better with dialogic feedback if they have the opportunity to engage in the process multiple times (Bardine & Fulton, 2008; Parrott & Cherry, 2014). However, the decision seems to have also given the dialogic feedback model an unintentional and unfair advantage over the monologic feedback model. If these students prefer dialogic feedback only because they had the opportunity to engage in the process twice, the evidence does not and cannot suggest that half of the class prefers dialogic feedback, as the reason for their preference does not have anything to do with the feedback model itself. For example, Ashley, who writes particularly clearly, writes the following statement in her reflection:

Ashley: I found the feedback process for Essay Two to be slightly more helpful only because we did two rounds of it so it made me consider more things to ask about and improve.

Ashely's response makes it clear that her only reason for preferring the dialogic feedback model is that she engaged in the process twice. Had she engaged in the monologic feedback process twice, her preference might very well be different. Thus, a definitive claim that half of the

students in the class prefer dialogic feedback cannot be made, as so much of these students' preference reasoning is disconnected from the feedback model itself.

The remaining five students who say they prefer dialogic feedback describe three different reasons for preferring dialogic feedback. Becca writes that dialogic feedback “made more sense” to her than “just getting feedback for the paper afterwards that sometimes does not make sense.” Her response seems to indicate that she found some of the monologic commentary to be difficult to understand, which relates to an argument in the current scholarship that says good feedback should have a system for helping students comprehend feedback (Ajjawi & Boud, 2015). Three of the pro-dialogic feedback students describe enjoying the opportunity to ask their own questions and focus on their own concerns, which relates to an argument in the current scholarship that says good feedback should know and value students' writing intentions and concerns (Charles, 1990; Cresswell, 2000; Bardine & Fulton, 2008; Parrott & Cherry, 2014). Finally, Steve writes that he believes “the dialogic feedback process helped make [his] paper stronger and academic,” although he does not explain why he believes the process helped him write a better paper. Furthermore, Steve continues in his reflection to suggest that next time the process should “rely less on our (student) comments,” which is the exact opposite of what three of his fellow pro-dialogic feedback classmates argue when they describe enjoying the opportunity to pose their own questions.

However, Steve is not alone in his desire for instructor-led feedback, as this conversation appears in the writings of the two students who declare preferring monologic feedback. Moreover, these pro-monologic students also describe the dialogic feedback process as being unclear and frustrating, which indicates that they are using their emotional reactions to judge the

quality of feedback. The students who declare finding the feedback models equally helpful generally describe both how the two models offered the same amount of feedback and how the two models made them feel the same about their writing, which is interesting because both the idea that good feedback is measured by amount and the idea that good feedback is measured by the emotions it produces appear in this group's discussions as well. The evidence thus seems to suggest that FYC students primarily value feedback models that they deem provide them with greater amounts of feedback and that they believe produce positive feelings.

The analysis of how these FYC students engage with and react to the dialogic feedback process is possible only because of how these students conducted themselves and because a group of these students were willing to provide their consent to participate in this study. Because these students conducted themselves as curious, engaged, and respectful learners, our class was able to engage in an experience that was both new to me and to the majority of them. Furthermore, because some of these students were willing to consent to participate in this study and share their learning experience, a more thorough analysis of this data developed and a more interesting narrative of the class's experience emerged. These students thus had an important impact on this project as a whole and are an instrumental component of the conclusions and discussions that can be drawn from this data.

Chapter V: Implications and Discussion

Student Engagement

Doing the Work: Discussing *this* dialogic feedback model. Analyzing the students' dialogic feedback assignment completion rates revealed that fewer students completed submission two than submission one in both Rounds of dialogic feedback. Although factors both outside and inside the instructor's control contribute to whether the students complete assignments, one factor that seems to be influencing the decrease in assignment participation and within my control as the instructor is the structure of the dialogic feedback model. Since the evidence suggests that aspects of this dialogic feedback model were unnecessary for some of the students to begin making revisions, the second submission requirement should be reconsidered. However, this reconsideration is complicated by the fact that so many of these students expressed valuing feedback models that offer them greater amounts of feedback in their reflective essays. Thus, the difference between how the students actually engaged with this model and what the students say they value in a feedback model must be considered together in order to identify possible dialogic feedback model revisions.

Time is likely a central factor in the discussion on the difference between the students' actions and the students' desires. As noted by the current scholarship, time is incredibly important both to students, as there is a relationship between timely feedback and students' feelings of anxiety (Shields, 2015), and to instructors, as instructors need a way to compose quality feedback within their busy schedules (Sommers, 1982; Connors & Lunsford, 1993; Charles, 1990; Nicol & Macfarlane-Dick, 2006; Zigmond, 2012). The timeline of this dialogic feedback model had the students composing submission one on a Monday night and receiving a

response by a Wednesday morning. Then, the timeline had the students composing submission two by that same Wednesday night and receiving a response by a Friday morning. Thus, even though the students received each instructor response within two days, which can arguably be considered timely feedback, the feedback process for an entire Round occurred over the course of five days, which is certainly not as timely, especially when one considers that the due date for the students' next draft was only two days after they received that final response. This timeline both made the students wait for the feedback conversation to come to a close and left them with little time to make revisions.

Furthermore, the timeline of the model was also a burden on my own schedule. Although the act of composing a single set of dialogic responses took no longer than the time it took to compose a single set of monologic responses, which supports Charles's (1990) finding that composing dialogic feedback takes her the same amount of time as monologic feedback, composing four sets of dialogic responses over the course of two weeks quickly became overwhelming.⁴⁸ In order to both make the dialogic feedback model timelier for students and to reduce the amount of time devoted to composing feedback that might be unneeded, the dialogic feedback model has been revised to make submission two optional, which will make the model timelier and will still offer the students more feedback if they want it.

Research Question 1: Discussing student and instructor preparation. The students' initial dialogic feedback comments exposed a relationship between the students' concerns and

⁴⁸ I teach one class of 24 students as part of my graduate assistantship. An instructor who taught multiple sections of a FYC course would likely find the act of composing four dialogic feedback assignments over the course of two week even more burdensome, which creates a further need for the model to be redesigned to better meet the needs of both students and instructors.

the course's content, as the primary writing concern themes can be better understood when the lessons the students' received throughout the semester are contextualized. The relationships between the comments and the course's content repeatedly indicated that these FYC students both used the course's instruction to assess what writing concerns are important and used the course's other resources to assess on which writing concerns they needed instructor feedback. These relationships reveal that these students put both thought and effort into composing their questions and that these FYC students did not create their commentary in a vacuum. Rather, they created their commentary in a specific situation within which they demonstrate an ability to read, process, and act.

Furthermore, because their situation emphasized the value of global writing concerns and the majority of their commentary focused on HOC, instead of LOC, their commentary suggests that FYC students can be taught to value global writing concerns. HOC themes, including evidence, style, organization, thesis, argument structure/style, and rhetorical appeals, account for 142 of the total 155 student comments, and LOC themes, including citations and grammar and mechanics, account for only 7 of the comments,⁴⁹ which suggests a significant difference between the number of HOC and LOC comments. Moreover, when one compares the number of students who initiated LOC conversations to the number of students who initiated HOC conversations, it becomes abundantly clear that the majority of these FYC students prioritized discussions about HOC. Only six students composed commentary that deals with LOC, and the remaining 18 students did not compose a single comment dealing with a LOC. Thus, the

⁴⁹ The remaining six comments are in the basic request for assistance and "other" categories.

evidence that suggests these FYC students can be taught to value global writing concerns supports Cresswell's (2000) argument that students who are taught the value of global writing concerns, the importance of revisions between drafts, and the idea that the writing process is recursive are better prepared to engage in a dialogic feedback experience.

The evidence that these students both craft their commentary in response to their learning situation and value global writing concerns is significant because it suggests that these FYC students can have meaningful conversations about their writing through the dialogic feedback model. However, this conclusion is not to imply that meaningful conversations cannot come from the discussion of LOC; rather, the conclusion implies that meaningful feedback conversations come from the discussion of relevant writing concerns.⁵⁰ If the evidence suggested that these FYC students could not initiate meaningful and productive conversations through the dialogic feedback model, then a different feedback model, such as the monologic feedback model,⁵¹ would likely be more appropriate for providing them with useful feedback. These FYC students are at the very least demonstrating that the dialogic feedback model is an appropriate feedback model for their abilities to analyze both their course's expectations and their own writing.

⁵⁰ For example, if a student chose to discuss a LOC, such as the formatting of an in-text citation, for a quotation that was being effectively introduced, interpreted, and connected to the claim, then the LOC would spark a meaningful feedback conversation, as the more pressing HOC would have already been addressed.

⁵¹ The monologic feedback model would be more appropriate if the students struggled to initiate meaningful dialogic feedback conversations, as the monologic feedback model focuses on the instructor's writing concerns, which could be crafted to address the most pressing writing concerns in the students draft.

