The Impact of Reading Annotation on Text-Evidence Incorporation

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Abstract

This research paper is focused on a study in which the effects of reading annotation on a tenth-grade students' ability to use and incorporate text-evidence was investigated. The study used convenience sampling of one standard tenth grade English class. In order to investigate the effects of reading annotation on a student's usage and incorporation of text-evidence, the study used a pre-test, post-test model for data collection using a practice English Ten PARCC examination to collect student data. The study took place over a two-week period and during that time, students learned how to determine what the writing prompt is asking, how to annotate correctly, and how to use the annotations to find and incorporate text-evidence into a written response effectively. At the conclusion of the study, it was determined that the pre-test score (Mean = 2.10, SD = 1.24) differed significantly from the post-test score (Mean = 2.96, SD = 1.40) [$t(29) = .612$, $p<.05$]. The results revealed students correctly identified 40% of the items on the pre-test but significantly improved to 59% on the post. Therefore, reading annotation does have a significant impact on a student's ability to use and incorporate text-evidence into their writing.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Overview

Writing is a foundational skill in education. It is one that students must improve on as they complete various grade levels. As the grade levels rise, the expectations for student writing becomes greater, influenced by standardized testing pressures and Common Core State Standards. By the time a student reaches tenth grade, the expectation is that the students already have a solid writing foundation that the teacher can simply build upon throughout the course of the year. However, that is rarely the case. In fact, many students who enter tenth grade are not equipped with the necessary writing skills that are needed to not only pass the grade and be successful beyond tenth grade and also to pass the required English 10 PARCC Assessment.

In high school, a student's ability to write well is a critical skill that will help them in college or in the general work force. If a student is unable to produce quality writing, it could inhibit them from getting into a particular college or even being hired for a job. One of the foundational skills of writing that a student must master before leaving tenth grade or high school in general is being able to successfully incorporate text evidence to back up claims made in their writing. Through this study, students will gain the skills to not only improve their writing ability, but also their reading. Writing and reading are skills that go together, a student cannot be successful at one without the other. Therefore, by teaching students how to annotate a text prior to completing a written assignment it improves their critical thinking and writing skills. This

ultimately sets the student up for success on any writing prompt, including those on the PARCC examination.

As a current English ten teacher, the researcher became interested in this problem after witnessing English ten students struggle with writing and make little to no improvements over the course of the school year. With the PARCC test looming over the heads of students and the researcher, it became clear that strategies needed to be put into place to improve student achievement on the writing portion of the PARCC examination. Therefore, the researcher decided to implement a reading strategy that would help students be able to grapple with a given text more efficiently, answer the provided writing prompt fully with the incorporation of text-evidence to support student claims, and overall improve the scores on the writing portion of the English Ten PARCC examination.

Statement of the Problem

Does reading annotation improve the usage and incorporation of text-evidence in the writing of tenth grade students?

Hypothesis

The null hypothesis is that reading annotation does not have an effect on the usage and incorporation of text-evidence in the writing of tenth grade students.

Operational Definitions

The independent variable in this study is the implementation of the ***reading annotation strategy*** that requires students to highlight specific details in the text and make a note about each one. The reading annotation strategy was implemented as a whole class, by first being modeled

by the researcher and then allowing students to complete the rest of the task independently. Students used the reading annotation strategy on all texts provided to them by the researcher. After each text was read and annotated, students were provided a writing prompt, which instructed them to go back into the annotated text and pull out specific textual evidence from the reading to use for the provided writing prompt. The dependent variable in this study is ***English student achievement***. This was operationalized using an English 10 PARCC examination created by the testing company Pearson as the instrument. Student achievement will be measured using a Common Core State Standards Rubric for grades nine to ten.

<center>**CHAPTER II**</center>

<center>**REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE**</center>

<center>**Overview**</center>

This literature review explores the topic of improving tenth graders integration of text-evidence to support claims. In Maryland, high school students are required to pass the Maryland Comprehensive Assessment Program (MCAP) for tenth grade English. This assessment aligns with current Common Core State Standards with its primary focus being on reading and writing. One standard that students are required to have mastery of is their ability to effectively incorporate text evidence into their writing to support claims. This standard is one with which students, regardless of grade level, struggle which makes it a critical skill for high school students to master.

This literature review is organized into sections. Section one introduces the issue. Section two discusses factors that impact the issue. Section three outlines the consequences of the issue. Section four discusses studies and interventions which have tried to address the issue. Finally, section five concludes the literature review and discusses potential learning opportunities that this study will provide to advance students' ability to effectively incorporate text evidence to support claims.

