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MODELING DURING WRITING INSTRUCTION AS A WAY TO INCREASE
ELEMENTARY AGE WRITER SELF-EFFICACY

by

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A capstone submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Masters
of Arts in Education.

Hamline University
Saint Paul, Minnesota

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To my family and friends for your continued support and motivation. Thank you to my capstone committee for the great amount of time you spent guiding me on this project. Your ideas and positive encouragement were greatly appreciated throughout the process. Lastly, thank you to the students and teachers I have worked with in the past and present. I learn from you everyday.

“If I have the belief that I can do it, I shall surely acquire the capacity to do it even if I may not have it at the beginning.”

-Mahatma Gandhi

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CHAPTER 1

Introduction

The classroom is silent but filled with palpable dread, fear and a bit of terror, obvious from the silence and looks of the students. The teacher has announced it is time to write and the students sit staring at blank paper with motionless pencils. The teacher, sensing the fear, also loses confidence. What can she do in her own classroom so this is not the case every time it's writing time? Surely, she does not want this to continue with her students as it has for so many others.

Writing is an essential skill, not only in school but all aspects of personal and professional life. American education may never reach its full potential until a writing revolution places the power of language and communication in its proper place in the classroom (College Entrance Examination Board, 2003).

The decline in writing instruction may be partly contributed to the result of more focus on reading and math in relation to improving performance on standardized tests (Brandt, 2001). How to teach writing also may pose a concern for many educators. Applebee and Langer (2006) reported that teachers were unclear about what process-oriented writing was and how to implement it in their classrooms.

From my experiences in the classroom, I have seen that teachers have many guides to teach math and reading with fewer consistent practices or instructional aids for writing. The teaching varies tremendously from classroom to classroom. When asked, often teachers indicated they felt less prepared and lacked confidence in their own writing (Harward, Peterson, Korth, Wimmer, Wilcox, Morrison, Black, Simmerman, & Pierce, 2014). As a teacher, I have felt the ever-existent lack of time in the day and the difficulty

that writing poses with not only grading but time and effort to read through the content and mechanics. Despite all this, there are teachers out there that have made writing in the classroom a priority and have implemented strategies that increase overall writing abilities and student confidence. For many students, that increased confidence can lead to improved performance as well as more enjoyment as young writers that will carry with them forever.

As is typical in many elementary classrooms, students move through their Daily 5 rotations (Boushey & Mosley, 2006). As a teacher, I watched as seven-year-old, Orin, sat during “write to self” staring blankly at his page. He continuously asked to change centers after he stated his frustration, “I don’t know what to write” and “I can’t think of anything.” As we neared the end of our time period, little existed on his paper. He was excited to rotate to the other centers and move away from writing. What can I do as a teacher so writing is more enjoyable for Orin in the future? What can I do to instill confidence in his abilities to generate ideas and translate those thoughts to paper? As a new teacher, I am trying to incorporate strategies into my classroom from the beginning to be the most effective teacher I can be. As an elementary teacher, specifically, I have an opportunity to help students become confident in their writing abilities at a young age.

Effective teachers have found ways of combating the time issue by incorporating writing into all aspects of the curriculum. The act of writing, after all, helps us to solidify our knowledge. Writing is not simply a way for students to demonstrate what they know. It is a way to help them understand what they know. At its best, writing is learning. Writing competence builds confidence, which readily turns into creativity and fun,

precisely what is most frequently absent from the policy discussions about today's schools. (College Entrance Examination Board, 2003, p.13)

Background

Writing is how students connect the dots in their knowledge (College Entrance Examination Board, 2003). Writing can be used to activate background knowledge, to make predictions, and to inquire about the text. During reading, students can write about the connections they make between the text and themselves, other texts, and the world. By using writing to record understanding of the text, students are able to increase their comprehension of the text they have read. The importance of writing is clear however, studies show that writing is an area where students lack confidence and struggle repeatedly. According to Persky, Daane, and Jin (2003), two-thirds of American children do not write well enough to meet classroom demands (as cited in Cutler and Graham, 2008). Cutler and Graham (2008) wrote, "...the development of policies and practices to improve writing instruction at any grade level must be grounded in a clear understanding of how writing is currently taught. Without such information, it is hard to determine what needs to be done" (p. 915).

According to recent studies, writing is a difficult subject for many teachers. The National Commission on Writing in America's Schools and Colleges termed writing "the neglected R" (College Entrance Examination Board, 2003). The median amount of time surveyed teachers reported spending on writing was about 20 minutes per day with intermediate teachers reporting less (Cutler & Graham, 2008). The decline in writing instruction may be due in part to several factors, one being that writing was not part of the national testing movement (Brandt, 2001). Many children, including those with

disabilities, struggle with writing. According to recent reports, 24% of students at both grades 8 and 12 performed at the proficient level in writing in 2011. The National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) proficient level represents solid academic performance for each grade assessed. Students performing at this level have clearly demonstrated the ability to accomplish the communicative purpose of their writing (National Center for Education Statistics, 2012).

We know that concentration on writing is important in our classrooms but as researchers, how do we focus our efforts to produce results? In 1986, Albert Bandura made a significant contribution to the study of writing in academic studies through his social cognitive theory and the self-efficacy component. Through his research it is understood that individuals possess self-beliefs that will affect the choices they make, the effort they generate, the persistence and perseverance when obstacles arise, and the thought patterns and emotional reactions they experience. Bandura's research findings showed that a student's confidence in his or her writing capabilities influence writing motivation as well as various outcomes in school (Pajares, 2003). It is these outcomes as a teacher that I hope to influence and is the impetus for this research.

The difference with writing compared to other academic areas is that writing is as much emotional as a cognitive ability, affective components strongly influence all phases of the writing process (McLeod, 1987). It has also been established that the beliefs students hold about their writing abilities powerfully influence their writing performances, as well as the academic choices they make in high school and college (Hackett, 1995 as cited in Pajares, 2003). The importance of studying at an early elementary age is that we can begin to develop positive attitudes and beliefs from the

beginning. Researchers have found that writing self-efficacy beliefs diminish as students move from elementary school to middle school, and then remain at that level during high school. As documented, middle school seems to be the critical juncture at which academic motivation, in this case self-efficacy, decreases (Wigfield et al., 1991). According to social cognitive theory, expected outcomes are related to self-efficacy beliefs precisely because these beliefs, in part, determine the expectations. Thus, individuals who possess strong confidence that they can accomplish a particular enterprise anticipate successful outcomes, whereas those with low confidence are more likely to anticipate failure (Pajares & Johnson, 1994).

Statement of the Problem

Writing in many of our schools is not at the level it should be and students are showing a lack of self-efficacy in their writing ability. As previous research has demonstrated, self-efficacy is directly related to performance, motivation factors, perceived value, self-regulation and goal setting.

As teachers, we need to understand what teaching strategies are most effective at increasing the self-efficacy that will lead to improved writing abilities of our students so they are prepared to face the challenges of writing as they grow.

Purpose of Research Study

The purpose of this capstone was to evaluate the use of modeling during instruction in an elementary classroom and the results on student self-efficacy. This research further explored modeling focusing not on how it enhanced writing ability but rather belief in abilities. The teaching strategies discussed are easily adaptable into a classroom and assist students writing with an improved attitude, less anxiety, and

hopefully with more enjoyment. The intent is that these attitudes will carry over into further grades and into writing in general. Because of the tremendous amount of variability in teaching strategies used in writing, this research evaluated one teaching strategy for effectiveness on improving self-efficacy with the hopes that more teachers will incorporate it into daily practice.

Research Questions

This research addressed the relationship between modeling and self-efficacy. The purpose of the research was to answer the question: *How does modeling during instruction increase writer self-efficacy?* Specifically, *How does a combination of teacher, peer, and text modeling work to enhance self-efficacy?* I explored how this teaching strategy, when used in the classroom, affects self-efficacy and the most productive ways to utilize this teaching strategy in order to produce writing improvements.

Summary

I contend that a focus on writing is needed in the school systems despite the time pressure and many other factors which make teaching writing difficult in today's schools. There are effective teachers throughout the country using techniques that are proving to be beneficial to improved student writing. This study examined one of the teaching strategies being used in the classroom and specifically how it is helping students to gain more self-efficacy in their writing. As shown in the research, an increase in student self-efficacy in his or her writing ability has other benefits to the student in terms of performance.

Chapter one of this capstone states the reasons for the purpose of this study as well as background information on the topic. A review of the literature and research pertaining to the elements of effective writing programs, and the relationship between self-efficacy and performance are presented in chapter two. Chapter three explains the methodology used in this study. The results and evaluation collected are included in chapter four. Chapter five combines a summary of the research study, conclusions from the data and a discussion of the results. Recommendations for further study are also shared at the end of chapter five.

CHAPTER 2

Review of the Literature

Introduction

There is a great amount of research on writing in schools. The nation's school improvement reform which began over 30 years ago with the publication of *A Nation at Risk* (1983) has put the focus on American school reform. The three R's in the old adage of "reading, writing, and arithmetic" are commonly regarded as the foundations of elementary studies. Writing, the second "R", has become neglected in the schools (College Entrance Examination Board, 2003). The decline in writing instruction may be in part to increased focus on reading instruction in order to improve performance on standardized tests (Brandt, 2001). Acquiring fluency in writing has always been a goal of education though it is not always realized (College Entrance Examination Board, 2003). "Writing can open minds the way that drilling on facts, details, and information never will. More than knowing, writing is an act of discovery" (College Entrance Examination, 2003, p. 14).

There are many reasons that writing is a difficult subject in the classroom. Among one of the more common reasons is simply a lack of time in the day. The median amount of time surveyed teachers spent writing was about 20 minutes per day (Cutler & Graham, 2008). Another study (Billen, et al, 2011), conducted in eight school districts, reported that teachers spent about 20 minutes per day in process-oriented writing, and the majority of that time was dominated by explicit teacher instruction (as cited in S. Harward, et al, 2014). Writing, educators will also agree, is one of the more difficult

areas to teach for most. There also exists a wide discrepancy among individual teachers as they implement writing instruction (Cutler & Graham, 2008). What does this mean for our students? As stated by the College Entrance Examination Board, “American education will never realize its potential as an engine of opportunity and economic growth until a writing revolution puts the power of language and communication in their proper place in the classroom” (2003, p.14). Author Kelly Gallagher (2011), when talking about writing in today’s world, stated:

When I visit with teachers across this country, I often ask, “How many of you work in a school where you are concerned that the students at your site are not writing enough to develop into skilled writers?” Almost without exception, I receive at least a 90 percent response rate. Whether I am in Charleston or Spokane, Albuquerque or Philadelphia, the response is overwhelming: students are not writing enough. (p. 5)

Students also lack self-efficacy for improving their literacy skills (College Entrance Examination Board, 2003 & Schunk, 2003). Because of the importance of writing and the difficulty of it, there is a lot of literature on different writing techniques and strategies and how they affect writing performance.

Researchers have recognized that writing is one subject in particular that causes great anxiety in students. This may be based on the very personal nature of writing (Pajares, Johnson, & Usher, 2007). Writing is also a very complex, multi-component subject, involving many aspects. To encode text, an author needs to choose a topic and develop an outline (Graham & Harris, 2005), provide for story structure (beginning, middle, and end) (Donovan & Smolkin, 2006), spell words to compose phrases and

paragraphs (Saddler & Behforooz, 2008), manage the visual motor integration process while producing legible prose (Berninger, Richards, Stock, Abbott, Trivedi, Altemeier, & Hayes, 2008), write a series of drafts and incorporate feedback for each revision (Shanahan, 2006), and finally produce a publishable copy to share with others (as cited in Dunn, 2011).

Self-Efficacy

As stated in social cognitive theory, self-efficacy is a person's belief in their ability to execute the behaviors necessary to achieve desired outcomes. In contrast to self-confidence, self-efficacy refers to beliefs about specific behaviors in specific situations. In *Social Foundations of Thought and Action* (1986), Bandura argued that beliefs people hold about their abilities and about the outcome of their efforts powerfully influence the ways in which they will behave; thus, those that have strong feelings of confidence that they can achieve a task will anticipate successful outcomes and those with low confidence are more likely to anticipate failure.