The analysis of the students' initial dialogic feedback comments also revealed that the dialogic feedback model can require instructors to make assumptions about their students' writing concerns, as some of the students' comments will likely be general, vague, or unintelligible. This revelation is significant because it clarifies an argument made by Charles in which she writes that dialogic feedback "can reveal the concerns of the student/writer" (1990, p. 293). In this statement, Charles is arguing that her feedback model is better at showing instructors their students' writing concerns than monologic models. Likely, she is still correct that a dialogic model is better for revealing students' writing concerns than a monologic model, as plenty of the students clearly expressed their concerns,⁵² but it is important to clarify that some of the students' comments will be general, vague, or unintelligible under the dialogic feedback model, even if the students are provided with extensive preparation for the experience. Furthermore, as an instructor, I was unsuccessful in providing feedback to at least⁵³ the three student comments that are classified as "other," which suggests that instructors, perhaps particularly new instructors, can certainly be unsuccessful in interpreting difficult student comments. Thus, instructors who choose to implement a dialogic feedback model should be prepared to handle vague or unintelligible commentary and should have an action plan to implement when they encounter this type of commentary, which could keep the process smooth and fair.

⁵² Furthermore, because the monologic feedback model does not ask the students to identify any of their own writing concerns, the dialogic model is certainly better for reveal the students' writing concerns.

⁵³ Although none of the FYC students expressed that I had misunderstood their comments or questions in either our conversations or their reflective essays, I potentially misunderstood more student comments, as it is unfair to assume that all of these students would feel comfortable telling their instructor that she was incorrect.

Our class's "Asking for Feedback" handout, which offers the students ideas for questions to ask about their writing, has been updated for our next dialogic feedback encounter to include a section that describes what vague commentary is and offers advice for revising the commentary. Furthermore, our dialogic feedback assignment sheet has been revised to explain that the students will receive an email if there are questions about a comment they have composed.⁵⁴ They are expected to respond to the email within 24 hours,⁵⁵ and if they do not, the plan is to offer them whatever feedback seems relevant. This action plan both offers the students further preparatory instruction, as they should be provided with tools to help them identify and revise vague commentary, and creates a clear procedure for handling student commentary that is difficult to understand, which will help keep the feedback process smooth and fair.⁵⁶

Research Question 2: Discussing students' self-regulation and agency. Analyzing the changes in the students' comments between dialogic feedback Round One and Round Two seemed, at first, to reveal only a small shift in the students' writing concerns. However, further analysis revealed that the majority of these FYC students did identify new writing concerns in Round Two but that their concerns stayed within the same major writing themes. Few FYC students engaged in return commentary, which suggests that the majority of the students

⁵⁴ The emailing process is even more important now that the second submission has been removed from the model, as the second submission was often where I asked students for clarification on their commentary.

⁵⁵ A 24-hour time limit will likely be difficult for many of these students to adhere to, as most of these FYC students do not check their emails on a regular basis. However, the strict time limit is necessary in order to provide the whole class with timely feedback.

⁵⁶ Unfortunately, how successful this action plan will be remains unknown, as the idea has yet to be tested.

identified new writing concerns on their second draft.⁵⁷ Because I was surprised to find that the students primarily identified new writing concerns but generally identified writing concerns within the same major theme categories, I have been prompted to reflect upon why the findings for Research Question 2 feel disconnected from my expectations and, in this reflection process, acknowledge that the research question stems from assumptions about how students will approach the writing process if they are given the opportunity to produce three drafts. Since this was the first instance in which I had assigned an essay with three drafts,⁵⁸ I had an unstated assumption about what the students' writing would be like in the second draft, as I assumed the students would be further along in the process and would be ready for meaningful LOC conversations. However, the majority of the students were not at a point in their writing process in which LOC conversations would have been appropriate, and thus, they were correct to continue identifying HOC.

Additionally, exploring the shifts in the students' writing concerns revealed that the entire class did experience a significant shift in the number of comments concerned with the use of direct quotations between Rounds One and Two. The relationship between the change in the course's expectations and the shift in the number of students' comments that are related to the use of direct quotations is significant because it suggests that the dialogic feedback model does provide opportunities for students to self-regulate their own learning. When students engage in

⁵⁷ Further study would be necessary to determine if the students identified new writing concerns in Round Two because they felt their most pressing writing concerns had shifted. Since the students were never explicitly told that they could return to previously discussed concerns, it is possible they felt they were "supposed to" identify new concerns.

⁵⁸ In my three previous semesters of teaching this course, I had always assigned essays with two drafts, a first and final draft.

self-regulation, they establish their own learning goals, and then, they engage in the behaviors that they believe will allow them to meet their learning goals (Nicol & Macfarlane-Dick, 2006). The students set their goals and select their behaviors by referring to the assignment they want to complete, the context of their classroom, and their teacher's expectations. The increase in the number of direct quotation writing concerns becomes evidence to suggest that the students are engaging in self-regulation because both the assignment and the teacher's expectations changed, and the students' behaviors changed in relation to them. Thus, the evidence suggests that the dialogic feedback experience gives the students an opportunity to exercise control over their own learning and, then, act upon those opportunities, which suggests the dialogic feedback model also prompts the students to exercise their own agency. Furthermore, the dialogic feedback model seems to allow the students to acknowledge both to themselves and to their instructor that they want to engage in behaviors and discussions that will allow them to better understand a concept and thus better meet a course's expectations. The evidence to suggest that the students are prompted to engage in self-regulation and exercise agency through the dialogic feedback model is incredibly significant, as students' self-regulation and agency are major dialogic feedback benefits being discussed in current academic scholarship.

Student Reaction

Research Question 3: Discussing the students' emotions and feedback preferences.

In their reflection essays, the students explored both how they felt during the dialogic feedback process and which feedback model they prefer. The analysis of the students' emotions revealed that the students expressed more positive emotions in relation to the dialogic feedback experience than negative emotions, which suggests that, for most of these FYC students, the

dialogic feedback process is a positive experience. Understanding how these FYC students feel when they are engaging in a feedback experience is incredibly important, as the current research shows that students use feedback to assess whether they belong in their current educational setting, and therefore, composition instructors should do their best to employ feedback models that give students positive feelings in order to help them feel like they belong in both their class and at their school (Shields, 2015). These FYC students' expressions of positive emotions, such as feeling good about their writing and feeling confident, is evidence to suggest that the dialogic feedback model can make students feel like they belong, which is important, as it suggests that the dialogic feedback model is an appropriate feedback model for these FYC students.

However, the comparison between the effectiveness of monologic and dialogic feedback remains an important element of this research project, and although the number of negative utterances is considerably lower than the number of positive utterances, it is important to remember that the students are only describing their emotional reactions to the dialogic feedback process. These students are not comparing their emotional reaction from the monologic feedback process to the dialogic feedback process, as the question did not prompt a comparison. The students did not respond to any reflective prompts about their emotional reaction to the monologic feedback process, and thus, the analysis of the students' emotional responses does not and cannot reveal any evidence to suggest that dialogic feedback is better than monologic feedback because dialogic feedback makes students feel better about themselves and as writers. Rather, the evidence merely suggests that dialogic feedback can make the students feel positive emotions, which is significant in itself but is not a comparison between the models. The lack of comparison between the models in this respect has emerged as a limitation of this study.

The results of analyzing the students' response to questions about their feedback preferences revealed that only two students actively prefer monologic feedback over dialogic feedback, as they felt uncomfortable in the dialogic feedback process and missed the instructor-led feedback provided under the monologic model. However, even though the majority of the class either claims to find dialogic feedback more helpful or finds the models equally helpful, an analysis of the students' reasoning revealed that the majority of these FYC students measure the quality of feedback in terms of the amount of feedback they receive from their instructor. Although some students are clear in the fact that *amount* refers to the additional round of dialogic feedback they received, other students are unclear in their explanation of what *amount* refers to. Thus, sufficient evidence to claim that the students believe dialogic feedback offers them more feedback than monologic feedback has not been found in this study. In turn, this means that sufficient evidence to claim that half of these FYC students actively prefer dialogic feedback also has not been found, as much of these students' preference reasoning is disconnected from the feedback model itself. Rather, the evidence suggests only that the majority of these FYC students do not actively dislike the dialogic feedback model, which is a notable finding in itself, as it still indicates that these students find dialogic feedback helpful.

Limitations and Future Study

All research projects are limited in some fashion, as no project will ever be inherently perfect, and this project is no exception to this reality of limitation and imperfection. This project's limitations were related to both the scope and contextual constraints of the project and the nature of embarking on a project with a number of unknown factors. The scope and contextual constraints of this project resulted in four noteworthy limitations, including the time

frame, the study's sample size, the focus of the study, and the perspective of the researcher. The nature of embarking on a project with a number of unknown factors resulted in two additional noteworthy limitations, including the reflective writing assignments and the difference between one round of monologic feedback and two rounds of dialogic feedback.