<center>**Introduction to the Issue**</center>

Effectively incorporating text evidence to support claims is a skill with which tenth graders struggle. There are various reasons for this problem, the first being that "text-based evidence" is one that has not been clearly defined for either students or teachers alike. If the goal

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is to improve students writing through the incorporation of text evidence, defining the term "text evidence" is clearly imperative.

On the surface, the simple and implied definition of this term is simply, evidence that is taken from a given text. However, the definition and concept of text-based evidence goes beyond the simplicity of the above definition. Instead, text-based evidence is more accurately defined as "perceived merit and reasonableness of the claims and proofs" presented in a text rather than the "emotions that the writing evokes in the audience" (Correnti, Matsumura, Hamilton & Wang, 2012). Text-based evidence does mention the need for evidence to be taken from the text to support claims. However, the definition also emphasizes the fact that when students incorporate text-evidence into their writing, it not only comes directly from the text and is discussed in an analytical way, but that it is also absent of any audience or writer emotion. A general lack of understanding of what text-based evidence truly is, only begins to bring the issue of the student's inability to effectively incorporate evidence to the surface.

In addition to the lack of knowledge that teachers and students have about the definition of text-based evidence, which contributes to the overarching problem, other reasons why student struggle with writing is the fact that they are rarely asked to write in ways that show a higher level of thinking (Matsumura, Correnti, & Wang, 2015). This means that students are not being asked to analyze or evaluate texts in a way that shows any level of critical thinking. Instead, students are typically required to essentially summarize what is stated in the text without providing any original thought or ideas.

For years, students have been requested to write in a way that focuses more on summary and less on analytical or critical thinking. As a result, research suggests that students are unable to think critically, pull evidence from a text that not only proves the claims that are made in the

text, but gives students the ability to analyze and evaluate the evidence, and discuss at length how and why the evidence they chose proves their original claim ((Matsumura et al., 2015).

In addition, the amount of writing that students are doing in class is slowly declining. On average, students spent twenty-five minutes of class time writing, and the most common writing activities in which students engaged in involved little to no opportunity to think analytically or produce an extended response (Matsumura et al., 2015). The decline in the opportunities that students are receiving to write in an analytical way is one reason for their lack of ability to write and support claims with meaningful text-based evidence. Therefore, due to the lack of writing opportunities provided to students as well as the absence of critical thinking required to complete the scarce writing assignments, students are being deprived of the necessary opportunities to develop the skills needed to compose meaningful text-evidence based analytical style writing.

As a result of the decline in writing opportunities provided to students as well as the absence of text-based evidence used in the writing completed in the classroom, The Common Core State Standards were issued. "Common Core State Standards emphasize writing, especially students' ability to write analytically in response to both fiction and nonfiction (informational) texts" (Matsumura et al., 2015, p.418). The goal of the standards ultimately being, to put students on track to college and career readiness by ensuring they are able to

> Write extended essays in which they draw on multiple text sources to support analysis
> and opinion. Students must reason and construct knowledge from texts in several
> different ways, including comparing themes across texts, analyzing conflicting points of
> view, and showing how authors use reasons and evidence to support a particular
> viewpoint. The Standards also emphasize the importance of students stating clear claims
> and supporting assertions with appropriate text- based reasons and information.

The mandated Common Core State Standards was supposed help combat the issues that teachers and students faced when it came to analytical text-evidence based writing. However, despite the efforts made by the inclusion of the standards, the issue of students effectively incorporating text-based evidence into writing still exists.

Factors that Impact Students Effectively Incorporating Text-Based Evidence into Writing

The incorporation of the Common Core State Standards is just one factor that influences efforts to improve tenth-grade students' ability to effectively incorporate text-evidence to support claims. In fact, there are four additional factors that influence a student's mastery of this skill. Those factors include diagnostic writing, standardized testing, writing opportunities provided to students, and lastly, how teachers teach writing.

Diagnostic Writing

When a teacher begins the process of working on a student's writing, the very first task that should be assigned is a diagnostic writing assessment. A diagnostic writing assessment is a writing assignment that students complete with little to no help from the teacher. This assignment should be designed to give teachers an understanding of the writing ability of the students in their classroom and its results ultimately be used to drive instruction. If teachers do not use a diagnostic assessment prior to writing instruction it will be difficult to provide the individualized experiences that writing instruction demands. The results of diagnostic testing should not be the only basis for formulating objectives, but should also be used for selecting and organizing instructional strategies and learning activities. The diagnostic assessment will ultimately provide direction to the incorporation and evaluation of learning outcomes (Goggin, 1980).

Therefore, in order to truly begin the process of improving student's ability to incorporate text-evidence to support claims, teachers need to understand where to begin, which is why diagnostic writing is so critical to success in the process. As noted, the diagnostic writing results should drive teacher instruction. Teachers should use the diagnostic assessment when grouping students, so that students who have the same writing difficulties will be in the same group, allowing the teacher to cater writing instruction to the individual need of the student or set of students. This can result in students experiencing more success with writing overall. .