Self-efficacy beliefs will affect the choices students make, the effort they exert, their persistence and perseverance, and the anxiety they experience (Pajares & Valiante, 1997). A belief that they are capable writers helps in writing competency not only because the belief itself increases writing ability but also creates a greater interest in writing, more focused effort, and resiliency when obstacles get in the way. Further, research shows that those with low self-efficacy focus on performance as opposed to learning when they experience challenge, and choose moderately easy tasks so they can remain confident in their skills and abilities (Linnenbrink & Pintrich, 2003). In difficult learning situations, low-efficacious students use fewer strategies for reading and writing

while proposing negative attributions of their own and give up easier and disengage to save face (Walker, 2003). The judgements students hold about their abilities to successfully perform a task are good predictors of performance across academics and therefore offer promising areas of research for writing instruction (Pajares, 2003).

According to Pajares (2003), there has been a lack of research in this area, “Self-beliefs about writing have received modest attention both from researchers in the field of composition and from self-efficacy researchers. This is unfortunate, given the critical role that composition plays at all levels throughout the academic curriculum” (p. 141).

Self-efficacy beliefs are defined as “people’s judgements of their capabilities to organize and execute courses of action required to attain designated types of performances” (Bandura, 1986, p. 391). Linnenbrink and Pintrich (2003), discuss three areas related to self-efficacy:

- behavioral engagement: which includes effort, persistence, and instrumental help-seeking
- cognitive engagement: incorporating strategy use and meta-cognition
- motivational engagement: comprised of student interest, value, and affect

The importance in this model is that it works in a cycle; for example, higher self-efficacy leads to more behavioral engagement and by doing so the student improves self-efficacy.

According to Schunk and Zimmerman (2000; 2001), there are two cognitive and motivational variables in reading and writing: self-regulation and self-efficacy. Self-regulation refers to self-generated thoughts, feelings, and actions that are designed to affect one’s learning, knowledge, and skills. Self-efficacy beliefs in writing can be

influential for literary topics, effort, and persistence. Students with high self-efficacy for a skill participate more, work harder, and persist longer when they encounter difficulties and achieve at higher levels (Schunk & Zimmerman, 2007).

Self-Efficacy Beliefs

In 1986, psychologist Albert Bandura, in his social cognitive theory, wrote about how beliefs in one's self can lead to the ability to succeed in a particular situation. In other words, what one thinks can lead to how one performs. Bandura's (1986) theory states that individuals possess self-beliefs that enable them to exercise influence over not only thoughts and feelings but also actions. Additionally, what is believed is critical to how we perform. The relationship is such that according to Bandura, "how people behave can often be better predicted by the beliefs they hold about their capabilities, what he called self-efficacy beliefs, than by what they are actually capable of accomplishing" (as cited in Pajares, 2003, p. 140).

The importance of looking at self-efficacy in writing is apparent, given the significance of writing skills to a student's academic success (Pajares, Johnson, & Usher, 2007). In the research that was completed on self-efficacy in writing, results have shown consistently that self-efficacy beliefs and writing performance are related (Pajares, 2003). Many researchers point out examples that writing self-efficacy is also associated with motivation factors such as writing apprehension, the writer's sensed value of writing, self-efficacy for self-regulation, writing self-concept, and goals (as cited in Pajares, 2003).

In the study by Pajares, Johnson and Usher (2007), elementary school students reported stronger mastery experience, vicarious experience, and social persuasions than

did either middle school or high school students. Elementary students also possessed stronger self-efficacy. In this same study, girls reported greater mastery experience, vicarious experience, social persuasions as well as lower anxiety. Girls also reported stronger self-efficacy and were rated better writers (Pajares, Johnson, & Usher, 2007).

Bandura (1986) stated that comparisons with peers are important in determining self-efficacy beliefs. He also noted that social modeling, or seeing others similar to oneself succeed by sustained effort raises one's own beliefs that they too can accomplish successfully in a similar task. Much of the research that has been completed on self-efficacy has involved high school and college undergraduates. It has been recommended that more research be completed at the lower academic levels where self-beliefs are beginning to take root (Pajares & Valiante, 1997). According to Pajares, Johnson and Usher (2007), writing self-efficacy beliefs actually diminish as students move through elementary school to middle school, and then remain at that level through high-school. Middle school seems to be an important turning point at which efficacy decreases (Wigfield et al., 1991). The reason that research in this area is so critical, Bandura (1986) argues:

Educational practices should be gauged not only by the skills and knowledge they impart for present use but also by what they do to children's beliefs about their capabilities, which affects how they approach the future. Students who develop a strong sense of self-efficacy are well equipped to educate themselves when they have to rely on their own initiative. (Pajares, 2003, p. 417)

Some self-efficacy researchers have stated that teachers should focus as much on students' perceptions of their competence as to actual competence, for it is the

perceptions that may more accurately predict student's motivation and future academic choices (Hackett & Betz, 1989). Additionally, according to Bandura's theory (1986), the perceived usefulness of activities is related to efficacy judgements because efficacy judgements partly determine the supposed value of an activity. Students who are confident in their writing capabilities experience less apprehension when assigned a writing project and find writing to be more important than do students who believe they are poor writers. However, as low self-efficacy can be detrimental to learning, effective learning does not require self-efficacy to be overly high. At excessively high levels students can and may feel overconfident and begin to slack in their efforts (Salomon, 1984). Having the right balance of efficacy but leaving some doubt can cause the learner to use better strategies than a student might use that is overly confident (Schunk, 2003).

Dimensions of Self-Efficacy

The literature mentions several dimensions that help to form the feelings of self-efficacy. According to Bruning, Dempsey, and Kauffman (2013), ideation, one dimension of writing self-efficacy is the belief that the student can generate ideas. Writing ideation focuses on a writer's' judgements of the availability, quality, and ordering of their ideas. The second focus on writing self-efficacy are writing conventions. These are the combination of generally accepted standards in writing, (ie. spelling, punctuation, capitalization, and sentence structure/grammar). Another important component of self-efficacy is the idea of self-regulation. Having both ideation and writing conventions are important and necessary but are not all that are needed to be effective writers. Because, as mentioned, writing is such a complex task, the writer needs to be able to stay on task and manage the anxiety and emotional part that accompanies

writing (Zimmerman & Bandura, 1994). As stated by Zimmerman and Bandura, self-regulation includes the ability of the writer to complete the complex tasks necessary from start to finish of the written project including: generate an idea, begin writing without difficulty, write for a variety of audiences, capture the reader's interest early on, problem solve when writing and experiencing difficulties, motivate when the topic choice is not personally satisfying, and locate and revise grammatical errors (as cited in Bruning, Dempsey, Kauffman, et. al, 2013).

Modeling During Writing Instruction

There are many important parts of effective writing instruction. The teaching method evaluated in this study was the usage of modeling. Modeling is an important variable in Bandura's (1986) social cognitive theory and is one way of promoting both self-efficacy and self-regulation (Schunk & Zimmerman, 2007). Rosenthal and Zimmerman (1978), noted that teachers as early as the ancient Greeks and Romans have recommended the use of literary models to develop writing and oratorical proficiency (as cited in Zimmerman & Kitsantas, 2002). One of the components of Bandura's (1997) self-efficacy beliefs is that students form their beliefs through vicarious experiences. This source of self-efficacy is less powerful than the feeling a student gets through his own performance or mastery experience as defined by Bandura (1997), but still a strong influence. It does become more influential when students have limited experience or are unsure of their abilities, which is often the case in writing. Since writing is a subject that many students struggle with, the observation of others or exposure to texts that demonstrate a form of writing can be very influential and helpful to the student.

Modeling is an effective teaching method in writing development, both by the teacher and other students. The approach to writing embodied in the National Literacy Strategy Grammar from Writing (NLS, 2000a) and Developing Early Writing (NLS, 2001) is based on research which shows that children's writing can be enhanced by teacher modeling, demonstrating, and using quality texts to highlight craft and artistry in writing (Corden, 2002). Great authors even struggle with writing, so it is important for children to see that everyone struggles, not just themselves. As they watch modeling they can see how others can navigate their frustrations and overcome negative feelings.

As a former co-director of a National Writing Project site, Kelly Gallagher spent time evaluating strategies to elevate students' writing. As Gallagher (2011) noted, "Of all the strategies I have learned over the years, there is one that stands far above the rest when it comes to improving my students' writing: the teacher should be modeling-and think out loud while writing-in front of the class" (p. 15).

Modeling can also include the incorporation of reading examples of texts which demonstrate to students the writing instructional lesson at hand. Exposure by teachers to text examples through text modeling can also be beneficial to the student as he practices his own writing. Modeling is an element of the common core standards as introduced in 2010 by the National Governors Association and the Council of Chief State School Officers. One of the changes of the common core initiative as it relates to writing is a closer connection between writing and reading. The standards require students to summarize text, critique and analyze text through writing, write synthesis papers combining information collected from multiple sources, and writing to text models. Text models means that students read model texts and imitate traits of the text in their own

writing. Modeling becomes an important way for students to make connections between reading and writing. Without models, students would have to create all writing forms from start to finish and all the features on their own (Shanahan, 2015).

By studying a model so closely that a student could reproduce his own version with some of the similar elements, a student is showing that he truly understands the original work and that he places great value in it (Shanahan, 2015). “Not only does modeling help teachers accomplish writing standards but it could help students reach the reading standards as well” (Shanahan, 2015, p.476). Modeling is beneficial in a complex task such as writing because it allows the student an opportunity to experience a step by step process which helps the student observe the writing as more manageable and less overwhelming. As a teacher, demonstrated modeling is part of the sequence of gradually releasing responsibility. By providing a sequential process students are better able to manage the different steps allowing them to produce the end product. The teacher begins with a verbalization of all steps and thoughts in the process, the students then work through the steps with the teacher’s help, and finally the students employ the strategy on their own incorporating teacher feedback (Dunn, 2011).

Teachers understand the importance of modeling during writing instruction but generally do not know how to do it effectively. Gallagher (2011), points out that elementary teachers recognize the importance of modeling, yet when secondary teachers were asked if they use the strategy in teaching the numbers that did were very low. He states:

It is a scary moment to show your kids that you are not Superman or Wonder Woman. But this reluctance must be overcome. Students must see the process to

understand the process. They must “stand” next to you to see how you do it.
(2011, p. 16)

An important part of observational learning occurs through cognitive modeling. Meichenbaum (1977), points out that cognitive modeling is defined as that which provides a thorough explanation with verbalizations of the model’s thoughts and reasons for performing the action (as cited in Schunk, 2003). It is more in-depth than simply physically modeling the desired action.

When teaching cognitive strategies, teachers should model: a) why the strategy is used by providing specific reasons for the strategy selection; b) how the strategy is used by providing explicit instruction absent ambiguity; and c) what strategies to select in specific situations by selecting the appropriate strategy to match the situation (Dole, 1991). Through the process of modeling, students will learn how to determine high quality work (Pajares, Johnson & Usher, 2007).

Observational learning through modeling occurs when observers display new behaviors that they could not perform prior to the exposure of a model (Schunk, 1987; Schunk & Zimmerman 2007). Modeling serves as a way to inform and motivate, especially when a series of actions leads to a positive outcome. When using models, it is important to expose students to different types of models because students are more likely to identify with at least one. If students see models that are struggling they may benefit by learning some coping strategies which will ultimately make them successful. When students perceive peer models to be more similar to themselves they feel higher self-efficacy for learning (Schunk & Zimmerman, 2007).

Students form self-efficacy appraisals from their own performances, additionally they acquire efficacy from socially comparing their performance to that of others. When students observe, others perform a task they think they are capable of performing, they believe too that they too can accomplish it (Schunk & Zimmerman, 2007).

Based on the social cognitive model of sequential skill acquisition, learners acquire new writing skills in four sequential levels, which include: observation, emulation, self-control, and self-regulation. Both the observation and emulation stages are strongly encouraged by modeling. During the observation stage a developing writer obtains information from the model by hearing descriptions and noticing consequences. (Schunk & Zimmerman, 1997; Zimmerman, 2002). In the emulation stage, the writer enacts the model's performance.

