

Correlational Analysis of Demographic Factors and Writing Proficiency among Grade 10 ESL Students

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ABSTRACT

This study employed correlational analysis of student essays within a descriptive-correlational research design to quantify writing quality and examine relationships with demographic variables. Using a modified rubric by Ozfidan and Mitchell (2022), the respondents' written Narrative, Persuasive, Argumentative, and Informative Essays were assessed by a team of licensed English teachers in the Pantabangan District, Nueva Ecija, Philippines, for the ESL students' writing conventions: grammar, mechanics, sentence structure, and vocabulary. The current study's results showed that while students displayed strong academic performance and a preference for English, their written texts were below average in grammar, mechanics, and sentence structure but average in substance and vocabulary. Gender and subject preference showed no statistically significant association with writing proficiency, whereas average grades and parents' educational attainment demonstrated significant correlations with writing quality. Given the correlational design, these findings indicate association rather than causation. Recommendations include longitudinal research to examine further developmental trajectories, targeted instructional support for identified weak areas, and strengthened parent-teacher collaboration informed by the observed patterns. The proposed intervention program, "Project Write Right: A Skill-Targeted Writing Intervention and Enhancement," was also recommended for adoption by school principals and district-level English coordinators, with potential for broader implementation.

Keywords: Correlational Analysis, Writing Proficiency, Secondary Education, English as a Second Language (ESL)

INTRODUCTION

Language may be expressed through the four macro skills of communication: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. These four macro skills are equally and fundamentally significant components of communicative competence (especially in effective communication and language acquisition) and are integral to ESL (English as a Second Language) learning settings. This study focuses on the productive skill 'writing', which is widely recognized as a complex cognitive process. It is considered the most difficult skill, particularly in English Education (Bulqiyah et al., 2021), primarily because it requires a combination of skills that affect academic performances of the students. Additionally, writing relies on good fine motor functions, visual-motor planning, attention, sequencing, thinking, memory, and knowledge of grammar, sentence structure, vocabulary, and the purpose of writing, which are derived from many aspects, as shown in the research by Meslissorgou and Frantzi (2015). Most of the time, teachers, even across different learning areas, ask students to write texts as their responses (outputs) to analyze their learning after class discussions.

Secondary ESL students face multifaceted writing challenges that intensify during adolescence. Moses and Mohamad (2019) identified persistent difficulties in writing and language acquisition among ESL learners globally, while Ariyanti and Fitriana (2017) specified these as poor grammar, lack of cohesion and coherence, disorganized paragraphs, poor diction, and vocabulary misspelling. At the secondary level, these linguistic deficits become particularly critical as students encounter more cognitively demanding academic tasks. Rahmatunisa (2014) categorized the writing challenges that she found into linguistic, cognitive, and psychological dimensions, emphasizing that secondary students really require motivational support and structured writing activities such as peer correction to navigate these complexities.

The affective dimension of secondary writing development cannot also be underestimated, as Setyowati and Sukmawan (2016) found that secondary students perceived writing as "difficult" and "stressful," particularly when composing in English as a Second or Foreign Language. The transition from basic language proficiency to academic writing compounds this emotional burden. On another layer, Troia et al. (2013) demonstrated that writing motivation, activity, and performance are intricately linked during these developmental years, with grade level and ability significantly influencing outcomes. Lastly, Graham et al. (2017) further established that strategic writing behavior and motivation are critical predictors of performance among young, developing writers, highlighting secondary school as a crucial intervention window.

Empirical evidence reveals alarming quality deficits in secondary ESL writing. Most notably, Pablo and Lasaten (2018) discovered that even for Senior High School (SHS) students in the Philippines, the quality of their English-written academic essays fell under the verbal description of *Poor* to *Fair*, characterized by weak organization, limited vocabulary, grammatical errors, and mechanical inaccuracies. This finding aligns with Fareed et al.'s (2016) identification of systemic ESL writing problems, including linguistic interference, inadequate instruction, and insufficient practice opportunities.