One limitation with this project was its timeframe, which only allowed for the students to write one short essay using the monologic feedback model and one slightly longer essay using the dialogic feedback model. Thus, questions about how these FYC students engage with the dialogic feedback model on multiple essays cannot be explored. Researching how students who are familiar with dialogic feedback engage in a dialogic feedback process would be an interesting area for future study, as the current scholarship suggests that students engage better in the process if they have the opportunity to experience the process multiple times (Bardine & Fulton, 2008; Parrott & Cherry, 2014). Furthermore, the students' emotional reactions revealed that their initial reactions to dialogic feedback were often negative. If the students were familiar with the dialogic feedback process, they might potentially report more positive emotions at the beginning of the process, as the experience would be known to them. Moreover, additional opportunities to engage in dialogic feedback might reduce the number of basic, vague, or unintelligible student comments, as the students would have further opportunities to practice composing specific questions. Only a study with a longer time frame could explore these questions.

The study's sample size is another noteworthy limitation, as only 24 students engaged in this process and only 8 students consented to participate in the research study. Since I teach only one class of 24 students as part of my graduate assistantship, I was limited in the number of students whom I could readily include in this study. Therefore, because the study's sample size is

relatively small, the impacts of its results are less than the impacts of what a larger study's results would be. A future study should address this limitation by exploring how a larger group of students engage with and react to a dialogic feedback process. A researcher who could access multiple sections of the same course could likely address this limitation and conduct this research with a larger number of student participants.

Additionally, the focus of this study was limiting in that it did not address how different demographic groups of students engage with and react to a dialogic feedback model. Exploring different demographic groups was outside the scope of this study but would be a rich and interesting project for future study. In particular, a future study that addressed how English as Second Language learners (ESL) engage with and react to the dialogic feedback model would be important for further understanding the effectiveness of the feedback model, as I observed a slight difference in how ESL students engaged with the dialogic model but could not explore this difference in this study. A future study that addressed these questions would contribute greatly to how the current scholarship understands the dialogic feedback model.

The final noteworthy limitation that relates to the scope and contextual constraints of this study is that I am the study's only researcher and that I approach this study from my own unique situation. Being the only researcher is limiting in that there was not a co-researcher to also engage in the coding process or conduct a consistency check on the coding process (Thomas, 2013). Thomas advocates for a fellow researcher⁵⁹ to also code the data and thus check the credibility of the themes identified by the first researcher. A consistency check was not

⁵⁹ Thomas (2013) also advocates for a study stakeholder to conduct a check of the credibility of the coding process.

conducted on this study due to the fact that there is not another researcher to conduct said check, and furthermore, there was not enough time to engage anyone else in the process. Being the only researcher is also limiting in the sense that I am limited by a unique situation and perspective. My situation is somewhat unique in that I teach only one course. Teaching only one course limited this study in that exploring how the monologic feedback model and dialogic feedback model differ in their impact on the quality of the students' writing was not possible, as the feedback models were implemented on two essays of different difficulty levels and at two different points in the semester. The essay that used a monologic feedback model was shorter, had fewer requirements, and was assigned in the first few weeks of the semester. These variations make it unfair to compare the quality of the students' writing in this study. However, a future study could address how the feedback models impact the quality of student writing if a researcher had at least two classes to observe. One class could then engage in a monologic feedback model and another class could engage in a dialogic feedback model on the same essay and at the same point in the semester. Controlling the type of essay and the time in the semester would allow for a comparison between how the feedback models impact student writing.

While engaging in this project, two additional noteworthy limitations were revealed, and these limitations are the result of embarking on a project with a number of unknown factors. First, the analysis process revealed that a limitation in this study was the use of reflective writing assignments to gather reactions from the students. Although the current scholarship suggests that reflective writing assignments can be useful components to dialogic feedback models, as they can deepen the students' understanding of the dialogic experience and their writing process, the

reflections were not ideal data collection instruments.⁶⁰ One issue that emerged from the analysis of the reflection essays was that some of the students did not answer all of the prompts on the reflection assignment sheet. Furthermore, some of the students did not make definitive statements in their responses to the assignment sheet prompts.⁶¹ Thus, some of the reflection essays did not provide usable data. These issues could have been resolved if the students had also responded to a multiple-choice survey in which they were asked similar questions. A multiple-choice survey would have collected concrete student responses. A future study might think to include a multiple-choice survey.

Additionally, the analysis of the students' reflections revealed that the students should have been prompted to explore their emotional reactions to the monologic feedback process, as these emotional reactions could have been compared to the students' emotional responses to dialogic feedback. Comparing the emotional responses to the two types of feedback could have led to a discussion about which feedback model evokes the most positive student reactions. Because the current scholarship argues that positive reactions to feedback have a relationship to students' sense of belonging, understanding which feedback model makes the students feel best would have been an important finding and would have provided evidence to suggest which feedback model is better for FYC students. Prompting the students to explore their monologic feedback emotions and then prompting them to compare their monologic emotions to their dialogic emotions could be an interesting component of a future study.

⁶⁰ Thus, the reflections should likely remain as a component of this dialogic feedback model, but this study should have utilized an additional data collection instrument to gather the students' responses.

⁶¹ This issue became particularly apparent when coding for the students' feedback preferences, as five reflection essays had to be coded as "unknown."

The second limitation that was revealed through the analysis process was that the study was designed to provide the students with one round of monologic feedback and two rounds of dialogic feedback. Although this design was merely intended to provide the students with an additional opportunity to engage with the dialogic feedback model, as I assumed the majority of the students would be unfamiliar with it and would need an additional engagement opportunity in order to feel comfortable with the model, the study design gave the dialogic feedback model an unforeseen and unfair advantage over the monologic model. Multiple students expressed that they preferred dialogic feedback over monologic feedback only because they engaged in two rounds of dialogic feedback. In order to fairly assess the students' feedback preferences and make a definitive claim about which feedback model is preferred by the students, a future study would need to provide equal monologic and dialogic feedback opportunities.

Conclusion

Exploring how FYC students engage with a dialogic feedback model has revealed support for the theory that FYC students are capable of undertaking an active role in the feedback process. They can successfully recognize and discuss important writing concerns in their own essays, although they do need sufficient preparation and support in order to engage in these conversations. The students' active role under the dialogic feedback model also allows them to exercise self-regulation and agency, which further develops both valuable skills. These FYC students demonstrate an awareness of their classroom situation and their course's expectations, and they initiate feedback conversations that will help them succeed in their situation and meet their course's expectations.

Exploring how FYC students react to the dialogic feedback model has revealed that these FYC students need a feedback model that offers them a sufficient amount of feedback, although it is unclear exactly what each of these FYC students means by *amount*. Many of these students do seem to prefer receiving feedback multiple times throughout the span of a single essay, which further highlights how important instructor feedback is to these writers. Moreover, FYC students' value feedback that evokes feelings of positivity, such as feelings of confidence or feeling good about one's writing. The dialogic feedback model seems to fulfill this need, as the majority of the students reported experiencing feelings of positivity during the dialogic feedback process and few students actively preferred the monologic feedback model over the dialogic feedback model.

Thus, the evidence unearthed in this study offers support for the theory that dialogic feedback is an effective feedback model to use with FYC students. Dialogic feedback can be structured so that it is effective, appropriate, and timely for both students and instructors. These findings are significant to the current academic conversations on best feedback practices, as academia is constantly seeking feedback models that support students as they work to become better, more confident writers. Although limitations in this study prevent definitive claims about whether FYC students prefer dialogic feedback over monologic feedback and whether dialogic feedback makes FYC students feel better about themselves as learners than monologic feedback, the evidence still suggests that dialogic feedback is an effective feedback model, and the students' active role under the dialogic feedback model does seem to suggest that dialogic feedback is, at least, better at promoting self-regulation and agency, as monologic feedback does not present FYC students with the same opportunities to be active participants in their feedback

conversations. Future study should continue to explore the effectiveness of dialogic feedback, especially for specific student demographic groups, and should continue exploring types of feedback models that offer students sufficient amounts of feedback while remaining timely for both students and instructors. Because feedback is vital to student learning, scholars, experienced and new, must continue to pursue this wondering for how to best support student learning through feedback. We must continue to throw ideas at the wall, each time asking ourselves what we are throwing, why we are throwing it, and what it might mean if it sticks.