Types of Models

Mastery Models

In using models, the most traditional form to use is a mastery model where the task is completed successfully the first time. A limitation of a mastery model is that they do not provide information about error correction because their performances are flawless. In writing, in which so many students may struggle with anxiousness, a coping model, may also be important to incorporate. A coping model can show how a struggling student can overcome learning difficulties and gradually improve as a result of persistence, strategy use, and using coping statements, (e.g. "I have to pay better attention") (Schunk, Hanson, & Cox, 1987). Students who are quick learners may benefit more from a mastery model and those who often have difficulty may benefit more from a coping model. Teachers should attempt to make mistakes while reading or writing so they

can show how to recover and which strategies to use. It is not enough to tell a student “It is ok to make mistakes.” It is helpful to show them what to do when it happens (Walker, 2003).

In order for modeling to be effective, students must pay attention to a model, code the information for retention, be capable of producing the demonstrated pattern, and be motivated to perform it. In a study by Zimmerman and Kitsantas (2002), modeling and social feedback were studied on 72 college students and specifically the roles of observation and emulation in acquisition of writing skills were examined. Prior to the research it was hypothesized that those students observing a coping model would surpass students observing a mastery model in writing skill and self-regulatory measures such as self-satisfaction, self-efficacy perceptions, and intrinsic value in the task. Those that observed a mastery model were hypothesized to exceed those that had no model at all and social feedback was important for all groups in obtaining writing and self-regulatory skills. The results of this study found the hypothesis to be true. A student’s degree of observational learning significantly influenced his learning during the emulative practice. (Schunk and Zimmerman, 2007).

Coping Models

Coping models are more effective in teaching observers because students learn how to eliminate errors and are better able to detect errors in the first place. Mastery models do not provide information on how to make corrections. In a study by Kitsantas, Zimmerman, and Cleary (2000), the differences between the use of a coping and mastery models were studied using the motor learning task of dart throwing. High school girls involved in the dart-throwing study witnessed both mastery and coping models. The

results showed that the girls who witnessed the coping models versus the mastery models not only surpassed the girls who observed the mastery model in the dart throwing skills itself, but also in self-regulatory measures such as self-satisfaction, self-efficacy perceptions, and intrinsic value in the task (as cited in Zimmerman & Kitsantas, 2002).

The research by Zimmerman and Kitsantas (2002), validated the hypothesis that students that observed models whether mastery or coping performed better with writing practice outcomes and had higher self-efficacy than those with no model. But importantly, it was found that there was a need for both emulative practice and social feedback in order for students to acquire optimum levels of writing skill on their own.

Text Models

Using text models to write is another way of combining reading and writing synthesis as required by the Common Core Standards (Shanahan, 2015). Writing to a text model can be helpful in getting the writing started but on its own the approach does not lead to much higher writing achievement (Graham & Perin, 2007). When students are identifying the features of craft and structure of a text model (specifically required by the Common Core) they are able to hone both their reading and writing skills. Text modeling does not have as strong of a research foundation as other approaches to combining reading and writing, though the results have been positive just limited in effect (Graham & Perin, 2007).

Text modeling can be helpful to teach students different types of writing such as narrative, explanatory, and argumentative (all required by the Common Core) and to help demonstrate specific text features such as linking main ideas to supporting details, applying direct quotes within an argument, and relaying evidence from an original

source. Shanahan (2015) says, “Examining examples of the placement or introduction of such information provides students a big step up; first they recognize, then they imitate, then they try to do the same thing on their own” (p. 476). Once the text model is either read by or to the students there needs to be a discussion of the elements of the model and why each text feature was used. Once students understand the model clearly they are able to then reproduce their own work. Over time, less scaffolding would be needed (Shanahan, 2015).

Another aspect of modeling is the use of cooperative groups. A cooperative group is where students work together on a writing task. Fitzgerald points out that the peer group would work together to critique each other’s writing and offer suggestions for improvement (as cited in Schunk, 2003). The members of the group are modeling then for each other as they explain their thoughts in the writing process (Schunk, 2003).

Summary

The fourth area of influence, as stated by Bandura (1997), to influence self-efficacy is the physiological and emotional state which would include anxiety, stress, arousal, and mood. As many teachers and researchers have seen, writing is a subject that may cause great stress and anxiety in all students from the very young through adulthood. Writing in general is very personal and it is often suggested that is the reason that writing anxiety can be so powerful and a factor faced by many students (Pajares, Johnson, & Usher, 2007). The teaching method included in the research of modeling has the ability to lessen that anxiety and stress for reasons discussed earlier in this literature review. The important element to note is that self-efficacy is changeable and teachers can influence students’ self-efficacy beliefs.

The purpose of this capstone was to examine modeling as a method of instruction as discussed in the literature review. The forms of modeling used during the research included: teacher, peer, and text with a combination of mastery and coping models within those three models. The study was qualitative, involving student questionnaires, observations, and interviews to determine the effects of these three teaching strategies on increased self-efficacy. Greater research could be done in more detail on each type of modeling and the development of self-efficacy, but the purpose of this paper was to use a combination of modeling techniques to assess self-efficacy results. It is imperative that teachers develop and sustain their students' self-efficacy for learning regardless of the content area.

CHAPTER 3

Methods

Writer self-efficacy has been linked to greater performance in writing. As educators, it is important to help our students develop into stronger writers and there are many different approaches being used today to help in that process. The intent of the study was to gather data to answer the questions: *Does modeling during writing instruction increase student self-efficacy?* and specifically, *How does a combination of teacher, peer, and text modeling work to enhance self-efficacy?* This research examined the teaching strategy of modeling when used in the classroom and whether it affects the self-efficacy of the writer. In the following chapter the methods for the current research are presented. First, the approval process, experimental design, and methods are explained followed by the setting, participants, and procedures.

Hypotheses of Research

Modeling can be an influential strategy to developing young writers. The students involved in this study were assessed on their efficacy beliefs twice during a six-week time period using the same scale and survey. At the conclusion of the six-week time period they were compared to students also tested in the class not using modeling to the same extent as the test group.

It was believed, based on the research (Bandura, 1986; Schunk & Zimmerman, 2007) that there would be a difference in the scores of the students. The students in the research group were expected to most likely score themselves higher on the self-efficacy scales in the areas of content and mechanics. To explore this group in further detail and gain insight into the use of these teaching strategies, qualitative data was collected in the

form of teacher and student interviews and observations to gain insight into how the modeling strategies were used and the benefits to the students of using them.

The student interviews and observations included questions such as:

- How do models help you when you write?
- What types of models are most helpful?
- What is the hardest part about writing?

During the weekly work, field notes were recorded about the work with the students about what was seen and heard when they were participating in the group. It was important for the research to capture the self-regulating aspects of self-efficacy, including the emotional and anxiety as described by Zimmerman and Bandura (1994) that often accompany writing (as cited in Bruning et al., 2013) but may not be captured authentically in a quantitative survey. The field notes included such items as participation, ability to overcome frustration, eagerness to work each session, and overall enjoyment in written work.

The researcher examined how modeling was used in the classroom and what effect it had with the students. The interviews, surveys, and observations were used to provide detail and support for the hypothesis.

Approval Process Explained

Prior to beginning the research on this project, many steps were taken to ensure that all necessary approvals were received from the Institutional Review Board (IRB). Consultations were held with the principal at the participating elementary school to determine if the study would be a good fit at the school. The purpose of the study was explained in detail as well as details about how the study would be conducted within the

classroom. Although the principal had a broader view of the classrooms, she was aware of the curriculum goals and the individual teachers. A classroom was selected that met the needs of the study. The principal agreed that the classroom chosen would be appropriate for the purpose of this research. A discussion with the Director of Research in the school district detailing the plans, time frame, and the specifics of the research took place. After narrowing down the school and classroom, a meeting was held with the classroom teacher, Mrs. Banford (note the use of pseudonyms for the teacher and students for the purpose of this research) to gain insight about the goals for the year and information about the class in general. This discussion ensured that the selected classroom would be favorable to the research.

Formal written approvals from the IRB and Human Subject Committee (HSC) committees, the school district, and participating school principal and classroom teacher were received prior to beginning the research in the classroom.

A consent form was sent home with each child informing parents/guardians of the study and how their child would be involved in the research. Contact information was provided for any questions from parents or teachers before, during, and after the study (Appendix D). Once approvals were received and all the parental consents were collected, the research was ready to begin.

Experimental Design

Students in the whole classroom prior to the start of the research were asked to complete a writing survey and prompts. The writing prompts were completed first to assess students' ability and their beliefs in their own words. After the completion of the writing prompts, a nine-item Likert scale survey was completed. The testing was given in

that order so that the students would not use ideas from the survey in their writing prompts if they believed those were the desired responses. A combination of the survey and writing prompts were used to observe whether their answers on the survey could be validated in a sample of writing (Appendix A). The writing prompts were developed to provide more revealing and authentic information from the students than could be gleaned from only the Likert-scale survey.

Construction of the Self-Efficacy Scale

In developing the self-efficacy scales used in the survey to evaluate the effectiveness of modeling, the studies of Bandura have again been cited. As Bandura (2006) stated, there is not an all-purpose measure of perceived self-efficacy. Because there is no “one measure fits all,” the scales used in research must be tailored to the particular domain of functioning.

In writing, some of the areas of frustration for young writers can be broken into two main areas: mechanics (including spelling, grammar, and word choice), and content (including idea generation, transitions, thought processing). The ten questions on the qualitative survey fell under the three focal dimensions tied to earlier researchers’ work (see esp. Pajares, 2007; Shell et al., 1995; Zimmerman & Bandura, 1994; Zimmerman & Kitsantas, 2007) of ideation, writing conventions, and self-regulation (Bruning, et al, 2013) as well as content and mechanics. The number of questions (10) on the quantitative survey corresponded to lessons that the research covered during the six-week time period.

Since self-efficacy is concerned with self-beliefs, all questions were phrased with *can do* rather than *will do*. All of the areas in the writing process addressed in the survey

questions were modeled and discussed during the writing class over the six week research period.

Use of the Likert Scale for Children

The standard methodology for measuring self-efficacy is the use of a 100-point scale, ranging in 10-unit intervals from 0 (cannot do) through intermediate degrees, 50 (moderately certain), to complete assurance, 100 (highly certain to do). Since this research was being completed on young children, eight to nine year olds, a smaller scale from zero to nine was used. Scales with too few steps are not used because they are less sensitive and reliable (Bandura, 2006). It is recommended using pictures with young children to show gradations or efficacy beliefs but not happy or sad faces since children could misread the happiness or sadness indicating how they feel rather than how confident they are in their abilities (Bandura, 2006). This research used circles that progress in size to show the differences in efficacy and for the ease of the student.

Minimizing Response Bias

Several safeguards were put into place to ensure the reliability of the data. First, the students were assessed on their self-efficacy at two different times throughout the research period. Prior to the survey distribution, students were given explanations of the survey and the purpose of the research. Students were educated on how to use the scale in the survey and the survey remained the same in format throughout the research period to ensure consistency and familiarity.

Before the surveys were used with the students they were reviewed with the cooperating teacher and district research manager to ensure they were not ambiguous or confusing. Before survey completion, a discussion took place in the classroom with the

researcher and the students to explain the meaning of self-efficacy and the difference between beliefs and actual ability. Several examples were provided to the students to demonstrate the difference in meaning.

Setting of the Research

This study was completed over six weeks at a mid-sized elementary school in an eastern St. Paul suburb. The students in the school were from predominantly middle-class families. The school serves 765 students in kindergarten through fifth grade. The student population at the school is comprised of mainly 79% Caucasian, 11% Asian, and 6% African American families. Of the student population, 6% qualify for free or reduced lunch. In 2016, the Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments (MCA) results showed 77% student reading proficiency, 80% math proficiency, and 81% science proficiency. The school opened in 1991 and has a student/staff ratio of 15:1. Additionally, 81% of the teachers on staff have master's degrees.