Standardized Testing

The next factor that influences the writing instruction that students receive is standardized testing. Even after teachers give a diagnostic assessment and begin the process of teaching writing, instruction may tend to cater to ensuring that students pass various standardized tests. In the case of tenth grade, as stated prior, students must pass the MCAP examination to graduate high school. This alone puts tremendous pressure on teachers to teach writing so that it ensures that students pass the examination. One of major ways that standardized testing has influenced writing instruction is its overall affect on teacher priorities.

> Researchers found that "competing priorities impact teaching in secondary settings; balancing daily instruction with preparation for state or district tests is challenging. In fact, sixty-six percent of high school teachers felt that state examinations considerably shaped their curriculum. Essentially, many educators are greatly impacted by the influence of standardized testing: teaching to the test is becoming more prevalent" (Sundeen, 2015).

As a result of standardized testing, teachers have changed the way they teach curriculum in order to meet the demands set by a test. Therefore, standardized testing has changed the type of writing that is done in the classroom, in ways that may not support better incorporation of text-based evidence into writing. Standardized testing has caused many teachers to switch their focus to timed, on-demand writing in their classrooms, rather than providing ample time for planning, drafting and revision of written work. Students are expected to generate full process essays in a single class period (Sundeen, 2015). Unfortunately, with the focus so much on teaching to the test and the rapid pace that comes with it, students are falling behind in their writing ability. Teachers are unable to spend the time needed to effectively teach analytical writing, which involves the incorporation of text evidence to support claims even though this is, an essential skill to be considered a proficient writer. However, while standardized testing does play a major role in the issue, another factor is the writing opportunities that are provided to students in the classroom.

Writing Opportunities

The writing opportunities that are provided to students in the classroom is another major factor that impacts their ability to effectively incorporate text-evidence in their writing to support claims. When a teacher makes the choice to assign a text-based writing task to a student, one of the last things that tends to come to mind is the quality of the assignment (Matsumura et al., 2015). Right now, teachers are so focused on ensuring the assigned task meets and aligns with The Common Core State Standards that the overall quality of the writing assignment plays a secondary role. When determining the quality of a writing assignment, the teacher analyzes the cognitive demand of the text that students are being asked to write about. When a text has a high cognitive demand, it "guides students to analyze or interpret a text (i.e., engage with the

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underlying meanings or nuances) and develop and support their assertions using evidence from the text" (Matsumura et al., 2015, p.422). If the text that is being used for the analysis lacks cognitive demand, it can ultimately reduce the challenge or benefit of the writing that is produced by the students. This is further proven by research that determined that the "cognitive demand of teachers' assignments predicted multiple features of students' writing performance, including their ability to reason analytically about texts, use evidence to support their claims, and organize their writing" (Matsumura et al., 2015, p.423). For this reason, it is critical, that teachers provide students texts to write about that are cognitively demanding, in order to ensure that the writing performance done by students meets the standards described by Common Core as prepares them for the standardized tests that loom over the heads of both teachers and students alike.

Teaching Methods

The final factor the impacts a student's ability to use text-evidence to support claims made in writing is how teachers actually teach writing. Thus far, the importance of diagnostic writing, the influence of standardized testing on teacher priorities, and the cognitive demand that teachers need to provide to students to ensure critical thinking and analytical writing, have all been discussed. The final aspect being, how a teacher goes about ensuring that those three above factors are all considered and accounted for in actual instruction.

Scaffolding

The simple answer is scaffolding (Benko, 2012). The term scaffolding is defined as a variety of instructional techniques used to move students progressively toward stronger understanding and, ultimately, greater independence in the learning process. Currently in education, scaffolding includes internalization by students which involves students taking control of their learning and no longer needing scaffolding supports. In this type of scaffolding (internalization) teachers gradually release responsibility to students. In this model, teachers begin with a high degree of responsibility in performing a task and then over time transfer that responsibility to students. The gradual release of responsibility is a critical aspect of scaffolding. In order to ensure that students effectively incorporate text-evidence to support claims, teachers need to scaffold instruction so that students compose responses correctly. When teachers begin the process of scaffolding, the first thing that must be considered is task selection. As it has been stated prior, task selection is essential to the writing that students ultimately produce. During task selection, teachers need to make sure that it is appropriately challenging for students; otherwise, scaffolding is not necessary.