Essay writing serves as the primary genre for developing academic literacy in secondary ESL contexts. Mohammad and Hazarika (2016) even emphasized that, despite these multilayered challenges, developing writing skills remains essential for effective communication and academic progress. One of its importance is what Van Geyte (2013) observed that essays remain the most common assignment across learning areas, requiring students to express thoughts, integrate ideas, and communicate effectively. Second, Bailey (2015) distinguished that between general essays and academic essays, the latter demand higher theoretical knowledge, disciplinary conventions, critical provocation, and structured argumentation. This distinction is critical for secondary students transitioning from narrative and descriptive writing to analytical and argumentative writing in order to enhance their essay writing process, which encompasses recursive stages: prewriting, thesis development, outlining, drafting, and revising (Greetham, 2022; Nordin, 2017). And in the writing process, Yunus et al. (2018) found that secondary students responded positively to prewriting strategies, recognizing their role in building confidence and improving the quality of their output, but mostly gets stunted after that, or there are less efforts in scaffolding the writing abilities to its maximum, especially that several colleges and universities require essays as part of their requisites before admission.

Systematic assessment, of course, is an essential kit for diagnosing secondary writing development. Rubrics serve as critical tools in this process, facilitating consistent evaluation while building student self-confidence and conceptual understanding (Boye & Collin College, 2021; Brooks, 2013; Hack, 2015). El Boudamoussi (2022) emphasized that criteria-based assessment supports the evaluation of higher-order thinking, while Nimehchisalem et al. (2014) identified standard rubric components—organization, content, mechanics, language use, and vocabulary—that align with essential writing conventions for secondary ESL learners.

Circling back with the evident writing difficulties, organized instructional interventions should be given to learners in bridging the learning gaps or deficiencies which are stipulated by the DepEd Order No. 13, Series of 2018, entitled "Implementing Guidelines on the Conduct of Remedial and Advancement Classes during Summer for the K-12 Basic Education Program," which is also in line with the implementation of Republic Act No. 10533, otherwise known as the Enhanced Basic Education Act of 2013. Both mandated memorandums stated that every learner must complete basic quality education with the necessary competencies and skills for higher education, including writing as a competency. It is implied that students learning how to write an essay in different forms should be a baseline in the English as learning area, and must also be addressed alongside reading, speaking, and listening.

With the guidance from the DepEd Order No. 35, Series of 2016 (which is "The Learning Action Cell as a K to 12 Basic Education Program School-Based Continuing Professional Development Strategy for the Improvement of Teaching and Learning"), the results of this study could inform and reform district-based educational policies and practices for Grade 10 students in the district to become proficient writers by implementing an intervention and enhancement plan tailored through this research.

The researcher's interest in this study was piqued by the same problems he encountered and observed among his Grade 10 students in a school in Pantabangan District—where the researcher served as the School English Coordinator—which aligned with the intervention of the mentioned problems. Moreover, no study has been conducted in the Pantabangan District on the writing proficiency of students' English texts, which could be considered a research gap.

METHODOLOGY

This study employed descriptive-correlational research methods. This method aimed to describe the proficiency of respondents' written English texts and their significance in relation to respondents' demographic profiles.

The study's respondents were the Grade 10 students from Pantabangan District, located in the Municipality of Pantabangan, province of Nueva Ecija, Region III, Philippines, comprising seven Public secondary schools: Cadaclan Integrated School-Pantabangan National High School Annex, Cambitala National High School, Conversion Integrated School, Ganduz National High School, Marikit Integrated School, Pantabangan National High School, and Pantabangan West Integrated School. The respondents of the study were 176 lifted from the total population of 440 Junior High School students with the use of Slovin formula under the Purposive Sampling with the specific criteria (must be enrolled Grade 10 students during the School Year 2022-2023 in a public secondary school, and must be in the Basic/Mainstream K-12 Curriculum or must not be attending Special Curriculum Program).

This study used a two-part instrument comprising a Survey Questionnaire and Writing Tasks. The Survey Questionnaire collected demographic data, including gender, favorite subject, average grade, and parents' educational attainment, using a researcher-developed tool supported by related literature and approved by one of the proponents, Dr. Mitchell (via email). The Writing Tasks involved four essay types—Narrative, Persuasive, Argumentative, and Informative—each structured with guiding questions to help respondents develop their introductions, bodies, and conclusions. It must be noted that these respondents were strictly prohibited from using their mobile phones while accomplishing the writing tasks.