Participating Teacher

The classroom teacher Mrs. Banford, has taught at the school for 16 years. She began her career in fifth grade in 2001. Mrs. Banford has a master's degree along with certification in English language learner (ELL) and gifted and talented education. For the 2016-2017 school year she changed from teaching fifth grade to third grade; prior to that, all of her experience was in fifth grade. As a fifth-grade teacher, she observed that students were not writing at an appropriate level for their grade. She expressed frustration with the writing students were doing in fifth grade involving both the mechanics and content. She stated, "Students not only lacked the quality in their writing but they didn't know the basics including when to indent, how to correctly write the title, and basic

paragraph structure. Consistently I noticed that the students were not prepared for grade level writing” (Interview, 2016).

Participating Class

One of the goals of Mrs. Banford in cooperation with the other third grade teachers was to develop a writing program that will prepare students for fourth and fifth grade. She wanted to see students write consistently throughout the year so they reinforced the learning from the first writing assignment and continued to practice until it became habitual. Her immediate goals were for the students to begin to improve their skills in content and structure and, through revision, add depth to their writing.

This research was designed for the participation of six to eight students, ensuring the sample would be large enough, understanding that there might be days where there would be absences of the students. It was important to get a strong enough number to provide a valid sample and it was also necessary to have variety including gender and academic ability of students in the research group. All of the students in the research group showed that there was opportunity for them to increase their self-efficacy based on the initial surveys. They also were students, based on feedback from the teacher, who would work well in a small group situation.

Research Group Size

In the research completed by Michael Dunn (2011), he commented that the ongoing challenge with writing includes a lack of resources (class size and time with individual students). In his study, the respondents recommended the need for small group instruction and one-on-one instruction. “Children need teacher guidance and practice in the classroom with a strategy’s process so as to become more proficient with writing”

(Dunn, 2011, p. 23). The third-grade class that was involved in the study consisted of 26 students. A group size of eight students allowed for effective small group instruction providing time for one-on-one instruction as well as feedback and discussion. The group was fortunate to have all the students present for all group instructional time.

Student Selection

After a pre-survey was completed, Mrs. Banford verbally provided details about the class including academic ability, behaviors, student schedules, and work habits. Student responses were reviewed from the initial survey and cross-referenced with the teacher comments to select a research group that would be most conducive to participation in the study. The responses on the survey were interpreted to indicate whether there was room for growth in self-efficacy and also removed were any responses that appeared to be on either extreme (too high or too low consistently).

The group selected had a mix of academic abilities including several high ability, majority average, one lower ability, and a combination of behaviors. Mrs. Banford believed that the students in the research study would work well in a small group setting that is separated from the majority of the class and the lower ability student would benefit from this type of instruction. Based on the initial surveys and teacher recommendation/approval the group of eight was selected.

Class and Research Group Demographics

The table below details the demographics of Mrs. Banford's third grade class and the eight-student research group.

Table 1. Class and Research Group Demographics

	Whole Class	Research Group
Race		
Caucasian	56%	62%
Hispanic	21%	0%
Asian	13%	25%
African American	10%	13%
Gender		
Male	55%	50%
Female	45%	50%
ELL	20%	0%
Other Health Impairments (OHI)	Number of Students	Number of Students
Autistic	2	0
Gifted and Talented	1	1
Speech	1	1
Physical	1	0
Visual	1	0

Procedure

Once approvals for the research were secured, the meetings with the research group began on a regular schedule for a six-week time period. The whole class was observed each day prior to breaking out with the research group in a separate work area. Over the course of six weeks a combination of teacher, text, and peer models were used

with the writing lessons in the research group. The 45-minute writing time included lesson modeling, discussion, and work time. A variety of topics were instructed over the six weeks that covered various aspects of content and mechanics in writing. The teacher was interviewed and observed for more detailed information throughout the six weeks.

At the conclusion of the six-week time period, results were gathered and comparisons and summaries were analyzed for themes that emerged, similarities and differences of the data, and any unique findings. Chapter four will specifically address the findings during this research time period and the specific insights the research showed. Chapter five, the concluding chapter, focuses on a summary of the results, a comparison to the literature and previous research, and a look at possible future research. The conclusion includes the major learnings of the researcher as well as recommendations for teachers to incorporate those findings into their own classroom.

CHAPTER FOUR

Results

Introduction

This research project was completed during a six-week time period from early November to mid-December 2016, in order to further explore the connection between modeling during writing instruction and the effects on student self-efficacy. After witnessing the difficulties elementary students faced in writing, this research was developed to address that issue. The intent of the study was to gather data and study a smaller group of students over an extended period of time to answer the questions: *Does modeling during writing instruction increase student self-efficacy?* and specifically, *How does a combination of teacher, peer, and text modeling work to enhance self-efficacy?*

Data was collected and observations were recorded in order to determine whether modeling was an effective teaching strategy that should be utilized more during writing instruction. This chapter will discuss the study including information on observations and data collected from the selected research students, lessons plans and the use of modeling, and lastly interpretations of the data from the surveys and writing samples collected from the students.

Research Overview

The research for this study began once approvals were secured from the HSC committee, IRB board, and participating school district, principal, and classroom teacher. After approvals, the classroom was visited before the data collection began to better understand the class personalities, classroom teacher and teaching style, and the current work of the students as well as the focus for the following six to eight weeks. As

mentioned, Mrs. Banford was developing a new curriculum for her class that would involve a consistent process of writing personal narratives from start to finish while following an organizational checklist. The goal was for students to become very familiar with the prewriting, writing, and post-writing progression and the completion of each step would move more easily throughout the process.

The official research began by administering the qualitative and quantitative pre-surveys (Appendices A and B) to the entire class. Prior to completing each survey, the intent of the surveys was provided as well as basic completion instructions. After the surveys were collected, the responses were reviewed. A group of eight students that participated in the research are further referred to as the “research group.” The initial intent was a group of six-eight students and it was decided that the larger group would ensure a stronger sample. An equal number of boys and girls were selected, also included were a range of skill levels and behaviors that were appropriate for productive small group instruction. The pre-surveys were also reviewed to allow for potential growth while eliminating those with extreme results. The final decision of research group selection was also based on teacher approval and recommendation considering her knowledge of the students and their daily habits and schedules.

Lesson Structure

During the six weeks of the study, the group of eight students began the writing lesson with the whole class. The research group then moved to another location outside of the classroom to work with the researcher on either the lesson that was used with the entire class while adding additional modeling, or another focus area in writing. A

combination of text models, teacher models, and student (peer) models were used (Appendix C).

Text models included well-known books or excerpts from books, chosen because the author demonstrated a particular skill practiced that day. Teacher models included stories and writing samples written either with the students observing or prior to class. Both text and teacher models were used as mastery models in this research. Student (peer) models included narratives and other writing samples the students wrote while working on a particular writing task. Peer models served mainly as coping models as well as teacher models occasionally. The majority of the writing samples were personal narratives. A variety of methods were used to present the models as well. Sometimes the students read an example from the flip-chart and other times they each had an individual copy. Using text models, generally the text was read to the students but occasionally the students took turns reading. Variances in delivery were used to accommodate diverse learning styles.

After each model was read or used as an example, the research group would discuss. The discussions included identifying different components of writing that the author used such as detail, strong words, feeling expression, and transitions. All elements that were identified on the pre-survey were discussed at some point throughout the six weeks. The class discussed why the author wrote a certain way and what changes could be made to improve the strength of the writing. It was observed that the students became so comfortable using models that they would quickly add their own ideas and suggestions to a well-known author's work or to the teacher examples. This willingness to share their

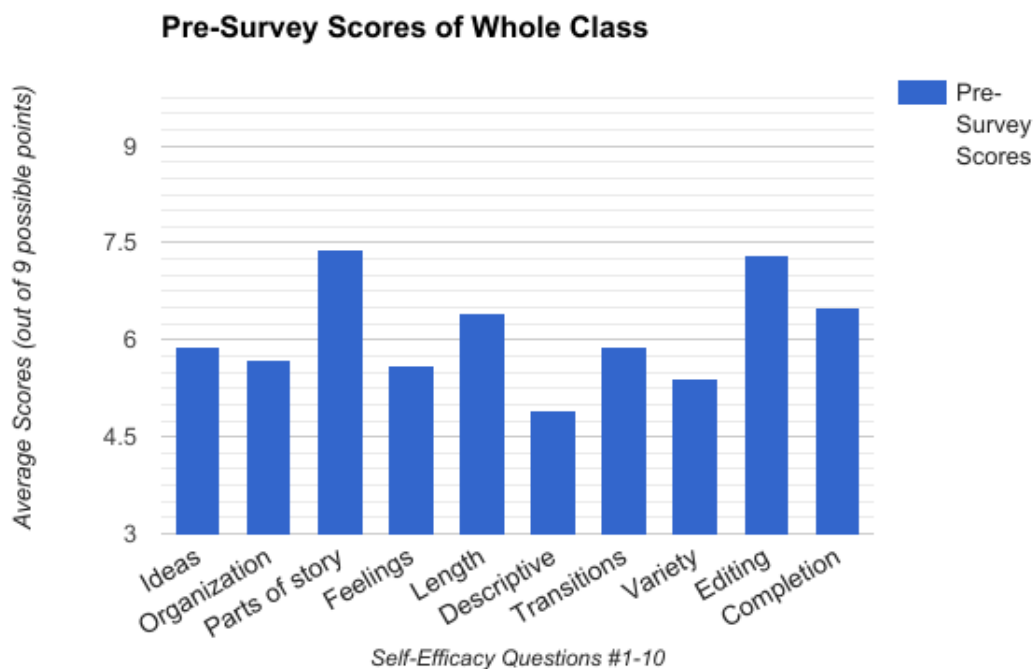
suggestions for improvement provided evidence of a confidence that the students had gained throughout the time together.

A combination of writing samples was used to demonstrate various features. This allowed for less time spent coming up with ideas and more time practicing word choice, detail use, writing with expression, and the use of transition words. After each model was used and discussed, students always had work time to practice writing the skill demonstrated through the modeling. Students were able to apply what had been discussed while it was still fresh in their minds.

Pre-Survey Results

The whole class took approximately 30 minutes to complete both the qualitative and quantitative surveys. The students were asked to evaluate ten questions about their writing beliefs and rank their beliefs by filling in the circle that corresponded to their beliefs. The scale ranged from 1-9 (9 being completely sure). Students were provided with an explanation about the difference between self-efficacy beliefs and ability. It was important for students to understand the difference in order for the results to be meaningful. The pre-survey results were as follows:

Figure 1. Pre-survey scores of the whole class



The results showed on a scale of 1-9 the average score for the survey on all questions was 6.1.