Next, teachers need to consider their interactions with students during instruction and how that will influence students' writing. During instruction, "teachers can structure tasks in such a way that students learn skills and strategies that apply both to the task they are completing and to tasks they might encounter later" (Benko, 2012, p. 291). The ways that teachers structure instruction during the writing process can include a reduction a freedom, in which teachers have students focus on and perfect a section of a piece of writing. The next part of scaffolding is called direction maintenance, which focuses on the feedback that teachers provide to students to help them continue to make progress. In addition, teachers can mark critical features in the task

to help students understand what is required of them. Finally, teachers can model or demonstrate a piece of the writing task to support students writing. The final part of scaffolding focuses on teachers' disposition as an important part of support students writing development. Teachers can support students by creating a caring classroom environment that makes students feel as though he or she is generally interested in the students writing. This caring and encouraging attitude toward students and their writing might help manage student frustration. Through the use of scaffolding, teachers can cater instruction to meet the writing needs of students, and in the case of this problem, help them effectively incorporate text-evidence to support claims.

All of the four interactions combined, set the students up for being successful at completing a writing task and has become essential for students to meet the Common Core expectations of critical text-based analytical writing.

To summarize, factors such as diagnostic writing, standardized testing, writing opportunities provided to students, and how teachers teach writing all influence students' ability to effectively incorporate text-based evidence in their writing. Ultimately, the factors that affect the problem, lead to the consequences of the problem if they are not adequately addressed.

Consequences of the Issue

Tenth-grade student's inability to effectively incorporate text-evidence to support claims can lead to a multitude of issues as they progress through high school and onto college. The first and most immediate consequence is the inability to pass the MCAP assessment and be considered college and career ready. As stated previously, the MCAP examination is one that all tenth-grade students must pass to graduate high school. The examination currently aligns with the Common Core standards (one of the standards requiring students to be able to effectively

incorporate text evidence to support claims) for reading and writing. Right now, students must achieve a 725 score to pass the exam and be considered College and Career Ready by the state of Maryland (Maryland Public Schools, n.d. & English Language Arts Standards " Writing " Grade 9-10). However, passing an exam is just one small consequence in the array of consequences that will follow if a student does not meet the expectations set by the Common State Core Standards and the state of Maryland. If a student chooses to pursue a higher level of education after high school, it is important and critical that they have an understanding of basic writing concepts. This would include their ability to effectively incorporate text-evidence to support claims. While teachers should not necessarily teach to the test, the content presented in classrooms during a student's secondary years, should directly align with the standards set by the state of Maryland, students become College and Career ready.

Studies and Interventions That Have Tried to Address the Issue

In order to avoid the potential consequences that would occur if a student is unable to effectively incorporate text evidence in his or her writing, several interventions have been studied to help teachers and students successfully complete this task. Some of the interventions and studies that been done include the CASE intervention, IDOL mnemonic device, Writers' Workshops, and Self-Regulated Strategy Development intervention, all of which are designed to help students effectively incorporate text-evidence to support claims.

CASE

The CASE strategy is designed to help students improve the use of text-evidence in writing. The major focus of this intervention strategy is to help students understand the features of good evidence use. Researchers for this intervention claim that Common Core aligned

standardized tests and most writing rubrics provide vague guidance regarding what relevant evidence to use in a given writing assignment. One remedy is the CASE strategy.

The criteria for this strategy are based on both professional standards and research that identified features of successful text-based writing (Wang, Matsumura & Correnti, 2017). The strategy is broken down into parts with, each letter of the word CASE standing for a different part of the required criteria. To begin, C stands for complete: support each claim with multiple examples. For the first part, researchers claim that evidence is complete when students use a sufficient amount of evidence to support each claim. By providing multiple examples from different parts of a text, it bolsters an argument by showing a more complete pattern of evidence. A stands for accurate: choosing the best evidence to support a claim. "Providing accurate evidence, as in evidence that directly relates to and supports a claim, is crucial. Evidence that is unrelated to the point students are making weakens their argument and may even confuse the reader" (Wang et al., 2017 p. 481). The S in CASE stands for specific: provide detailed evidence to make a point. "Evidence that is specific points to particular incidents or pieces of information. Specific references include direct quotations and precise descriptions or paraphrases of text ideas. Specific evidence helps students illustrate arguments or ideas concretely; meanwhile, cursory references and general text summaries are ineffective at supporting assertions." (Wang et al., 2017, p.482). Finally, the E stands for explained: articulate why or how the evidence supports the claim. "In addition to the quality of the evidence students provide, it is important to consider how well students connect the pieces of evidence to their claim. Students should clearly explain why or how particular evidence supports an idea instead of leaving this to the reader to infer." (Wang et al., 2017 p.482). Each part of this strategy is designed to help students use and incorporate text-evidence by providing the students with multiple factors to consider during

writing. Therefore, guiding students toward providing evidence that is complete, accurate, specific, and explained is intended to help them build a stronger case in their writing.