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Appendix: IRB Materials

IRB Protocol Form



**OFFICE OF RESEARCH AND
SPONSORED PROGRAMS**
ST. CLOUD STATE UNIVERSITY

Institutional Review Board Protocol For Conduct of Research Involving Human Subjects

PROJECT

Project Title:	Let's Talk: A Study of Dialogic Feedback in a First-Year Composition Classroom
Project Start Date:	01/13/2020
Project End Date:	08/20/2020

RESEARCHER(S)

Principal Investigator					
First Name	Last Name	Status (Select One)	Email	Phone Number	IRB Training Completion Date
Jenna	Saunders	<input type="checkbox"/> faculty/staff <input type="checkbox"/> undergraduate <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> graduate masters <input type="checkbox"/> graduate doctoral	jmsaunders@stcloudstate.edu	952-857-9750	January 18 th , 2019

Co-Investigator/Research Assistant					
First Name	Last Name	Status (Select One)	Email	Phone Number	IRB Training Completion Date
Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.	<input type="checkbox"/> faculty/staff <input type="checkbox"/> undergraduate <input type="checkbox"/> graduate masters <input type="checkbox"/> graduate doctoral	Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.
Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.	<input type="checkbox"/> faculty/staff <input type="checkbox"/> undergraduate <input type="checkbox"/> graduate masters <input type="checkbox"/> graduate doctoral	Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.

Faculty Mentor/Course Instructor (if Principal Investigator is a student):

First Name	Last Name	Email	Phone Number	IRB Training Completion Date
Michael	Dando	mbdando@stcloudstate.edu	320-308-3724	Click or tap here to enter text.

ALL Principal Investigator(s) is required to completed SCSU's required CITI IRB training, <https://www.citiprogram.org/>




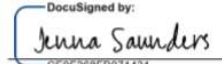

If you collaborate with an individual from another institution, we may be able to use an Authorization Agreement with another institution's IRB. Contact ResearchNow@stcloudstate.edu for more information.

SPONSORS

Is there external funding source(s) for this project?	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Pending <input type="checkbox"/> If Yes, please provide Funding Agency/Sponsor name and account number.	
Funding Agency/Sponsor:	Click or tap here to enter text.
Account #:	Click or tap here to enter text.

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CERTIFICATION STATEMENT

 PI Initial here	As Principal Investigator , I certify that the information provided in this protocol represents a complete and accurate description of the proposed study, this study will not begin until IRB approval is received, and this study will be conducted in compliance with IRB recommendations and requirements.	
 PI Initial here	As Principal Investigator , I understand that modifications, significant new finding which develop during the course of the study or increase the risk of participant, or reporting to the IRB any adverse or unexpected events, and that protocols approved as expedited or full require an annual/final report (protocols approved as exempt do not require continuing review/final report process). To submit a Continuing Review/Final, please complete the <u>Continuing Review Form</u> .	
 Faculty Mentor Initial here	As Faculty Mentor , I certify that I have reviewed this protocol and that I attest to the scientific merit of this study. I will advise and provide continued guidance to support the study as appropriate for the student's academic development.	
DocuSigned by:  Signature of Principal Investigator		11/14/2019 Date
 Signature of Faculty Mentor/Course Instructor		11/14/19 Date

PROJECT DESCRIPTION**1. Purpose of the study (Limited to once sentence):**

The purpose of this study is to explore how first-year composition students engage with and react to a dialogic feedback experience.

2. Project Summary/Abstract (Limited to 250 words):

This study recognizes dialogic feedback as a concept of growing importance within the field of higher education. Dialogic feedback refers to a series of "interactive exchanges in which interpretations are shared, meanings negotiated and expectations clarified" between students and their instructors (Carless 90). This definition, as provided by David Carless, highlights the major benefit some scholars find in dialogic feedback. Namely, the benefit is that dialogic feedback models generate a space for students and instructors to engage in productive dialogues about students' writings. Therefore, this study hopes to contribute to the conversations about dialogic feedback by implementing a dialogic feedback experience in one section of St. Cloud State University's ENGL 191: Introduction to Rhetorical and Analytical Writing (ENGL 191) during the Spring 2020 semester. Like other dialogic feedback models before it, this model will invite students to both active a productive dialogue about their writing and become the dominate voices their own revision process. The model will accomplish these goals by instructing them to, first, locate concerns within their own writings and, then, explain these concerns to the instructor, who will respond and, thus, create a dialogue. The model will also provide opportunities for self-reflection through written reflection assignments with targeted questions. This study will investigate how first-year composition students engage with and react to the implementation of a dialogic feedback experience by analyzing both the conversations that develop between the students and their instructor and the students' written reflections.

3. Research question(s), if applicable include hypothesis:

I hope to investigate the following research questions with this study:

1. What themes emerge when students identify their own writing concerns?
2. Do the writing concerns students identify shift throughout the drafting process?
3. How do students react to a dialogic feedback experience, especially when they contrast the experience with a non-dialogic feedback experience?

4. Research design and analysis:

I propose an eight-week study on how first-year composition students engage with and react to the implementation of a dialogic feedback experience in a first-year composition classroom. The proposed study will be conducted in ENGL 191, section 10. I will teach ENGL 191, section 10 as a graduate teaching assistant in Spring 2020. In the study, I will analyze work produced by my students as part of the regular ENGL 191 curriculum. All students enrolled in my section of ENGL 191, regardless of whether they choose to participate in the study, will complete these graded assignments. However, only the students who consent to participate in the study will have their works pulled for analysis in this study. Participation within the study will not affect or alter the grading process or individual student standing in my ENGL 191 course. I will work to ensure that all my students are treated fairly in this process by intentionally making myself unaware of who has consented to participate until after I have graded all the assignments associated with this study. I will accomplish this by having my students return their consent forms to my faculty mentor, Dr. Dando. Approximately one week after providing my students with the appropriate consent forms, Dr. Dando will visit my ENGL 191 class and collect the signed consent forms from my students. I will set out of the classroom during this time. Dr. Dando will keep my consent forms in his locked office until I have graded all the assignments associated with this study. Only after the assignments are graded and posted to my D2L gradebook for the students to access will I take possession of the consent forms and learn what works I need to pull aside for further analysis. These steps intend to protect the students who choose not to consent to participation in the study and intend to better separate this study from the everyday operations of my ENGL 191 class.

I drew primarily from the work of Heather Macpherson Parrott and Elizabeth Cherry in "Process Memos: Facilitating Dialogues about Writing Between Students and Instructors" and Rola Ajjawi and David Boud in "Researching Feedback Dialogue: An Interactional Analysis Approach" to design the dialogic feedback model I plan to implement in my section of ENGL 191. The study design itself and data analysis process are based on the methods of action research discussed by Herbert Altrichter et al. in *Teachers Investigate their Work: An Introduction to the Methods of Action Research*.

On the first day of classes in the Spring semester, I will explain to the students that I will be conducting research in our class. Although I do not intend to officially introduce "Let's Talk" until the second week of the Spring semester, I do want to make my students aware of the fact that they are enrolled in a class where research is being conducted. I also plan to post my recruitment script to our D2L Announcements page at this time (the script is attached with this form). I will officially introduce "Let's Talk" to my students in the second week by verbally explaining the study with the use of my recruitment script. After using my recruitment script to introduce the study, I will take student questions and provide the students with the appropriate consent forms (the consent forms are attached with this form). My students will then have approximately one week to sign and return the consent forms to Dr. Dando if they choose to participate in the study.

I will begin the first phase of "Let's Talk" in the third week of the Spring semester after my faculty mentor collects the consent forms from those who choose to participate. Since one of the research questions in this study asks how students react to a dialogic feedback experience when compared to a non-dialogic feedback experience, the first phase of "Let's Talk" must provide students with a non-dialogic feedback experience. This non-dialogic feedback experience will then become a reference point for students as they reflect and compare the two different feedback processes near the end of the study. In the non-dialogic phase of the study, the students will draft short essays. I will provide standard feedback on their essays. The students will then use my feedback to revise their essays. They will submit the revised essays and compose written reflections on their experiences (both the assignment sheet for the short essay and the reflection are attached with this form).

I will begin the second phase of "Let's Talk" in the fifth week of the Spring semester. The second phase of "Let's Talk" will be focused on providing my students with a dialogic feedback experience. In this phase of the study, my students will draft another essay. In lieu of my standard feedback procedure, the students will be asked to initiate the conversation about their writing. The students will identify concepts in their first drafts that they believe need to be discussed and revised. Utilizing the Microsoft Word Commentary feature, students will explain their concerns to me. Each student will submit their own document with their comments to the designated D2L Brightspace assignment folder. I will respond to the students using the same tools, thus creating a dialogue between student and instructor. The students will be instructed to continue this dialogue using the same process until they reach a point at which they feel their concerns have been fully addressed. We will repeat this entire process with their second draft.

After the dialogic feedback process is completed for all drafts, students will submit their final drafts. The students will then be asked to engage in a reflective writing assignment. In this reflection, the students will compare the dialogic feedback experience with the non-dialogic feedback experience.

I will only analyze the work from the students who chose to participate in the study after I have posted grades for all assignments related to this study. This analysis will include the participants' essays, my standard feedback, our conversations, and the written reflections.