The highest self-efficacy scores on the surveys were:

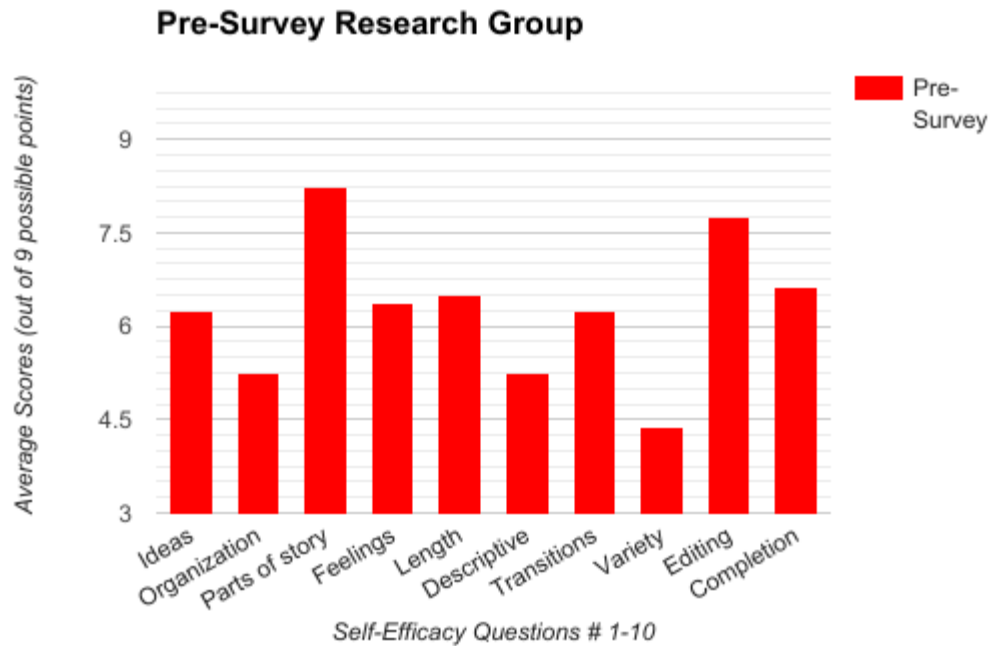
- Question 3: Parts of story- *How sure are you that you can write a story with a beginning, middle, and end?* (average score 7.4)
- Question 9: Editing- *How sure are you that you can revise and edit your own writing?* (average score 7.3)

The questions the students scored the lowest on for self-efficacy were:

- Question 6: Descriptive- *How sure are you that you can write using descriptive words?* (average score 4.9)
- Question 8: Variety- *How sure are you that you can use a variety of words in your writing?* (average score 5.4)

After analyzing the results of the research group, their pre-survey results were as follows:

Figure 2. Pre-survey results for the research group



The pre-survey results showed that the three areas where the research students scored the lowest efficacy beliefs were in the following questions:

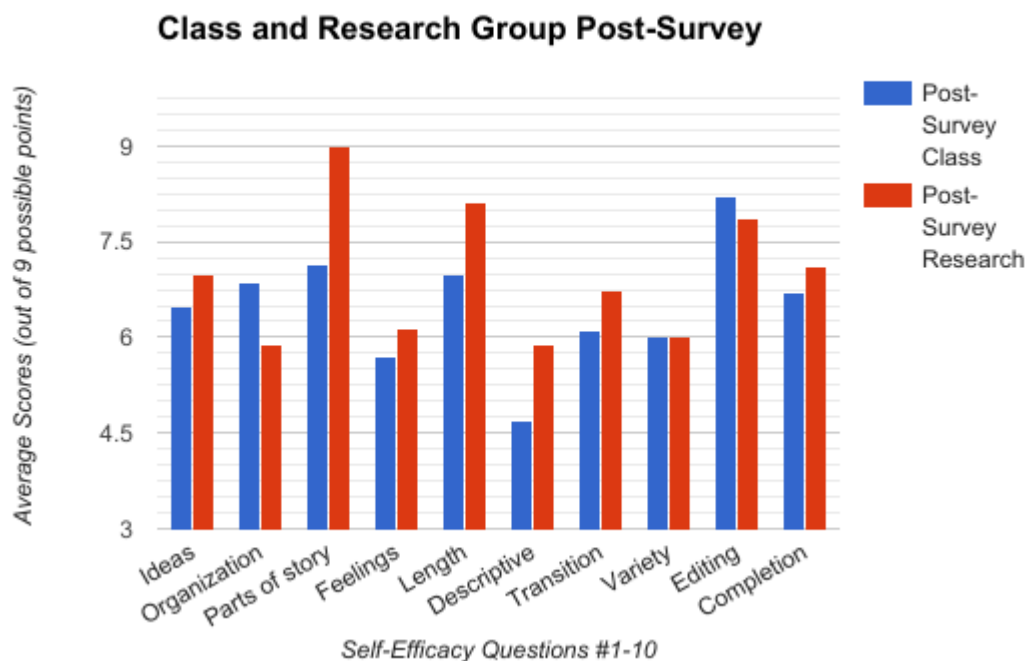
- Question 8: Variety- *How sure are you that you can use a variety of words in your writing?* (average score 4.38)
- Question 2: Organization- *How sure are you that you can organize your writing?* (average score 5.25)
- Question 6: Descriptive- *How sure are you that you can write using descriptive words?* Also scoring (average score 5.25)

Much the same as whole class scores, the two highest areas of self-efficacy for the research group were:

- Question 3: Parts of story- *How sure are you that you can write a story with a beginning, middle, and end?* (average score 8.25)
- Question 9: Editing- *How sure are you that you can revise and edit your own writing?* (average score 7.75)

The following graph shows the difference when the research group is separated from the whole class.

Figure 3. Pre-survey results of class and research group separated



Comparing the class by separating out the research group the results showed:

- The research group initially ranked higher on self-efficacy on eight out of ten questions.

- The two questions where the class ranked higher were on organization and variety of words.

The largest discrepancy between the class and research group was:

- Question 8: *Variety- How sure are you that you can use a variety of words in your writing?* The difference between the class and the research group was an average of 1.4 points.
- Question 3: *Parts of story-How sure are you that you can write a story with a beginning, middle, and end?* The difference was 1.15 average points.

Student Observations/Interviews

On one of the final days together, the research group was asked a series of questions to gain more insight into the use of modeling over the six weeks (Appendix E). In general, the students shared that models were helpful to them because they provided inspiration and ideas. Coping models were reassuring because they were reminded that mistakes are a part of the writing process. Increased confidence in the students was apparent through their responses about how their writing had changed over the six weeks of work, commenting that they have more to say and write now with more detail and better word choices.

Post-Survey Results

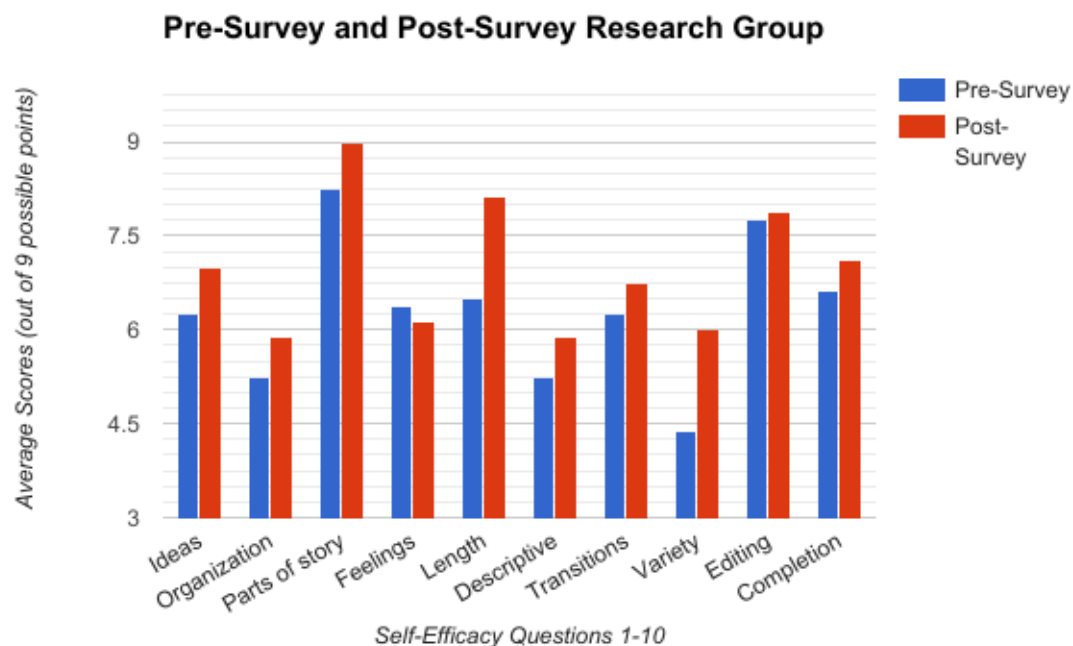
On the final day with the students the qualitative and quantitative surveys that had been used prior to the research were distributed. All of the students in Mrs. Banford's third grade class completed both surveys (Appendices A and B). The results of the responses of the eight students in the research group showed an increase in 54 points overall from the pre-survey. This point total was a 10% increase in overall self-efficacy

scores from the pre-test six weeks prior. Of the eight students, six students' scores improved, one student remained the same, and one student had a decrease on the quantitative score. The largest change was an increase of 17 points by one student and the student that showed a decrease scored seven points less on the post-survey.

The two questions where research students showed the largest increase as a group were:

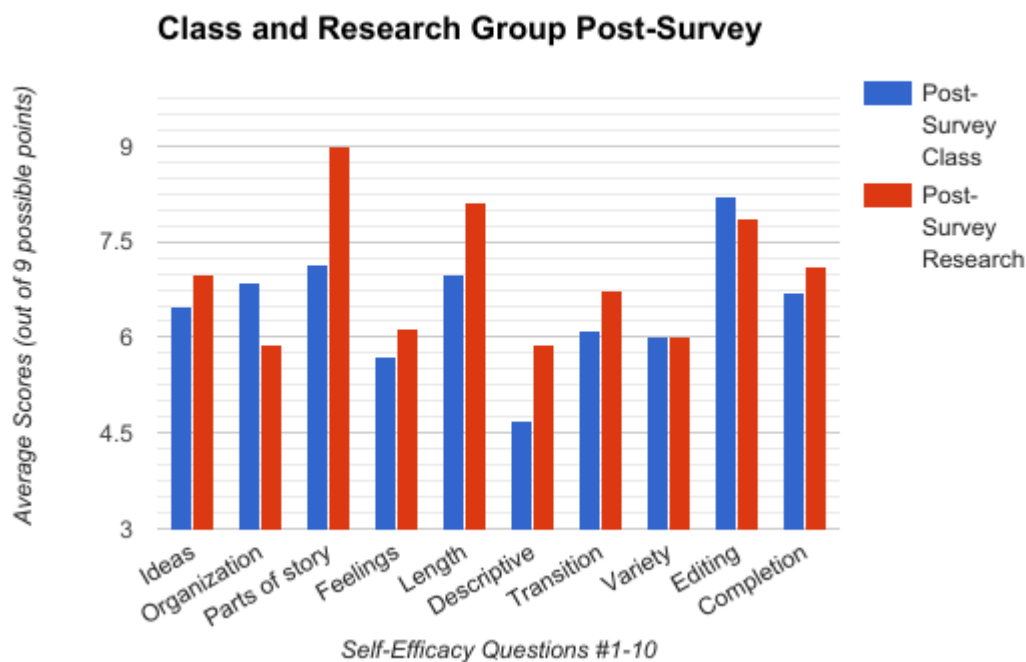
- Question 5: Length- *How sure are you that you can write at least one page about your topic?* Scores improved 1.63 points on average.
- Question 8: Variety- *How sure are you that you can use a variety of words in your writing?* Scores improved 1.63 points on average.

Figure 4. Pre-survey and Post-survey results of research group



When comparing both the research group and the rest of the class, the scores on the quantitative post-survey showed that both groups showed an increase on the self-efficacy scores.

Figure 5. Class and research group post-survey results



The overall average scores went up 8% in the rest of the class and 10% in the research group. The increase was slightly better in the research group. The amount of efficacy increase was higher, though, with the research group than that of the rest of the class. The largest increase in average points for the remainder of the class was on the following questions:

- Question 2: Organization- *How sure are you that you can organize your writing?* (.96 average point improvement)

- Question 1: Ideas- *How sure are you that you can come up with ideas to write about?* (.72 average point improvement)

The research questions asked at the beginning of the research were:

- *How does modeling during instruction increase writer self-efficacy?*
- *How does a combination of teacher, peer, and text modeling work to enhance self-efficacy?*

The research points to the possibility that modeling increased writer self-efficacy. A combination of teacher, peer, and text modeling is most desirable in the classroom because different students benefit from the various types of models. The literature also suggests that varying abilities in students will tend to prefer mastery as opposed to coping models (Schunk & Zimmerman, 2007) and that with a variety of models, students will find at least one they can relate to (Schunk & Zimmerman, 2007).

Revisiting the Literature Review

An important part of each lesson was the discussion with the students about the model as was indicated as imperative in the literature review. Dole (1991) pointed out that when teaching cognitive strategies using models teachers should model why the strategy is used, how it is used, and what strategy to use in the situation. After each model was used these discussions were held in the research group. As examples were read, students began to quickly identify descriptive and transitional words and categorize word choice by strong, average, or weak. The regular conversations in the group involved students adding different words that they thought might make the story more interesting or descriptive. It was through these discussions that the students learned to identify high quality work as was determined through the research of Pajares, Johnson and Usher

(2007). Some of the early work during the six-week session included focusing on editing including indenting, capitalization, and punctuation. Throughout the six weeks we continued focusing on mechanics but moved into more content focus.