IDOL

The next intervention that teachers can use to aide students with the task of effectively incorporating text evidence is called the IDOL device. The IDOL writing device is derived from researchers Tolumin, Rieke, and Janik's (Dillon & Jenkins, 2013) claim data-warrant model. Toulmin and colleagues determined that all writing offered some sort of claim, provided data as evidence to support the claim, and argued that the evidence provided sufficiently supported the claim. The researchers determined that while the model on the surface seemed relatively straightforward students often struggled to incorporate all three elements into their writing. As a result, the IDOL writing device was developed and is consistent with the claim data-warrant model. Similarly, to the CASE device, each part of the IDOL device stands for a different quality needed to complete text-based writing. The strategy is broken down as follows: "I: identify a specific claim, D: develop an argument to support the claim, O: offer an example(s) that supports the argument, L: link the example(s) to the claim. This device highlights the need for students to make a specific claim and further describe the claim by providing additional details. Finally, it asks students to explain how the examples connect to the claim being made" (Dillon & Jenkins, 2013). Using the IDOL device, helps students remember critical elements of making and supporting arguments in formal writing by using sufficient and relevant text-evidence.

Writers Workshop

The third intervention that teachers can implement to improve student writing are writers' workshops. A writer's workshop is broken down into the following parts, a minilesson, writing time, and ends with time to share (Karsbaek, 2011). During a writer's workshop, teachers model the expectations for the writing that is to be completed. It is during this time, that teachers can help students understand what classifies as sufficient and relative text-evidence to use in their writings in order to support claims. After the modeling is done, the teacher will spend the rest of the time working with small groups of students on each part of the writing task. In addition, Writers Workshops are an effective intervention for addressing the problem students have with incorporating text-evidence to support claims, because they are designed to meet the specific needs of a student or set of students. Therefore, writers' workshops are an effective intervention strategy because of the flexibility for the teacher to present the workshops in a way that meets the needs and writing goals of the students in the classroom.

SRSD

The final intervention that can be used to address the issue is an evidence-based approach called Self-Regulated Strategy Development (SRSD). This intervention should be implemented after various writing strategies have been taught to students. The SRSD writing intervention that an

> "explicit, interactive learning of powerful strategies for writing both across and within
> genres, the knowledge needed to use these strategies, and strategies for self- regulating
> use of these writing strategies throughout the writing process. Equally important, SRSD

purposively develops self-efficacy for writing, attributions to strategy knowledge and

effort, and motivation for writing" (Harris, Graham, Friedlander & Land, 2013 p. 540).

Instruction using this intervention takes place across six flexible and highly interactive stages

that allows the teachers to provide a gradual release of responsibility for writing to students. The

stages of instruction for the SRSD strategy include: developing and activating knowledge needed

for writing and self-regulation which includes students reading texts in the genre that will be

written about. Next, teachers need to discuss the writing that is being completed with the student.

Teachers should "discuss students' current writing, self-regulation abilities, and their attitudes

and beliefs about writing" (Harris et al., 2013 p. 541), to help the student complete the task

successfully. In addition, teachers should model expectations and various strategies to help and

guide students with their writing. The next steps include memorization and support in which

teachers will emphasize the importance of memorizing the taught strategies to students and

support students during the writing process. Finally, students are able to participate in

independent performance in which they are able to use writing and self-regulation strategies

independently; teachers monitor and support as necessary. The key aspect that teacher need to

remember when implementing the SRSD strategy is that "the six SRSD stages can be modified,

reordered, or repeated if necessary because the focus is on students mastering the use of the

strategy independently" (Leins, Cuenca-Carlino, Kiuhara & Jacobson, 2017 p. 83). It is also

important to note that more than eighty studies have been conducted across grade levels and have

provided evidence that the SRSD is an effective method for teaching writing strategies to

students. "SRSD research has resulted in the development of writing strategies (typically with

the assistance of teachers and their students) for a variety of genres, including personal

narratives, opinion and persuasive essays, report writing, expository essays, story writing, and

state writing tests" (Harris et al., 2013 p.540). Therefore, once students have an understanding of various writing strategies the SRSD can be implemented to continue to support students with incorporating text-evidence to support claims.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this review discussed the challenge of key framework definitions, why students struggle with writing, and how Common Core state standards intended to address those issues. The review then described four factors which impact the issues including diagnostic writing, writing opportunities that are provided to students, the impact of standardized testing, and how teachers teach writing. The consequences of the issue if not addressed, will be student's inability to write persuasively and argumentatively and pass the MCAP, which all tenth-grade students are required to pass in order to graduate high school. In order to ensure that tenth grade students do develop writing skills and pass the exam and are set up to be successful in high levels of education, teachers can implement various interventions. Examples include CASE, IDOL, Writing Workshops, and SRSD which research has proven to be effective for supporting student's ability to incorporate text evidence to support claims made in writing.