Analysis of the students' drafts and the written conversations will be used to determine how first-year composition students engage with a dialogic feedback experience. By coding the writing concerns identified by the students in the written conversations, I will be able to both observe what themes emerge when students identify their own writing concerns and whether these themes shift throughout the drafting process. Analysis of the students' reflections will be used to observe how first-year composition students react to the implementation of a dialogic feedback experience. By coding the students' responses and their comparisons between the dialogic and non-dialogic feedback experiences, I will be able to get a sense for how first-year composition students react to the dialogic feedback experience.

5. Recruitment procedures:**a. Who will recruit?**

As the principle investigator, I, Jenna Saunders, will recruit first-year composition students to participant in this study.

b. How is the recruitment accomplished?

Click or tap here to enter text.

I will recruit first-year composition students to participate in "Let's Talk" by explaining the study to the students in ENGL 191, section 10. As mentioned in question four, I teach ENGL 191, section 10 as a graduate teaching assistant.

I will use a recruitment script to provide my students with a verbal explanation of the study during the second week of the Spring semester. After verbally explaining the study to my students, I will provide them with the appropriate informed consent forms. I will explain to the students that they have one week to consider participating in the study and that in approximately one week my faculty mentor will come to class to collect their informed consent forms. I will also remind them that the recruitment script is available to them on our D2L Announcements page for further reference.

c. How does the participation take place?

☒ Once ☐ Continual Basis ☐ Recurring

d. Will recruitment materials be used?

☐ No ☒ If Yes, please attach all emails, scripts, flyers, etc. used to recruit participants with your protocol.

e. Will cooperation with non-public listservs, directories, memberships, etc. be necessary to recruit participants?

☒ No ☐ If Yes, please list the entities/persons you will be working with. (Each entity/person will also need a support letter indicating they are aware of the study and their involvement in recruitment after IRB approval is given)

Click or tap here to enter text.

f. Will cooperation with professors be necessary to recruit participants?

(Professor(s) allowing you to recruit in their classes)

☒ No ☐ If Yes, please list the professors you will be working with. (Each professor will also need a support letter indicating they are aware of the study and their involvement in recruitment after IRB approval is given)

Click or tap here to enter text.

g. Will cooperation with independent school(s)/institutions(s) be necessary to recruit participants?

(Independent school(s)/institution(s) willing to provide access to students, faculty, staff, or other persons.)

☒ No ☐ If Yes, please list the entities/professors/persons you will be working with. (Each entity/professor/person will also need a support letter indicating they are aware of the study and their involvement in recruitment after IRB approval is given)

Click or tap here to enter text.

h. Will cooperation with medical, clinical, or other professional organization(s) be necessary to recruit participants?

(Medical, clinical, other professional organization(s) willing to provide access to clients/patients)

☒ No ☐ If Yes, please list the entities/professors/persons you will be working with. (Each entity/professor/person will also need a support letter indicating they are aware of the study and their involvement in recruitment after IRB approval is given)

Click or tap here to enter text.

6. Participant activities (List all participant activities from recruitment through study completion from the participant's perspective):

Students will learn there is a study taking place in ENGL 191, section 10 on the first day of classes in Spring 2020.

Students will learn the specific details of the study in the second week of classes. Students will be given the appropriate informed consent forms and will be asked to spend the next week either having their guardians review the forms or reviewing the forms themselves.

Students will give signed informed consent forms to Dr. Dando when he visits my ENGL 191 class in approximately the third week of the semester.

Students will draft a short essay in Microsoft Word based on the instructions in the Unit One Essay One assignment sheet. After I provide the students with standard, non-dialogic feedback using Microsoft Word's Commentary feature, they will revise their essays. They will submit the revised essays through the appropriate D2L Brightspace assignment folder.

Students will complete a reflection of the non-dialogic feedback experience based on the instructions in the Unit One Essay One Reflection assignment sheet. Students will submit their reflections through the appropriate D2L Brightspace assignment folder.

Students will draft another essay in Microsoft Word based on the instructions in the Unit One Essay Two assignment sheet. The students will initiate a conversation with me about their writing concerns utilizing the Microsoft Word Commentary feature and will submit their work with comments to me through the appropriate D2L Brightspace assignment folder. Students will structure this dialogue based on the Unit One: Dialogic Feedback for Essay Two assignment sheet.

After we engage in this dialogue using the Commentary feature, the students will revise their essays. The students will initiate a second conversation with me about writing concerns in their second drafts following the same procedure. The students will revise their second drafts. They will submit the revised second drafts through the appropriate D2L Brightspace assignment folder.

The students will complete a reflection of the dialogic feedback experience based on the Unit One Essay Two Reflection assignment sheet. This reflection will compare the non-dialogic and dialogic feedback models. Students will submit their reflections through the appropriate D2L Brightspace assignment folder.

7. Description of potential participants:

The potential participants for this study will be first-year composition students who are enrolled in SCSU's ENGL 191, section 10 in Spring 2020. The students enrolled in ENGL 191 are generally traditional, first-year college students. Although upper-level students, international students, nontraditional students, and Post Secondary Enrollment Options (PSEO) students take ENGL 191 as well, these groups of students enroll in smaller numbers.

a. Maximum number of anticipated participants:

The maximum number of anticipated participants is twenty-five because the ENGL 191 course that I teach as a graduate teaching assistant has a maximum allowance of twenty-five students.

b. Ages:

☐ 0-7 ☒ 8-17 ☒ 18 or older

c. Describe the most relevant characteristics of your participants and explain why these characteristics are necessary for your study:

The following two participant characteristics are the most relevant for the purposes of this study. One, the participants in this study must be first-year composition students. This characteristic is essential to the purposes of this study because this study is interested in how first-year composition students engage with and react to a dialogic feedback experience. Two, the participants in this study must be enrolled in ENGL 191, section 10. This second characteristic is essential to the purposes of the study because I only teach ENGL 191, section 10, and I do not intend to involve any other instructors in my study.

d. Describe any characteristics that would be used to exclude participation from your study:

People who are not first-year composition students enrolled in SCSU's Spring 2020 ENGL 191, section 10 will automatically be excluded from this study, as they will not be exposed to the recruitment process for this study. Within the population of people who will be exposed to the recruitment process, there are no characteristics that will warrant exclusion from the study.

e. Will you actively recruit any of the following as participants in your study:

Yes	No	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Prisoners
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Economically disadvantaged individuals
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Educationally disadvantaged individuals
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Individuals with impaired decision-making capacity
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Students or other individuals whose risk of identification through dissemination would pose more than minimal risk of harm (reputation, academic standing, immigration status, etc.)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Employees whose risk of identification through dissemination would pose more than minimal risk of harm (reputation, employment status, etc.)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Other, please specify: Click or tap here to enter text.

8. Will participants be compensated for participating in the study?

☒ No

☐ If Yes, you will use:

☐ Money or gift cards, distributed to participants after their time is completed

☐ Money or gift cards, using a lottery system

☐ Extra credit in a course

Will you ensure that other extra credit opportunities are available, as per SCSU requirements ☐ YES ☐ NO
(Note this either in the professor's letter of support or describe here if it is your course)

Click or tap here to enter text.

☐ Other, please describe the compensation.

Click or tap here to enter text.

9. Describe the data/information/biospecimens that will be collected (your dependent variables or equivalent):

The following documents will be collected throughout the study for analysis:

Phase One-

Student first drafts
My standard feedback
Student final drafts
Student reflections

Phase Two-

Student first drafts
Written conversations about the first drafts
Student second drafts
Written conversation about the second drafts
Student final drafts
Student reflections

10. How will the data be collected (select all that apply):

Use of survey or data collection instruments

☒ No ☐ If Yes, please attach the survey and/or data collection instrument to the IRB submission Interview Guide.

Use of Interview Guide

☒ No ☐ If Yes, please attach the Interview Guide to the IRB submission.

Use of audio/video/photographic means to assist in data collection

☒ No ☐ If Yes, please attach the SCSU audio/video/photographic release to the consent form.

☒ Others, please describe:

As mentioned in previous responses, student writings, which includes essays, conversations, and reflections, will be collected through our D2L Brightspace course page using the assignment folder feature.

11. The data collected are:

☐ ANONYMOUS: no names/identifiers are collected and no signed consent form

☒ If CONFIDENTIAL: identifiers are collected but are not linked to participant response during dissemination.

Are participant identifications linked to response for analysis purpose?

☐ No ☒ If Yes, please explain.

i. The purpose of linking responses

Linking responses throughout the analysis portion of the study will allow me to analyze how each individual participant experiences and responds to the dialogic feedback model as a continuing process.

ii. The coding process

Participants will be given a number to be referred to by in the study. All collected data will have student names removed and replaced with numbers. A key will be created as a Word document that will be used to match the students' names with their corresponding numbers.

iii. Who will have access to the key? Where will the key be stored?