As Shanahan (2015) stated, by studying a model so closely that one can reproduce it, the student shows he understands the original work but also he sees value in it. This comment was concurred by research student, Adam, during the student interviews when he responded to the question why he valued the text models the most. He stated, “because you can memorize how they did it and do your writing like they did.”

Much of the focus in the main classroom and in the research group was the use of strong words so this improvement was understandable. Also, much of the growth in word use (both transitional and variety), organization, and idea generation could help the students produce more written work.

The majority of the time was spent in the research groups using cooperative models where students worked together on a writing project and offered suggestions for improvement (Schunk, 2003). The students all modeled as they explained their thoughts in the writing process. This also provided the opportunity to see coping models where students were able to see mistakes being made and then corrected. As was also indicated in the students interviews, these coping models and seeing mistakes was reassuring and provided additional learning opportunity. Students commented that coping models or student models helped them identify mistakes and then compare to their own work, helped to generate ideas for writing, and most importantly understand that making mistakes and corrections is a natural part of the process.

Conclusions

The data indicates that the modeling work completed over the six weeks may have helped the students in the research group experience higher levels of self-efficacy with their skills in the ten different areas of writing evaluated. The student scores in the research group on self-efficacy improved 10% through our time period together. What was even more apparent from the observations and actual work with the students over the six weeks was their increasing confidence, positive attitudes, and the enjoyment they were experiencing. The difference between the research group and the rest of the class was minimal (10% increase compared to 8% increase) and both groups did show an increase in efficacy. These results demonstrate that the technique of modeling could be useful for improving student self-efficacy in writing.

Since the school day moves quickly and the time allotted for each subject area is limited, often much of the writing time ends up being spent in the pre-writing including gathering ideas and beginning writing. This lack of accomplishment during a work period can leave the students frustrated. By using a model, the students started working with more ideas and a clearer picture of what they might do in their own work. Ultimately, more actual time was spent writing in the 20 minutes of allotted work time.

In the observational work and through student interviews it was identified that all three types of models: text, teacher, and peer were helpful to the students. Different students found the various types of models to be more useful. It is possible that the various types of models are more appropriate for different writing lessons. This further differentiation could be explored in future research.

CHAPTER FIVE

Conclusion

Major Learnings

Modeling is a teaching strategy easily incorporated into any classroom subject. The benefits of modeling for all ages are numerous, but as this research has shown one key benefit, building self-efficacy, is one that can lead to improved results and greater internal satisfaction for the student. This research sought to answer the question: *How does modeling during instruction increase writer self-efficacy?* and specifically *How does a combination of teacher, peer, and text modeling work to enhance self-efficacy?* The research demonstrated that modeling does increase self-efficacy and all three types of models are beneficial to the writer.

Modeling can easily be expanded to all subjects while also benefitting all ages. It can be as simple as incorporating an additional example with each lesson into the class to demonstrate an idea or approach.

Students need to absorb a lot of information during a lesson which is challenging especially for young students. Not only are students processing the directions and instructions from the teacher, but also experiencing various classroom distractions. Additionally, there exists the varying attention spans and abilities of the students. These factors all affect how prepared the student feels to work independently. The more explicit directions one can provide students, the better prepared they are to work independently and with confidence.

Modeling is an important part of that preparedness because it provides a concrete, step-by-step example where the student can see what is ultimately expected. It also can provide inspiration and ideas to students as they begin their own writing.

The students in this research did show an increase in self-efficacy in several areas during the research time period. The class in which the research was done had a strong focus on writing. The classroom teacher, Mrs. Banford, recently transitioned from fifth grade to third grade and previously noticed a lack of adequate writing skills at the fifth-grade level. Collaboratively, she worked with the grade level teachers to develop a more focused writing plan to ensure students were prepared for higher-level writing. Because of her dissatisfaction with student writing, I believe that her writing practice was extremely strong and focused. She also spent a considerable amount of time during each of the 45-minute writing blocks practicing modeling to the students even prior to the research.

The research included additional modeling beyond that in the class of Mrs. Banford. In each session with the students, supplemental models were incorporated including either a teacher model, text model, or student model or a combination of any of these (Appendix C). Time was spent with all of the models discussing what the author did well and what could be improved. Students viewed models in different formats, as well. Sometimes students read through the model displayed on a flip chart, other times students had individual copies to read and make notes on. In doing so, it was observed that some students focused more when they had an actual example in their hands where they could take notes or mark the writing. Also, students were read text models and took turns reading models to the entire group. The variety of models were used to appeal to different

learning styles for the students to ensure that the use of the models was most effective. During some learning sessions they were read to and other times they read the examples themselves. Time spent observing the models included a daily discussion focused on “what did the author do?” The amount of time writing and overall amount of modeling was most likely increased in this classroom compared to other 3rd grade classrooms.

One benefit of the research was working with a small group and observing more closely how they were able to benefit from the models. Again, it was observed that students began their writing more quickly with less time spent getting started and thinking of ideas. They demonstrated a confidence in their writing as well as the ability to identify strong writing traits. They were comfortable making mistakes and offering suggestions to other students and to the teacher because we practiced this every day we met.

Mrs. Banford commented that she noticed the students in the research group enjoyed working in small groups. She said, “Kids always want more attention especially when they are writing. They want to be able to talk through their ideas and writing” (Interview, 2016). Her comments, when asked about what she noticed in terms of writing changes from the beginning of the research (November to mid-December), included enhanced word selection, improved ability to add depth (through word choice, detail, and expression), revision skills, and overall structure improvements. She commented, “The structure of writing has definitely improved. They may not be doing it right the first time but they know what they need to do and can go back in and add it.” She added, “Seeing examples over and over has reinforced those skills.”

The students in both classrooms had the benefit of two teachers working with the group. The research group worked in a select group of eight students which left 18 students in the classroom. The research group in particular had the benefit of 1:8 teacher ratio which likely increased the student's self-efficacy beliefs simply by the nature of having more contact with the teacher to work through writing problems and get more individual feedback during the writing session.

During the six-week time period the students finished their first personal narrative and then went on to complete at least one additional narrative. Another advantage to the classroom arrangement was Mrs. Banford was completely responsible for the writing instruction for two third grade classes. She used the same lessons with her homeroom class and that of another class, rotating two-three days per week. This provided her with efficiencies of time because she was able to use the lesson with two classrooms as well as strength in her teaching having presented the lesson twice. She was able to adjust her lessons to ensure they were the most effective for the students.

It was a goal of the classroom teacher to have the students completely understand the writing process including the prewriting, writing, editing, and revising steps and then repeat it again so that the process was reinforced. During the time with the students over the six weeks, it was noted that students became very independent with their writing. They kept a writing checklist with them at all times and moved through the checklist to make sure that each step of the process was followed. Mrs. Banford modeled each step and kept examples throughout the classroom for students to use as a reference.

Throughout the research period as examples were shown, students quickly started interacting with the models. Before long even if reading a text or teaching model,

students would make suggestions for improvement. This willingness to improve upon a model from a text example or the teacher was a demonstration of the increasing self-efficacy of the students. Through the six weeks they continually noticed word choice, supporting details, emotion, and watched for editing in models that were used.

When reviewing the student responses on the qualitative portion of the survey, one student (Hannah) from the research group when asked the question “Do you like to write?” responded, “Yes, I like to write because I like learning new things. I like listening to people read stories so I can be inspired. I like when I learn from making mistakes. I like to get new ideas.” Another student (Aiden) responded, “I like writing because I can show what I feel like. I want to inspire people to write. It’s real fun writing. It makes me happy.” These are the types of comments from students that give hope to educators that students will want to write and as a result the quality of writing will most likely improve through practice.

Literature Review Revisited

As explained in the literature review, writing is a very complex, multi-component subject, involving many aspects. Although there has been a lot of research in the areas of writing ability, less exists on the focus of the self-efficacy of the writer. There exists a particular interest in the self-efficacy of the writer because when students have stronger self-efficacy beliefs, it seems that they enjoy the process more. If educators can teach them to believe in themselves as writers, they are more apt to practice the craft and persevere. Writing can be much more than an academic subject but also a personal pursuit, a form of relaxation, method of true expression, and simply a form of communication.

Albert Bandura made significant contributions to the study of self-efficacy in *Social Foundations of Thought and Action* (1986) and stated that beliefs can powerfully influence behavior in the effort put forth and the interest. It was also found that the judgements people make about their beliefs are good indicators of their performance (Pajares, 2003). Bandura (1986) also followed-up in his social cognitive theory that one's thoughts can be a predictor of performance. It is because of this link that studying self-efficacy is so very important. Self-efficacy affects behavior not only directly, but also other factors such as goals and aspirations, outcome expectations, and the perception of impediments. The beliefs determine if someone thinks erratically or strategically, optimistically or pessimistically, and affects the path taken to achieve.

Research has shown that modeling has several positive effects when used during instruction and can be a very effective strategy in writing development, both by the teacher and other students. The approach to writing embodied in the National Literacy Strategy Grammar from Writing (NLS, 2000a) and Developing Early Writing (NLS, 2001) is based on research which showed that children's writing can be enhanced by teacher modeling, demonstrating, and using quality texts to highlight craft and artistry in writing (Corden, 2002). Everyone, not just young students, struggles with writing. It is important for students to learn how to overcome these struggles and that they are a normal part of the writing process.

If we want our students to grow as writers, we have to come out from behind the curtain and model to our students what good writers do. We can't hide, like the Great Oz, standing behind the curtain barking our writing assignments. We can't simply present our students with beautiful, polished drafts and ask them to

replicate them. If we want our young writers to improve, we have to plant ourselves in the middle of our classroom and demonstrate how we approach this confusing thing we call the writing process. (Gallagher, 2011, p. 225)

In the Teaching Reading and Writing Links project (TRAWL) 14 teachers, working as research partners in seven primary schools, explored ways of helping students grow as reflective writers (Corden, 2002). Evidence from the TRAWL project indicated that a critical evaluation of literature and an examination of literary devices can help students become more reflective writers. As teachers helped students draw attention to features of texts and through group discussion-students developed an awareness of how texts were constructed. The use of literary terms helped students clarify their ideas and thoughts, identify issues, and engage in lucid informed discussion about their writing. They were then able to integrate these literary features into their own writing. This is a clear example from the literature where modeling helps students identify the parts of good writing and then transfer to their own work. This ability to transfer demonstrated a strong self-efficacy as explained by one child, “I never knew I was this good” (Corden, 2002, p. 273).

Implications for Educational Organizations

Modeling as an instructional strategy has many benefits. It does not add any additional expense and the time allowed for it can be minimal, but the numerous benefits have been demonstrated through this research. In a time where there are both budget and time restrictions, modeling remains an applicable and practical teaching strategy.

The number of ELL students in the classroom continues to rise. In the research classroom, 20% of the students were considered ELL students. Modeling may be

particularly helpful for students that may struggle with the language in seeing an actual demonstration of a skill that is desired. Models can also be used to appeal to different learning styles such as those that are more visually focused and serves as a scaffolding method for differentiation within the classroom.

By using teacher modeling, a teacher is doing exactly what is expected by the student. If some part of the lesson becomes ambiguous or could be improved, the teacher will see this while modeling and can make adjustments before the students begin independent work. Effective teaching involves constant reflection on possible improvements. Modeling provides the teacher with an opportunity to see the lesson in action rather merely in theory or as an idea.

Research Limitations

The main limitation of this study included the amount of time to work with students. As the research was done in cooperation with a classroom, the time devoted to writing was limited to 45 minutes, 2-3 days per week. Within the 45-minute writing time, students spent time working on their writing so the modeling was therefore limited to one or two examples. More time in general each day to practice modeling and then individual practice would be even more effective. Increasing the amount of time devoted to writing in general was one of the recommendations offered by the National Commission on Writing (2003). The median amount of time spent writing each day according to teachers was about 20 minutes (this included writing material of at least a paragraph in length or longer). The recommendation was for it at least to be doubled and avenues for doing such included more work at home and combining the writing with other subjects (Cutler and Graham, 2008).

This study lasted for six weeks. Since a certain amount of time is spent learning about the students, their work styles and classroom habits, perhaps eight to ten weeks would have improved the results as well. It took a few sessions to learn how to best work with the group of selected students and which techniques worked the best.