In addition to the various interventions that can be implemented, teachers can continue to improve composition by doing the following: providing numerous opportunities for students to engage in writing, engaging students in cooperative groups, modeling expectations, and providing rubrics (Sundeen, 2015). All four of these elements combined with the previously described interventions will improve students writing composition, and therefore, improve their ability to incorporate text evidence to support claims.

CHAPTER III

METHODS

The purpose of this study is to examine the effectiveness that reading annotation has on a tenth-grade students' ability to incorporate textual evidence into a piece of writing. Students began by learning how to effectively annotate a provided text.

Design

This study consisted of a quasi-experimental pretest-posttest using a convenience sample. A pre-test was administered in February 2021, using Unit One from the English Ten practice PARCC examination. The PARCC was used to determine student's ability to incorporate text-evidence to back up claims made about a given text before each student received the treatment. Students were provided with annotation strategies over the course of three weeks. This study will help determine whether or not having students annotate a provided text before engaging in writing is an effective strategy in improving students' incorporation of text evidence in their writing from February 2021 to March 2021.

Participants

The participants in the study included a convenience sample of 30 tenth grade students at a public school in Harford County, Maryland. The sample group consisted of eleven (37%) females and nineteen (63%) males, ages fourteen to fifteen all of which were Caucasian. The selected high school's population has students from diverse socio-economic backgrounds. The school has minimum racial diversity with 80% of the population being Caucasian. There are sixteen hundred students that are currently enrolled at the school and enrollment increases every

year. The school is a magnet school for agricultural studies in Harford County. Currently 15% of the schools' population receives free and reduced lunch.

Instrument

The instrument being used in this study is a practice PARCC English Ten examination. This instrument is an example of what students will encounter on the actual PARCC examination that they will take in the Spring. Since the instrument being used is a practice test, there is no existing analysis of its reliability or validity. Therefore, for the purpose of understanding the instrument being used, the validity and reliability analysis is focused on the actual PARCC examination from which the practice PARCC examination is derived.

To begin, according to the Final Technical Report published by the creator of the PARCC exam, Pearson, outlines the various degrees of reliability and validity of the PARCC examination. The reliability for this exam is measured from zero to one, the closer that the scores averaged are closer to one, the more reliable the test is. According to this study completed in 2019 "the average reliability estimates for the computer-based test (CBTs) for grades 3–11 English language arts/literacy range from .90 to .92. The average reliability estimates for the paper-based test (PBTs) for grades 3–11 range from .89 to .92. The average reliability estimates are at least .89. (PARCC Final Technical Report for 2018 Administration)." Therefore, the PARCC test can be deemed reliable because, while the scores are not at one, they are .10 or less away, proving that the test as a little reliability error and is suitable for measuring student achievement.

The validity of the examination begins with how the test is administered to students. In order to ensure that there is no threat to validity during the taking of the test, student electronic

devices are prohibited, test supervision must be provided by a trained teacher or staff member, any and all coaching of students during the examination is prohibited, all test materials are locked away and secure during non-testing hours, and lastly the test environment must be secure which means no unauthorized individuals are allowed to enter the testing room (PARCC Final Technical Report for 2018 Administration). The way that the test is administered to students increases the validity of the examination because of the strict guidelines that both students and test administers must adhere so that there is no breech in the validity of the examination. In addition, PARCC ensures that the way the exam in scored also remains valid. For all multiple-choice responses, Pearson has a computer-automated system to keep all scoring valid and reliable.

The writing portion of the test is scored by humans who are trained to ensure that there is consistency in the scoring process. There does not appear to be any published critiques of the PARCC test that have not yet been addressed since its incorporation into the school systems (PARCC Final Technical Report for 2018 Administration). Therefore, the instrument used in this study will be a good measurement of student success in incorporating text evidence into their writing because it is what students will expect on the exam that they will take and will be held to the same Common Core rubric used by test scorers.

Procedure

The practice PARCC English Ten writing pre-test was first administered to students. The pre-test had students focus their concentration on the following elements as it related to the passages that they had to read. The elements were focused on the main characters' interactions with other characters, the main characters' thoughts, and actions, and the strong feelings each

character experiences at the end of each passage. These are the elements that students were required to include in the written response.

The first step was for the researcher to provide students with two texts that were similar in the way that each author developed their various characters. This was ultimately to model what students experienced on the pre-test. Once the text was chosen, the researcher provided the exact same prompt students saw on the pre-test in order to begin providing the treatment.