The key will be stored on OneDrive and accessed through a password-protected computer. I will be the only person who has access to the password-protected computer.

12. How will raw data be stored? (give the physical location, security measures; Example: password-protected computer, locked file cabinet)

i. Who is responsible for overseeing the security of the raw data?

As the principle investigator of the study, I, Jenna Saunders, will oversee the security of the raw data.

ii. Who will have access to the raw data when it is outside of storage?

As the principle investigator of the study, I, Jenna Saunders, will oversee the security of the raw data. The data in this study will be stored on St. Cloud State University's secure OneDrive and accessed through a password-protected computer. I am the only person who knows the password to this secure computer.

iii. Will data be maintained for the purposes of secondary research in the future?

☒ No

☐ If Yes, will the secondary research require additional consent from the participants from whom the data were obtained? ☐ Yes ☐ No

13. How are data presented during dissemination?

Are data presented in aggregate form (groups of participants) with no more than 2 demographic variables presented together?

☐ No ☒ Yes

Are data not presented in aggregate form?

☒ No ☐ If Yes, please explain what data are presented and why this approach will protect participant identity:

[Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

Will direct quotes be presented?

☐ No ☒ If Yes:

Will participants be given an opportunity to review their transcripts and 1) make additions, 2) request omissions, and/or 3) have a final opportunity to withdraw their participation?

☒ No ☐ Yes

Will de-identified quotes be used?

☐ No ☒ If yes, explain the de-identification process:

Participant responses will be coded with a number.

☐ Others, please explain:

[Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

14. When will the raw data and/or coding key be destroyed (Check One):

☐ When the study is complete.

☒ When my degree is awarded.

☐ Within 3 years of study's completion.

☐ Other, please explain:

[Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

RISK AND BENEFITS

15. What are the anticipated benefits associated with this study for?

- a. Participants in the study:
There are no anticipated benefits for participants in this study.
- b. Other individuals, the field of study, society, etc.
This study hopes to contribute knowledge about the dialogic feedback experience to the field of first-year composition studies.

16. What are the potential risks for participants while participating in this study?

There are no foreseen risks for participants while participating in this study.

17. Does the study involve:

- a. Physical pain, discomfort, or injury from procedures or drugs?
☒ No ☐ If Yes, what precautions will be taken to minimize or prevent potential risks, inconveniences, and discomforts (e.g. anonymous data collection, presence of trained personnel who can respond to emergencies, etc.)?
Click or tap here to enter text.
- b. Undesired and/or unexpected psychological changes (e.g. depression, anxiety, emotional discomfort, confusion, hallucination, stress, guilt, embarrassment, loss of self-esteem)?
☒ No ☐ If Yes, what precautions will be taken to minimize or prevent potential risks, inconveniences, and discomforts (e.g. anonymous data collection, presence of trained personnel who can respond to emergencies, etc.)?
Click or tap here to enter text.
- c. Invasion of privacy/absence of informed consent (e.g. covert observation, review of private medical or educational records, etc.)?
☒ No ☐ If Yes, what precautions will be taken to minimize or prevent potential risks, inconveniences, and discomforts (e.g. anonymous data collection, presence of trained personnel who can respond to emergencies, etc.)?
Click or tap here to enter text.
- d. Sensitive information (e.g. alcohol/drug use, sexual orientation, illegal activities, suicidal thoughts, physical/mental illness, violence, depression, gang related activities, psychological/physical abuse, pro-life/pro-choice, relationship issues, etc.) that could result in social and economic harm (e.g. civil/criminal liability or damage to financial standing, employability, insurability, reputation, etc.) if a breach in confidentiality occurred?
☒ No ☐ If Yes, what precautions will be taken to minimize or prevent potential risks, inconveniences, and discomforts (e.g. anonymous data collection, presence of trained personnel who can respond to emergencies, etc.)?
Click or tap here to enter text.
- e. Deceptive techniques (e.g. giving false feedback about performance, staging an event or situation, concealing the purpose of the study, etc.)? **A debriefing statement is required; see the handout on deception and the debriefing process.**
☒ No
☐ If Yes:
How will subjects be misled (i.e. what information will be withheld or what false information will be provided)?
Describe when and how this deception will be revealed to subjects and provide a copy of the oral or written debriefing statement.
Click or tap here to enter text.
What precautions will be taken to minimize or prevent potential risks, inconveniences, and discomforts (e.g. anonymous data collection, presence of trained personnel who can respond to emergencies, etc.)?
Click or tap here to enter text.

18. All projects require consent, which form(s) will be used?

Yes	N/A	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Implied Consent: a cover letter/page accompanying a confidential/anonymous survey to adults
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Informed Consent: a signature form for a study with adult subjects
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Parental/Guardian Consent: a signature form for a study with subjects under the age of 18
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>Child Assent: a signature form for a study with subjects who are between the ages of 8 and 18.</p> <p>If study includes subjects under the age of 18, explain the procedures that will be used to obtain parental/guardian and child/minor assent (when applicable):</p> <p>Students who are interested in participating in the study who are under the age of 18 will be asked to collect a parental/guardian consent form and a child assent form instead of an informed consent form. These students will be told that they have one week to both provide their guardians with the form and obtain their guardians' signatures.</p>

19. IRB Protocol Submission Checklist

a. Required:
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Signed IRB Protocol
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Copies of recruitment materials
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Copies of data collection instrument(s) and/or interview guide(s)
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Consent form(s)
b. Required if applicable
<input type="checkbox"/> Signed support letter for participant recruitment
<input type="checkbox"/> Debriefing statement or handouts
c. Submit completed IRB protocol with all attachments to Research & Sponsored Programs (AS 210) or scan packet to ResearchNow@stcloudstate.edu

Recruitment Script

Let's Talk: A Study of Dialogic Feedback in a First-Year Composition Classroom Recruitment Script

I would like to invite you to participate in a research study I will be conducting in our ENGL 191 class as part of my graduate thesis. The 8-week research study I am going to conduct is called "Let's Talk: A Study of Dialogic Feedback in a First-Year Composition Classroom." In the study, I am going to look at how you, as first-year composition students, engage with and react to a dialogic feedback experience. When I talk about dialogic feedback, I'm talking about a process in which you will draft an essay for class, and then, you and I will have a conversation about your writing to help you revise your work and produce a more complete second draft. This process, where we have a conversation about your writing, is different than other forms of instructor feedback, where the instructor only writes comments on her students' essays and does not have a conversation—or a dialogue—with the students about their writings. Current research shows that dialogic feedback better supports student learning and better supports students through the drafting process. The purpose of this study is to investigate what instructors and students discuss in these conversations and to observe how students react to the overall process.

Everyone in this room will get to experience a dialogic feedback process as part of our normal ENGL 191 curriculum. In this process, you will draft an essay and write down any questions or comments you have about your draft. I will read and respond to your draft and your questions. We will do this for two drafts, and afterwards, you will complete a reflection on the experience.

If you choose to participate in the study, the work you do as part of this process will be analyzed by me and will become part of my study. Because this study is my graduate thesis, the study will be published on St. Cloud State University's Repository. I will keep all of writing that I analyze confidential. Your name will not be published anywhere in the study. If at any point you decide you do not want to participate in the study, you can tell me, and I will remove your work from the study. Removing yourself from the study will not affect your grade in ENGL 191 or your ability to participate in class.

Whether you choose to participate in the study or not, your decision will have no affect your grade in ENGL 191 or your ability to participate in class. Your decision will not affect how I interact with you in ENGL 191, and your decision will not affect your standing at St. Cloud State.

I am going to pass around two different consent forms now. One form is for people who are over 18 years old. If you are over 18, you can take the "Consent to Participate" form. If you take this form, you can read the form and decided whether you want to consent to participate in the study by signing or not signing the form. The other form is for people who are not over 18 years old. If you are not over 18, you can take the "Parental/Guardian Consent Form" and the "Child Assent Form." If you take that form, you will need to have your parents read about this study and consent to your participation by signing the "Parental/Guardian Consent Form." You will also need to sign the "Child Assent Form."

If you decide not to participate or if your parent/guardian decides you should not participate, please recycle the form. However, if you do decide to participate, please return this form within one week. In an effort to ensure fairness through the grading process, my faculty mentor, Dr. Dando, will visit our class and collect these forms on my behalf. He will keep the forms in his locked office until the assignments associated with this study have been graded and the grades have been posted to the D2L gradebook. Only after the assignments have been graded will I take possession of the consent forms and become aware of who has consented to participate in the study. To ensure the validity of this process, please do not tell me whether you decide to participate in the study until after the assignment grades are posted.

If you or your parent/guardian have any questions for me later, feel free to talk to me in person during my office hours or to send me an email at jmsaunders@stcloudstate.edu. This script is also posted to our D2L Announcements page for further reference.