As mentioned, Mrs. Banford was teaching 3rd grade for the first time. The advantage of the change was that she was redesigning the writing focus and curriculum to prepare students for 4th and 5th grade, but it was the first time she had been through the personal narrative writing process with this age level. Results with the research may have been different even after another year of having full year of experience with 3rd grade writing.

An additional limitation in this study is that the research group of eight students was a small number and they were all from the same class, grade, school and district. In further research the study could be done with an increased number of students across a larger sample area. Also, this study focused on writing the personal narrative. Future studies could also be done with different types of writing including information, persuasive, creative, etc. to see if the strategy is transferable.

Both groups had increases in overall efficacy, however the increase was greater in the research group overall and the increase on certain specific questions was higher. The two questions that showed the highest increase (both questions improved 1.63 average points) were Question 5: *How sure are you that you can write at least one page about your topic?* And Questions 8: *How sure are you that you can use a variety of words in your writing?*

Revising and editing writing are taught from the earliest writing experiences as well as the development of a story to include a beginning, middle, and end. Higher scores on these questions was understandable. It is not surprising that students rated themselves the lowest as a whole class in both the pre-and post survey results in self-efficacy on use of descriptive words (average score of 4.95) and variety in word use (average score 5.7) as these are not taught as much in early writing but are required increasingly through higher levels.

Several factors could have contributed to the similar post-survey results between the groups. First, both classes did work extensively over the six weeks on various writing techniques. More learning about writing and practicing took place in the six weeks which would naturally increase scores on self-efficacy. The classroom teacher utilized modeling in her classroom on a regular basis as well and through my observations used models with explicit directions on how and why the model was used. The teacher also displayed many visuals throughout her room which provided models for the students to use on a daily basis (Appendices F, G and H)

Recommendations for Future Research

Further research in the area of modeling and self-efficacy could focus on differences between the three types of modeling: teacher, peer, and text. This research used a combination of all three but the focus could be on comparing the three varying types for effectiveness and if order of use makes a difference. Studies could also be done to see the differentiation between efficacy at various grade levels to assess if there is a point at which efficacy starts to decline or increase and contributors to that. In the school district where the research was conducted there was not a writing curriculum. Modeling

was used in the classroom by the teacher and displayed throughout the classroom, but in general what is taught varies by grade. A set curriculum may help as students transitioned between the grades to make sure the instruction was comprehensive. Math and reading are usually taught with a text that students have as a reference to aid understanding something and they are taught to go back and review the examples in the text. This research included a pre- and post-assessment. In the future, research assessments could be done more frequently to determine at what point the efficacy is actually increased.

As research indicated, writing is a difficult subject not only for students but for the educators to teach. One reason for this is the lack of self-efficacy on the part of the teacher which can be attributed back to among other things teacher training and his or her own lack of belief in writing abilities. Since the practice of writing helps build self-efficacy, the more a teacher writes as a model for the students, his own beliefs about self-efficacy could be altered. Additionally, teacher self-efficacy in writing instruction could be a focus of further research.

Communication of Results

At the completion of the research, the results and finished work were shared with the cooperating teacher, principal, and the district in addition to the availability on the Hamline database for the educational community in general. The cooperating teacher, as discussed, is in the process of refocusing the writing instruction of the 3rd grade students to better prepare them for 4th and 5th grade when the writing demands increase. This information will be particularly helpful to her and the other team teachers as they continue to refocus their efforts.

The technique is something that can easily be incorporated into the teaching strategy of every teacher no matter experience level, grade, or subject.

As the students worked during this research they learned how to effectively use models. They were educated about the benefits the use of a model can have on their own writing whether it be a teacher, peer, or text model. The intent of the research was that students will also understand to seek out models in their learning not only in writing but in other areas to help them understand concepts and set expectations for the lesson. Models can help in understanding, clarifying, but also inspiring. It was found repeatedly that when exposed to models students used very similar ideas but altered them slightly. The model helped them to begin writing promptly. Without the aid of a model students struggled more to begin and less time was then spent actually writing.

Reflecting on the Capstone Process

This experience from beginning to completion has truly been a holistic, personal, and integrated journey as is intended through Hamline's Master of Arts in Teaching (MAT) program. I developed an interest in this subject through my own disillusionment of seeing students struggle at various grade levels throughout the district where I work. The frustration they experienced was disheartening. As a new teacher, I quickly became aware that writing is an area that needs focus in our schools. It was the emotion that I saw from the students: tears, shutting down, and statements of uncertainty in their abilities, that helped me narrow my focus. My interest focused more on the writer's self-efficacy in the writing journey rather than solely performance. Interestingly, I've experienced this same difficulty with writing outside the schools, in the professional world as well.

Written communication is an essential part of our relationships and paramount for the expression of ideas. Learning to write effectively is crucial for everyone at all ages. As an educator, I want to ensure that I am helping in the process during the critical elementary years when beliefs about these skills are still forming.

The completion of the capstone has been a very integrative experience, not only as a researcher and student, but also as a writer myself. Many times, through the process of completion I have found myself much like seven-year old Orin described in Chapter one, sitting quietly and staring at a blank page, unsure of where to go next. Writing is difficult for everyone and anyone no matter age or gender. It is a fundamental skill and learning how to fully utilize tools, including models, can help alleviate the stress that often accompanies the process.

I believe that my own teaching practice will benefit from this research. Having seen first-hand the benefits of models in student understanding and efficacy, I will most definitely incorporate additional modeling into my teaching practice.

One of the foundational pieces to my education at Hamline has been the incorporation of reflection into my teaching practice. This capstone process as the culminating project in my education program has given me to opportunity to incorporate theory and practice. My capstone work has been enhanced through the past three years of teaching experience I have had. Having the opportunity to practice in different grades and various classrooms, I have seen a consistent need for the focus on self-efficacy. By incorporating my own observations and practice with the intellectual and academic focus that is required in the completion of a capstone, I feel that I have truly grown as an educator and student myself.

Through the journey I have had conversations about the subject with many different teachers, administrators, university personnel, and students. It has been interesting to hear that the concern is relevant. The importance of being able to contribute to the knowledge that exists on the subject is a valuable part of my own educational experience. Bandura (1986) professed that the stronger the sense of self-efficacy, the greater the perseverance and the higher the likelihood the task will be performed successfully. I know that as a reflective educator, the journey to make a difference will continue. Gallagher (2011) reinforced the importance of writing as a focus for educators.

Let's not forget that writing has become much more than a school activity; it has become a cornerstone to living a literate life. With this in mind, let's move our students beyond the narrowly prescribed "school writing" and give them the kinds of authentic writing instruction and practice that will prepare them to be lifelong writers. (p.21)

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APPENDIX A

1. How sure are you that you can come up with ideas to write about?

Very unsure

Somewhat sure

Completely sure



2. How sure are you that you can organize your writing?

Very unsure

Somewhat sure

Completely sure



3. How sure are you that you can write a story with a beginning, middle, and end?

Very unsure

Somewhat sure

Completely sure



4. How sure are you that you can express your feelings in your writing?

Very unsure

Somewhat sure

Completely sure



5. How sure are you that you can write at least one page about your topic?

Very unsure

Somewhat sure

Completely sure



6. How sure are you that you can write using descriptive words?

Very unsure

Somewhat sure

Completely sure



7. How sure you that you can use transition words in your writing?

Very unsure

Somewhat sure

Completely sure



8. How sure are you that you can use a variety of words in your writing?

Very unsure

Somewhat sure

Completely sure



9. How sure are you that you can revise and edit your own writing?

Very unsure

Somewhat sure

Completely sure



10. How sure are you that you can complete a writing assignment from beginning to end in your class?

Very unsure

Somewhat sure

Completely sure



APPENDIX B

Qualitative writing prompts for students

1. What do good writers do when they write? (Describe in 4 sentences)
2. Describe you as a writer. (Describe in 4 sentences)
3. Do you like to write? Why or why not. (Describe in 4 sentences)

APPENDIX C

Sample Lesson Plans

11/3/2016

Modeling type: Teacher modeling/student modeling-word choice activity

Purpose of modeling: Demonstrate the difference between average, good, and strong word choices.

Lesson plan: Students used paint strips with three color variations of the same color and started with an average word. Students then changed the word from average to good and finally strong. Teacher modeled the activity and then students modeled different words and their changes.

11/7/2016

Modeling type: Student models of personal narratives

Purpose of modeling: Showed student examples of three paragraph personal narratives.

Lesson plan: Students discussed what the author did well and what could be changed. Students then worked on their own personal narratives (#1). Several students in the group shared their personal narratives with the group.

11/9/2016

Modeling type: Teacher modeled writing a Veteran's Day letter

Purpose of modeling: Show the parts of a letter so students can write their own.

Lesson plan: Students wrote letters to veterans and shared their examples. Students then worked on personal narratives.

11/11/2016

Modeling type: Student model, personal narrative, *The Sled Run*

Purpose of modeling: Demonstrate a student's version of a three paragraph personal narrative that uses excitement, transition statements, details, and emotions.

Lesson plan: Students identified characteristics of a well-written personal narrative by coding their own copy with colored pencils to identify the following parts used by the author:

Red- author's emotions and feelings

Green-transition words

Purple- details

Blue-strong word choice

11/14/2016

Modeling type: Student model, *The Fire Drill*

Purpose of modeling: The class used a very simple student sample of a personal narrative called *The Fire Drill* to see how the story could be enhanced.

Lesson plan:

Students read the example together and then worked as a group to add detail, strong words, emotion, and expand the story. The final version then was read and students discussed what made this version better. As a class we then dissected what made this student example a well written personal narrative. We talked

about use of punctuation and the three parts of a story including: beginning, middle, and end of the narrative.

11/16/2016

Modeling type: text model, *My Rotten Redheaded Older Brother*, by Patricia Polacco

Purpose of modeling: Students read through the personal narrative to hear examples of details, emotion, and word choice.

Lesson plan: Students were read story and discussion followed to note choices the author made that strengthened the story. The group then discussed their favorite parts of the story. Students spent the remainder of our time together working on their personal narratives.

11/21/2016

Modeling type: Student model, personal narrative, *Lost at the Fair*

Purpose of modeling: Students read through an example of a student model personal narrative.

Lesson plan: Students each had a copy of the story and edited story to make it better. Students revised words to make them stronger and added details. At the end of the lesson, students shared their revised copies with the class.

11/23/2016:

Modeling type: Text, *An A from Miss Keller*, by Patricia Polacco

Purpose of modeling: Strong word use, also tells the story of writing a personal narrative. Ideas stressed included word variation and emotion.

Lesson plan:

We read the story and identified strong words the author used in story on post-it notes. Also, we used post-it notes to identify the writing elements used by author. During work time students worked on personal narratives from class. Students also worked on transition words in writing their class stories of “how to make a turkey” including: first, next, and then.

11/30/2016

Modeling type: Teacher model

Purpose of modeling: Demonstrate how to use a graphic organizer, brainstorm on ideas, titles, details, and emotions to include.

Lesson plan:

We used teacher modeled graphic organizer to brainstorm ideas for class narrative. We then started paragraph 1 of personal narrative-*The 4th of July Puppy*.

12/5/2016

Modeling type: Text, *A Tree Named Steve* by Alan Zweibel

Purpose of model: Demonstration of the use of details

Lesson plan: We read the story and discussed the story and identified how the author used of emotions and feelings as well as details. Students recited examples of the details used in the story. Students then copied down the main idea of the story and five supporting details. The group then worked on paragraph two of our class model personal narrative, *The 4th of July Puppy*.

As we worked on the class modeled narrative students added many details to our story. So many details were added that we could not use them all. Students also added emotion to our story and strong words.

12/8/2016

Modeling type: Student model/Teacher model

Purpose of model: Examples of transition words used in personal narratives were read. Student models were used and read by students. I then modeled how I might change some of the transitions to improve them.

Lesson plan: As a class students listed out examples of transition words. We listened to students read their own examples of transition words in their narratives. As a group we made changes to an example of a personal narrative adding transition words. In remaining session time students also identified words that could be made stronger and details that could be added.