Next, the researcher asked the students to first read the prompt provided to them, many of them noting that it was similar to the one they saw previously. Students were then asked to highlight important key words in the provided writing prompt. This allowed students to have a basic understanding of what they were to write the essay about, prior to reading the provided texts. After, the researcher asked the students to read both texts one time through. This was so the student could have a basic understanding of the text prior to being provided annotation strategies. Once students finished reading both texts one time through, the researcher provided students with annotation strategies. The annotation strategies included students using different color highlighters to symbolize each of the four required elements in the prompt. Students were to highlight the characters thoughts, motivations, actions, and, at the end of passage, feelings. For each element that was highlighted, students were to write a note next to the annotation in which they outlined how that element helped to develop the character and why. The researcher modeled the expectations for annotation prior to allowing students to work on the task alone. As students annotated the researcher noted to the students how the annotations that they were creating were to be used when writing the essay.

After students finished annotating, the researcher instructed students on how to effectively incorporate text-evidence into their written responses. Students were told that all text

evidence needed a lead in word or phrase so that the quotation did not stand alone in the essay. In addition, students were asked to explain each quotation used, the quotation explanation required students to make connections back to the original prompt regarding character development. After the researcher explained how to effectively incorporate text-evidence into the students' writing, the researcher then modeled how students should use their annotations to find evidence to use in their written response. The researcher had students go through each text and circle annotated quotations that would fit into their essays effectively. Finally, students began composing their essays on the provided text, using their annotations to effectively incorporate text-evidence to into their writing.

At the conclusion of the lesson, students received the Common Core rubric that was used to grade the initial pretest. The researcher asked students to grade their responses using the rubric and to write how the strategy of annotation helped them with their usage of text-evidence in their writing. The researcher then took the written responses, the student rubrics, graded the responses and provided feedback for improvement.

Throughout the remainder of the unit, students continued to use the reading annotation strategy in order to effectively find and incorporate text-evidence into their writing. For each annotated reading that students encountered during the unit, they completed a written response and were graded on the Common Core State Standards rubric.
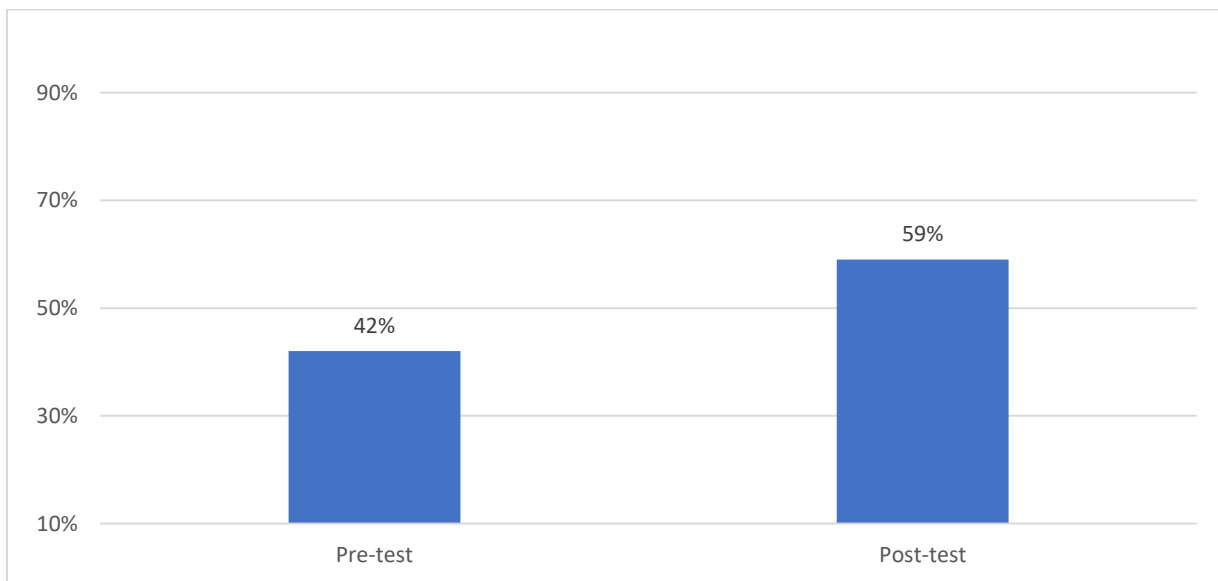
Chapter IV

Results

The purpose of this study was to determine if reading annotation had a significant effect on a student's usage of text-evidence to back up the claims made in their writing.

To determine whether the treatment was successful, the research used the pre-and post-test model. The pre-test score (Mean = 2.10, SD = 1.24) differed significantly from the post-test score (Mean = 2.96, SD = 1.40) [t(29) = .612, p<.05]. (See Figure 1). The results revealed students correctly identified 42% of the items on the pre-test but significantly improved to 59% on the post. As a result, the null hypothesis reading annotation does not have an effect on the usage and incorporation of text-evidence in the writing of tenth grade students, failed to be rejected.