Informed Consent Forms

Adult Consent Form

Let's Talk: A Study of Dialogic Feedback in a First-Year Composition Classroom Consent to Participate

You are invited to participate in a research study about dialogic feedback. Dialogic feedback refers to a process where writing instructors and writing students engage in a series of interactive discussions about the student's writing and the student's revision process. Current research indicates that dialogic feedback better supports student writers and better involves student writers in the composition process. The purpose of this study is to investigate what concepts students and instructors discuss in these conversations and to observe how students react to the overall process.

If you agree to be part of the research study, you will be asked to allow me to analyze the work you produce throughout the process of this study. The work produced in this time will include multiple drafts, our written conversations about your drafts, and two reflection essays. ~~All~~ of these assignments are part of our regular ENGL 191: Introduction to Rhetorical and Analytical Writing curriculum, and you will be asked to produce this graded work in ENGL 191 whether you decide to participate in this study or not. Participation in this study merely indicates that you consent to allowing your work to be further analyzed as part of this study. Your decision of whether to participate in this study will not affect your grades in ENGL 191 or your ability to participate in class.

Benefits of the research include contributing knowledge to the field of composition studies about how first-year composition students engage with and react to a dialogic feedback experience.

Risks and discomforts are not anticipated in this study.

Data collected will remain confidential. All confidential data will be presented in either group form or with no more than two demographic descriptors presented together at one time. Your name will be removed from all writings that you complete as part of this study and replaced with a number (i.e. Student 10).

Participating in this study is completely voluntary. Your decision ~~whether or not~~ to participate will not affect your current or future relations with St. Cloud State University, or the researcher. If you decide to participate, you are free to withdraw at any time without penalty.

If you have questions about this research study, you may contact Jenna Saunders, jmsaunders@stcloudstate.edu or Dr. Dando, mbdando@stcloudstate.edu. Results of the study can be requested from the researcher or accessed through the St. Cloud State University Repository.

Your signature indicates that you are at least 18 years of age, you have read the information provided above, and you have consent to participate.

Name (Printed)

Signature

Date

Parental / Guardian Consent Form

Let's Talk: A Study of Dialogic Feedback in a First-Year Composition Classroom **Parental/Guardian Consent Form**

My name is Jenna Saunders, and I am your child's instructor for ENGL 191: Introduction to Rhetorical and Analytical Writing, section 10. This form is to ask your permission to allow your child to participate in a study being conducted for my master's degree at St. Cloud State University. Two consent forms—one for you, the parents/guardians, and the other for your child—are included with this memo. Both of these forms must be signed and returned prior to the start of the study should you choose to allow your child to participate.

Your child is invited to participate in a research study about dialogic feedback. Dialogic feedback refers to a process where writing instructors and writing students engage in a series of interactive discussions about the student's writing and the student's revision process. Current research indicates that dialogic feedback better supports student writers and better involves student writers in the composition process. The purpose of this study is to investigate what concepts students and instructors discuss in these conversations and to observe how students react to the overall process.

If you agree to be part of the research study, your child will be asked to allow me to analyze the work they produce throughout the course of the study. The work produced in this time will include multiple essay drafts, written conversations between your student and I about these drafts, and two reflection essays. All of these assignments are part of our regular ENGL 191 curriculum, and your child will be asked to produce this graded work whether they decide to participate in this study or not. Participation in this study merely indicates that you and your child consent to allowing your child's work to be further analyzed as part of this study. Your decision of whether to allow your child to participate in this study will not affect their grades in ENGL 191 or their ability to participate in class.

Benefits of the research include contributing knowledge to the field of composition studies about how first-year composition students engage with and react to a dialogic feedback experience.

Risks and discomforts are not anticipated in this study.

Data collected will remain confidential. All confidential data will be presented in either group form or with no more than two demographic descriptors presented together at one time. Your child's name will be removed from all writing that they complete as part of this study and replaced with a number (i.e. Student 10).

Participating in this study is completely voluntary. You and/or your child can withdraw at any time without penalty. The decision whether or not to participate will not affect your or your child's current or future relations with St. Cloud State University, or the researcher.

If you or your child have questions about this research study, please contact Jenna Saunders at jmsaunders@stcloudstate.edu and Dr. Dando, mbdando@stcloudstate.edu. Results of the study can be requested from the researcher or accessed through the St. Cloud State University Repository.

Your signature indicates that you and your child have read the information provided here and have decided to participate. You or your child may withdraw from the study at any time without penalty after signing this form.

Student Name (Printed)

Parent(s')/Guardian(s') Name (Printed)

Parent(s')/Guardian(s') Signature

Date

Child Assent Form

Let's Talk: A Study of Dialogic Feedback in a First-Year Composition Classroom Child Assent Form

You are invited to participate in a research study. This research study will happen in your ENGL 191: Introduction to Rhetorical and Analytical Writing class, and it is about dialogic feedback. Dialogic feedback is a process where teachers and students have conversations about the student's writing and the student's revision process. Dialogic feedback is supposed to better support students in their writing and to better involve students in the writing process. The purpose of this study is to explore what students and teachers talk about in these conversations and to explore how students react to the process.

If you agree to be part of the research study, you will be asked to allow me to examine the work you produce throughout the study. This work includes multiple essay drafts, written conversations between you and I about your writing, and two reflection essays. **All** of this work is part of our normal ENGL 191 class, and you will be instructed to complete this graded work in ENGL 191 whether you decide to participate in this study or not. If you choose to participate in this study, you are allowing me to further examine your work for my study. Your decision of whether to participate in the study will not affect your grades in ENGL 191 or your ability to participate in the class. Your decision of whether to participate will not affect our interactions in class or your standing as a student in ENGL 191.

Benefits of the research include contributing knowledge to the field of composition studies about how first-year composition students engage with and react to a dialogic feedback experience.

Risks and discomforts are not anticipated in this study.

Throughout the study and in the final paper your name and information will be kept private and will not be shared.

If during the study you decide that you do not want to continue to be a part of the study, please tell Jenna Saunders or your parents. Your decision to stop being in the study will not be held against you and will not cause problems for you or your family.

If you have questions about this research study, you may Jenna Saunders at jmsaunders@stcloudstate.edu and Dr. Dando, mbdando@stcloudstate.edu. Results of the study can be requested from the researcher or accessed through the St. Cloud State University Repository.

When you print and sign your name below, it means you understand this information and have agreed to be a part of the study.

Name (Printed)

Signature

Date

Collection Instruments

Unit One: Essay One Assignment Sheet

Unit 1: Jimmy Santiago Baca's Causal Argument Essay

IMPORTANT DATES:

First Draft DUE: Monday, February 3rd at 9am

My Comments RETURNED: Wednesday, February 5th

Final Draft DUE: Monday, February 10th at 9am

Reflection DUE: Wednesday, February 12th at 11:59pm (*see Reflection One assignment sheet*)

Format: Two *full* pages, MLA style consistently followed, including a separate "Works Cited" page, headers and page numbers, in-text citations.

Typography: 12-point Times New Roman, double-spaced, 1" square margins, no double spaces after periods, no extra spacing after paragraphs.

Sources: You will cite from *A Place to Stand* and "Coming into Language."

Grading: This assignment is worth **50 points**

This will be a causal argument about the documentary *A Place to Stand* and Jimmy Santiago Baca's essay "Coming into Language." You will argue that specific events led to literacy in Baca's life or that literacy led to specific events.

You will need to contextualize Baca's life for the reader, assume they do not know who Baca is. What events in Baca's childhood prevented him from being literate as a child/young adult? What specific events changed this for Baca? You will also need to define what you mean by literacy.

The causal argument will be laid out as:

Because of 1, 2, and 3, Baca becomes (A) literate

OR

Because of (A) literacy, Baca has 1, 2, and 3

OR

Because of 1, 2, and 3, Baca was (A) illiterate

OR

Because of (A) his illiteracy, Baca had/did not have 1, 2, 3

For example: *Because of (1) Baca's unstable family life, (2) growing up "on the run", and (3) the prison denying him an education, Baca (A) was illiterate* OR *Because of literacy (A), Baca could (1) develop a relationship with Harry Gould, (2) teach other inmates how to read and write, and (3) become a world-renowned poet.*

You will need to focus on the impact literacy or illiteracy had in Baca's life. This kind of argument is typically harder to make because it is easy to turn it into a narration of Baca's life, so focus on showing how 1, 2, 3 specifically were the causes or effects.

Refer to *Read, Reason, Write* and our other in-class activities to compose your argument.

Unit One: Essay One Reflection

Unit 1: Reflection One

This reflection is in response to Unit One: Essay One- Jimmy Santiago Baca's Causal Argument Essay.