12/12/2016

Modeling type: Teacher model/student model

Purpose of model: I used a teacher model, *Saturday Morning*, that demonstrated transition words and phrases.

Lesson plan: The class read through the model of a short narrative, *Saturday Morning*. We talked about how and why the transition phrases and words were used and how they signaled to the reader the direction of the story. Students then practiced writing a similar short narrative. At the completion of the work time, students read their examples to the group. As students read their

stories we identified the transitions and talked about even more additional options that could be used.

12/13/2016

Modeling type: Text, *Owl Moon* by Jane Yolen

Purpose of model: Demonstrate author's use of detail and descriptive words and phrases.

Lesson plan: I read the story of *Owl Moon* to the students for the purpose of identifying the detail the author used to describe elements in the story. As a class we reviewed what the author meant by using the descriptive words and phrases. Students worked on their own descriptive phrases and sentences to add to their personal narratives.

12/14/2016-final surveys distributed to the entire class.

APPENDIX D

Consent Letter

Dear Parent or Guardian,

I will be working with your child's class during the next 6 weeks while completing my Masters in Arts of Teaching degree from Hamline University. I will be in the classroom during regular writing time during the month of November through mid-December 2016. The purpose of this letter is to ask permission for your child to partake in the research. The research will be public and will be accessible to you after it is completed. Names of students, teachers, and school information will remain confidential.

The research purpose is to study if modeling during instruction helps to increase the students' beliefs in their writing abilities, also known as self-efficacy. A small study group of 6-8 students will be taught writing lessons using models (text, teacher, and student) to emphasize and explicitly demonstrate various parts of writing that your child will be working on already in the classroom. The modeling lessons will be comprised of the basic steps of writing including: idea generation, organizing, drafting, revising, and rewriting.

There is no risk for your child to participate, rather your child will receive additional small group focused instruction during this time period. The participants of this study will not be asked anything beyond completing classroom assignments that are already assigned throughout the school year for all third graders at ██████████ Elementary. No instructional time will be lost since all the research activities are part of focused instruction supported by state, national, and district curriculum and standards, with the likelihood of the activities causing discomfort being minimal. If any student demonstrates anxiety or discomfort upon knowing his or her work is being further analyzed, I will immediately talk with the child to gain understanding and contact the child's guardians. At any time, you have the full ability to withdraw your child's participation in the study if desired without any negative consequences.

I have received approval from the School of Education at Hamline University and from the Principal at ██████████ Elementary, ██████████. I am a licensed K-6 teacher and have taught at Middleton Elementary as a regular substitute teacher and long-term substitute teacher from 2013 - present. I completed my student teaching under the guidance of ██████████ during the spring of 2013. This research will be public scholarship and the abstract and final product will be cataloged in Hamline's Bush Library Digital Commons, a searchable electronic repository. It may be published or used in other academic ways.

If you agree that your child may participate, keep this top portion, sign the bottom portion, and return to school with your child.

Sincerely,
Kristin Locketz

██████████

Consent Letter Continued _____

I have received your letter about the study you plan to complete in the classroom focused on modeling during writing. I understand there is little or no risk involved for my child and that his/her confidentiality will be protected and I may withdraw my child at any time from the study.

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

APPENDIX E

Interview Questions/Answers for Students

1) How does using models when we write help us?

Examples of comments included:

- “They inspire me”
- “They help influence you to write”
- “Models give me ideas”
- “They use good details which helps”

2) What types of models help the most? (text, teacher, or peer)

- “Teacher-I like reading what the teacher writes to get ideas.”
- “Peer- because you can see what they did wrong and what you do wrong.”
- “Books- because you can memorize how they did it and do your writing like they did.”

3) How does it help to hear another student read a model?

- “It gives you more ideas for your paper”
- “They give you a boost and time to think”
- “Gives ideas”

4) How does it make you feel when a teacher or student makes a mistake when they are writing in front of you?

- “It is good to know you are not the only one.”
- “You learn it’s ok”
- “Making mistakes is a natural thing. Nobody writes their story right the first time.”

5) What are the most difficult parts of writing?

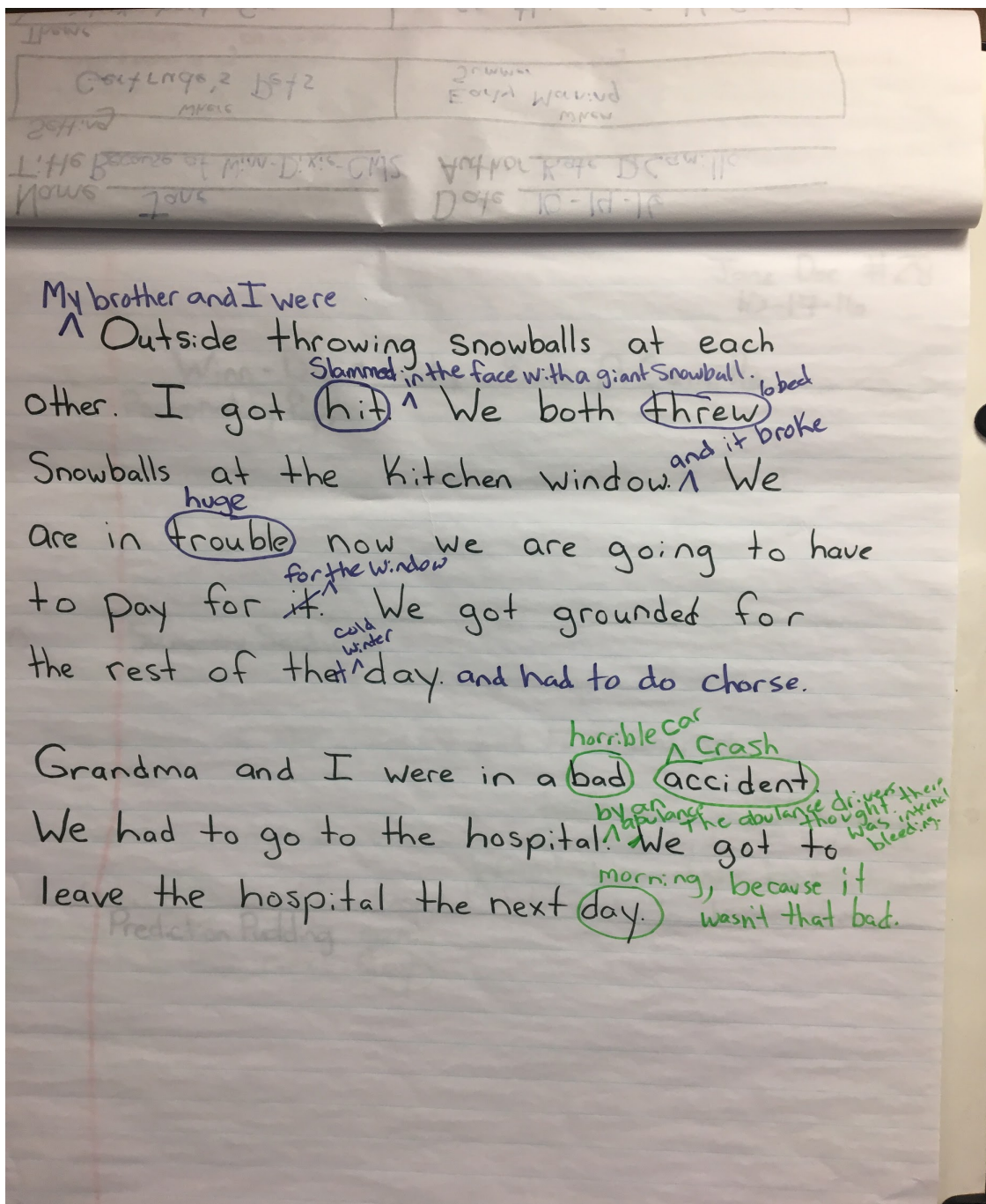
- “The first part because you don’t have a lot of ideas.”
- “Drafting and getting ideas”
- “The beginning because you don’t have ideas.”

6) How has your writing changed since the beginning of 3rd grade?

- “I use bigger words”
- “More detail”
- “I didn’t have much to say and now I do.”
- “I have more ideas in my brain and detail.”
- “I write with stronger words”

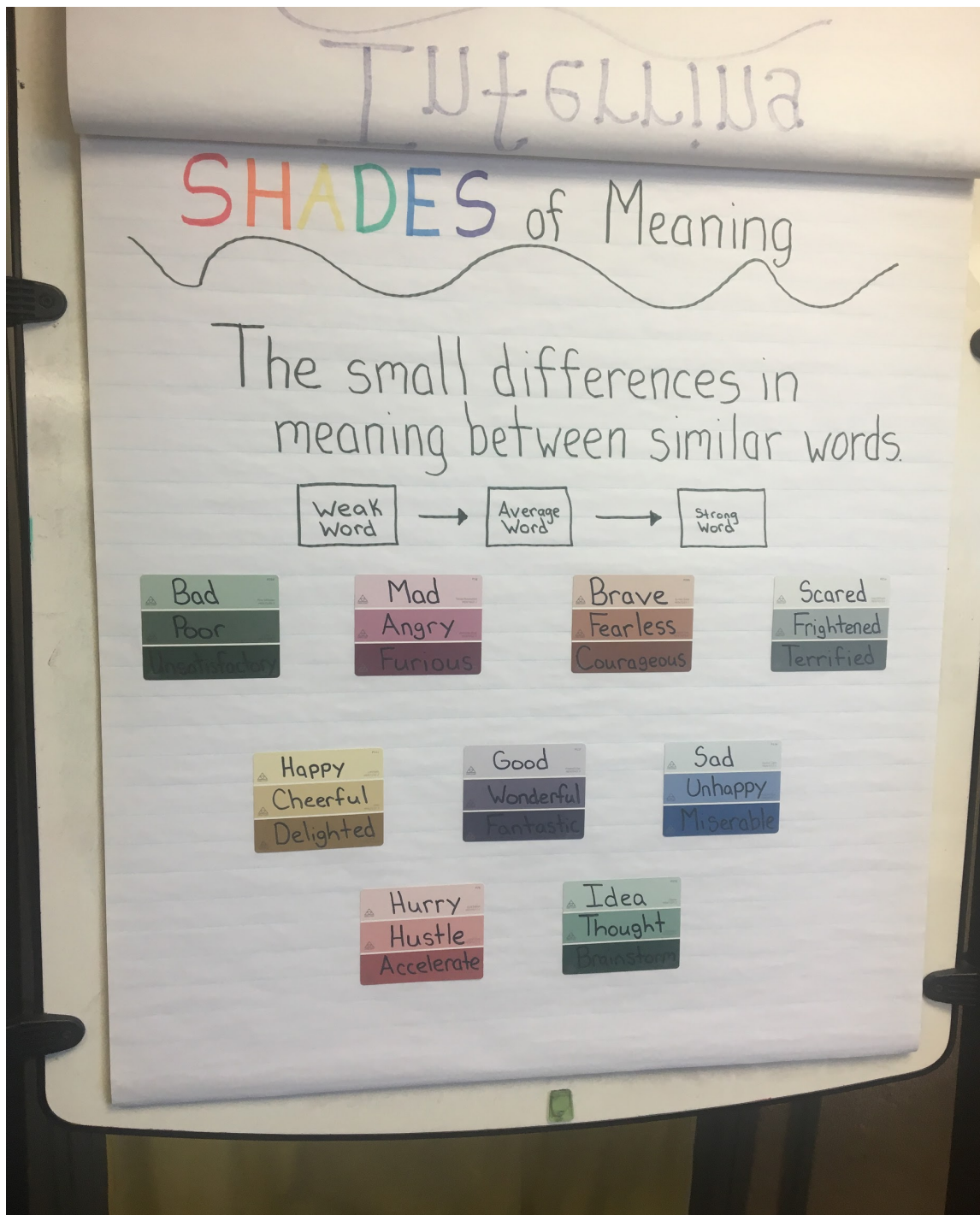
APPENDIX F

Photograph 1. Classroom Example of Personal Narrative with Editing



APPENDIX G

Photograph 2. Shades of Meaning Classroom Visual



APPENDIX H

Photograph 3. Classroom Example of Personal Narrative