Figure 1: Percent Mean Scores on Pre-and Post-test

CHAPTER V

Discussion

This study examined the effectiveness of reading annotation on a tenth-grade students' ability to incorporate text-evidence into their writing. The results of the statistical analysis provided in Chapter IV indicated that the null hypothesis was rejected.

Implications of Results

When reviewing the results for this study, there was significant evidence that suggested that reading annotation improved a student's ability to use and incorporate text-evidence into their writing. After reviewing the results, of the study through the analysis of data, the researcher noted a significant increase between the pre- and post-test provided to students. The pre-test resulted in a mean score of 42%, while the post-test resulted in a mean score of 59%, which equates to a 17% increase of students incorporating text-evidence into their writing as a result of including reading annotation into writing instruction.

Theoretical Consequences

On a theoretical level, the result indicates that reading annotation immensely improves a student's ability to use and incorporate text-evidence into their writing. During the intervention period, students participated in modeled annotation and written response instruction, were provided consistent feedback from the researcher, and worked in small and large group settings. Due to the intense intervention that took place during the treatment period, students had a greater understanding of the reading annotation strategy and how to successfully use it to incorporate text-evidence into a written response. This study showed dramatic academic growth between the pre-and post-test evaluations.

Threats to Validity

There are several threats to the validity in this study. The first threat was the sample that was used. The researcher used convenience sampling. The sample used was a particular standard tenth grade English class, chosen by the researcher.

In addition, there was also a threat to the internal validity as pertains to the time frame in which the study was conducted. The pre-and post-test was given over a short two-week period, therefore, the likelihood that students would improve on a given skill using the provided treatment was much greater than maybe it would have been had the study been conducted over a longer period of time. However, it is impossible to know what the results would have been or if they would have been different if there had been more time between the given pre-and post-test.

Connections to Previous Studies

A study done by Fisher and Frey (2013) determined how reading annotation improves a student's ability to use text-based evidence in their writing. In that study, the researcher used the strategy of annotation that had been previously taught to students to improve their performance on text-based questions provided by the researcher. The actual conduct of the research was different because the researcher did not use a pre-test prior to the implementation of the annotation strategy, but instead used it immediately as an intervention tool and treatment, which differed from how this current study was conducted. In addition, this study focused on a student's ability to answer text-dependent questions and a student's ability to verbally discuss the answers to those questions rather than compose a written essay response. The current study focused not only on a student's ability to incorporate text-evidence in a written response, but to ultimately improve achievement on the PARCC examination. Finally, in this study, there was no

post-test provided for the student. Once the researcher determined that the annotation improved written and oral responses of the students in the class, the study concluded. The current study used a post-test and a Common Core rubric to measure and understand student achievement after implementation of the annotation treatment.

Despite the various differences between the studies, there was one clear similarity and that was the results that were determined in both studies. Ultimately, both studies concluded that when students were taught how to annotate a text and how to use the annotations to include and incorporate text-evidence into a written response, students were more likely to compose responses that were more thoughtful and thought provoking and ones that include evidence from the text to back up claims made about a particular reading.

Implications for Future Research

This study reveals implications for future research that could alter the results determined by this study regarding the connection between reading annotation and text-evidence usage and incorporation. Time is the largest factor that could alter the results determined by this study. Since the study only took place in a two-week time period, it is difficult to determine whether or not it truly worked or whether students understood the expectation regarding annotating and evidence usage provided by the researcher and blindly incorporated it into their written response routine. Therefore, if the study took place over a longer period of time, students would have more time to use and understand the reading annotation strategy and how to use it effectively, and therefore, the measurement of student achievement would be more accurate because it would truly show if students understand how to use annotation to incorporate text-evidence into a provided written response.

In addition, the study would have been more effective if there had been a control group factor. Because one group received the treatment, achievement using the treatment was much more likely. If the study was conducted using two groups, one receiving the treatment and one not, the researcher would have a better understanding of the effectiveness of reading annotation on the incorporation of text-evidence in student writing.

Conclusion

In summation, reading annotation is a critical strategy to incorporate into writing instruction to improve student's incorporation of text-evidence on a written response. This study examined student writing before and after the annotation treatment period and found that, by incorporating reading annotation into writing instruction, students not only incorporate text-evidence into their writing, but the evidence that the students chose to use is more thoughtfully chosen and is better suited to the requirements of the writing prompt. Through the investigation of the results done by the researcher, it was evident that achievement improvement was made by the majority of the students in the classroom, even in the short amount of time that the study was conducted.

By incorporating reading annotation into writing instruction, teachers can improve student usage and incorporation of text evidence into their writing. Through the incorporation of reading annotation, students have a better understanding of the text that they must write about and will, as a result, produce responses that are better written and truly answer the requirements of the prompt, raising their academic achievement.

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