IMPORTANT DATES:

Reflection DUE: Wednesday, February 12th at 11:59pm

Format: 300-500 words. This reflection is structured as a letter from you to me. The writing should be easy to read and clear (still including a paragraph structure), but you don't have to be overly concerned with organization or style.

Grading: This assignment is worth 20 points. I will be grading your letter mainly on content.

In this reflective letter, you have the opportunity to reflect on your writing process. The goals of this assignment are twofold:

First, I hope that it engages you in a deliberate and reflective writing practice, in which you consider deeply the goals and choices, along with the constraints and limitations, of your writing.

Second, the letter helps me get a sense of your writing process, as I am not always able to fully recognize your goals and the choices you made in relation to those goals.

Please answer the following questions. Refer to your first draft, my commentary, and your final draft, if helpful:

Writing Process: Your writing process includes everything you did in relation to this essay from the time you read the assignment sheet to the time you submitted your final draft. This includes the moments that you "put pen to paper" to produce content and the moments that you wrestled with your argument internally.

- Explain your writing process to me.
- Do you feel that your writing improved between your first and final draft? If so, in what ways. Please be specific. And if not, why not? Please be specific.

Feedback: On your draft, I provided specific comments to point you towards writing concerns I considered important. Here, please explain how you incorporated my comments into the writing of your second paper.

- Which comments were most helpful? Why? Please identify one specific comment that you found useful.
- Which comments were least helpful? Why? Please identify one specific comment that did not help you.
- Do you have any questions about my comments that I did not address?

Unit One: Essay Two Assignment Sheet

Unit 1: Personal Causal Argument Essay

IMPORTANT DATES:

First Draft DUE: Monday, February 17th at 9am

Second Draft DUE: Monday, February 24th at 9am

Final Draft DUE: Monday, March 2nd at 9am

Reflection DUE: Wednesday, March 4th at 11:59pm (*see Reflection Two assignment sheet*)

Format: 3-4 *full* pages, MLA style consistently followed, including a separate "Works Cited" page, headers and page numbers, in-text citations.

Typography: 12-point Times New Roman, double-spaced, 1" square margins, no double spaces after periods, no extra spacing after paragraphs.

Grading: This assignment is worth **100 points**

Basic Overview

The causal argument will be laid out as:

Because of 1, 2, and 3, I am/have A OR

Because of A, I have 1, 2, and 3.

In both cases, A should be reading, writing, talking, public speaking, or whatever part of language you choose.

For example: *Because of (1) my interest in how language shapes our lives, (2) my experience as a tutor, and (3) my skill as a writer, I am (A) going to graduate school to become a writing teacher* OR *Because I am (A) a writer, I became (1) Reading Corps tutor, (2) I gained the skill of public speaking, and (3) became an English 191 instructor at St. Cloud State University.*

You will need to focus on the impact language has in your life. Since we are surrounded by language every day, you can draw from many different life experiences. This kind of argument is typically harder to make because it is easy to turn it into a narration of your life, so focus on showing how 1, 2, 3 were the cause or effects.

You must connect your paper to two of our four readings: Swales: "The Concept of Discourse Community: Some Recent Personal History;" Baca: "Coming into Language;" Pratt: "Arts of the Contact Zone;" and Crowley and Redman: "Why Teach Writing?" Refer to *Read, Reason, Write* and our other in-class activities to compose your argument.

First Draft: Your first draft should be a completed work (not an outline). This means that you will need to have 3-4 sentences written for *each section* of your paper (introduction, cause/effect one, conclusion, etc.). This includes evidence supporting your argument.

Second Draft: Your second draft should show signs that you have further considered your causal argument and that you have worked to refine the writing in your first draft (both *what* you wrote and *how* you wrote it). Refer to our conversations about your writing for direction. Second drafts should have two of our four readings incorporated as evidence.

Final Draft: Your final paper is not just a polished version of the first draft. You will be revising and further explaining why your evidence is of value. Carefully edit and proofread the revised final version prior to submission. Revision attempts are noted during the grading process. Revised papers with attention to first/second draft conversations and evidence of proof reading will receive higher grades than papers that are not revised. Happy writing!

****Final drafts that are nearly identical to first/second drafts or first/second drafts submitted as final drafts will receive a zero.**

Unit One: Essay Two Dialogic Feedback

Unit 1: Dialogic Feedback for Essay Two

This feedback process pairs with Unit One: Essay Two- Personal Causal Argument Essay.

IMPORTANT DATES:

Start dialogue one BY: Monday, February 17th at 11:59pm

Continue dialogue one BY: Friday, February 20th at 11:59pm

Start dialogue two BY: Monday, February 24th at 11:59pm

Continue dialogue two BY: Friday, February 28th at 11:59pm

Format: We will use Microsoft Word's Comments feature to have our discussion. Your writing in our conversations does not need to be concerned with grammar and mechanics.

Grading: Our conversations in the dialogic feedback process are *not* graded. However, since you receive class time to compose your contributions to the conversation and since any writing not completed in class is considered homework, this process is worth participation points.

Understanding Dialogic Feedback

Dialogic feedback is when an instructor and a student engage in a series of interactions in which meanings are shared and negotiated and expectations are clarified.

Dialogue and *dialogic* are slightly different terms. While *dialogue* refers to any conversation, *dialogic* refers to conversations in which meanings are *intentionally* created and understood. Because of this difference, not all conversations are dialogic. Only conversations where people are engaging in purposeful meaning-making with others are dialogic.

In our class, you and I will have conversations about your writing in Unit One: Essay Two. The purpose of our conversation is to refine your ideas about your essay and your writing in your essay *together*.

Engaging in Dialogic Feedback

In order for us to engage in a successful dialogic experience, I have set up the following structure:

You will *start* our conversation by composing **three** comments and/or questions on your first draft using Word's Comments feature. These comments and/or questions should be focused on aspects of your writing that you want to discuss with me. You can point to areas of your draft that you feel are weak or underdeveloped, or you can point to areas of your draft that you feel are strong where you might want confirmation of your writing strengths.

I will *join* our conversation by responding to your comments and/or questions on your first draft. I will likely ask you questions in return, as well as offer advice and resources.

You will *continue* our conversation by responding to my questions again before Friday at midnight. I encourage you to continue our conversation on an updated draft. Feel free to compose other comments and/or questions.

I will *respond* to you before your next draft is due on Monday.

We will *repeat* this process for your second draft.

Unit One: Essay Two Reflection

Unit 1: Reflection Two

This reflection is in response to Unit One: Essay Two- Personal Causal Argument Essay.

IMPORTANT DATES:

Reflection DUE: Wednesday, March 4th at 11:59pm

Format: 500-750 words. This reflection is structured as a letter from you to me. The writing should be easy to read and clear (still including a paragraph structure), but you don't have to be overly concerned with organization or style.

Grading: This assignment is worth 30 points. I will be grading your letter mainly on content.

In this reflective letter, you have the opportunity to reflect on both your writing process. The goals of this assignment are twofold:

First, I hope that it engages you in a deliberate and reflective writing practice, in which you consider deeply the goals and choices, along with the constraints and limitations, of your writing.

Second, the letter helps me get a sense of your writing process, as I am not always able to fully recognize your goals and the choices you made in relation to those goals.

Please answer the following questions. Refer to your Essay One Reflection, your drafts, and our conversations, if helpful.

Writing Process: Your writing process includes everything you did in relation to this essay from the time you read the assignment sheet to the time you submitted your final draft. This includes the moments that you “put pen to paper” and produced content and the moments that you wrestled with your argument internally.

- Explain your writing process to me.
- Compare Essay One and Essay Two: Do you feel that your writing improved between Essay One and Essay Two? If so, in what ways. Please be specific. And if not, why not? Please be specific.
 - *Note:* Please go beyond simply telling me the obvious—you completed a third draft in Essay Two and our feedback process was different—by exploring how these differences have influenced the ways in which you approach writing.

Feedback: We engaged in dialogic feedback on both your first and second draft. Here, please explain how you incorporated our conversations into the writing of your essay.

- What in our conversations was most helpful? Why? Please be specific.
- What in our conversations was least helpful? Why? Please be specific.
- Compare Essay One and Essay Two: Was the feedback process in Essay Two (the dialogic feedback process) more helpful, less helpful, or equally helpful to the feedback process in Essay One? Why?
- Do you have any questions about my comments that I did not address?

Reaction: The following questions are concerned with how you felt about dialogic feedback. Please be honest. All reactions are valid, and your honest answer will always be the “right” answer.

- Have you experienced anything like the dialogic feedback process before? If so, did that experience prepare you to engage in dialogic feedback? If not, did you feel prepared for our conversations?
- How did you feel about your writing before the dialogic feedback process? During the process? After the process was complete?
- How did dialogic feedback make you feel as you wrote the essay? Did it make you feel nervous? Anxious? Comfortable? Supported? Etc.