The essays were evaluated using a modified scoring rubric from Ozfidan and Mitchell (2022), which assessed grammar, mechanics, sentence structure, substance, and vocabulary on a 20-point scale per criterion. Scores were interpreted using verbal descriptors ranging from "Poor" to "Excellent," based on predefined weighted-average ranges. To ensure scoring reliability, the researcher collaborated with three licensed English teachers from the district, who independently scored a random sample of 44 essays each (25% of the total) using the same modified rubric by Ozfidan and Mitchell (2022).

The researcher employed statistical tools, including percentage, weighted mean, and Spearman's rho, to analyze the data. Percentage and weighted mean were utilized to describe the respondents' demographic profiles and to interpret the correlational analysis of the five writing conventions. To determine significant relationships between the respondents' profile variables and the proficiency of their written texts, Spearman's rho was applied.

This study adhered to ethical research standards, as prior to data collection, approval was obtained from the Schools Division Superintendent of Nueva Ecija, permission was secured from school principals, and informed consent was obtained from parents/guardians of the minor participants. Students were also informed that participation was voluntary, and their responses would be kept confidential and used for research purposes only. Personal identities and sensitive information were anonymized using coded identifiers to protect participant privacy.

RESULTS

The results showed that out of 176 respondents, 87 (49.4%) were male and 89 (50.6%) were female. Most of the students (60 or 34.1%) obtained an average grade of 80-84 in their previous year. English (47 or 26.7%)

was the most frequent choice, while Filipino (44 or 25%) was the second most preferred subject of the respondents. The majority of respondents' mothers and fathers had only attended high school.

Table 1. The Writing Proficiency of Students on their English Written Texts

Written Texts	Narrative Essay (\bar{x})	Argumentative Essay (\bar{x})	Persuasive Essay (\bar{x})	Informative Essay (\bar{x})	Total Weighted Mean	Verbal Descriptions
Grammar	7.47	7.73	7.61	7.47	7.57	Below Average
Mechanics	7.57	7.67	7.76	7.70	7.68	Below Average
Sentence Structure	7.61	7.73	7.56	7.73	7.66	Below Average
Substance	8.20	8.44	8.54	8.36	8.54	Average
Vocabulary	8.30	8.47	8.53	8.27	8.53	Average

The assessment scores of the respondents' English written outputs were as follows:

a) Grammar - Below Average (7.57 wm): The results might have been due to factors such as differences in prior English language exposure, teaching methods, or learning styles. Specifically, the researcher observed lapses in grammar, such as difficulties in using the correct verb tense when recounting past experiences, different tenses of the same verb in a single sentence, incorrect use of modals (especially "do," "does," and "did"), inconsistent subject-verb agreement, unparalleled structure of lists, and misuse of auxiliary verbs (is, are, was, were).

b) Mechanics – Below Average (7.68 wm): Data revealed a consistent lack of proper use of margins, spelling, capitalization, and punctuation, supporting observations by English teachers that students have become less attentive to these elements. This decline aligns with the noted post-pandemic trend, in which reliance on mobile devices and their autocorrect features appears to have contributed to students' diminished proficiency in manual writing tasks.

c) Sentence Structure - Below Average (7.66 wm): The researcher found that the students kept on using the same sentence structure until the end of the essays with limited use of cohesive devices or transitional signals (if they do, they repeatedly used them without variance). They also used only short and simple sentences, that most of the times were fragmented, run-on, and with dangling modifiers.

d) Substance - Average (8.39 wm): It was found that the writings have a clear purpose, or the ideas were present or even well-developed. The essays were relevant to the topic, but the ideas were general, and some supporting evidence was needed to back them up.

e) Vocabulary - Average (8.39 wm): The respondents demonstrated an average range of vocabulary with occasional use of more sophisticated words, as they used a more general linguistic choice. On the other hand, instances of ambiguity or imprecise expression were present. Some students also occasionally used figurative language to enhance the essay's impact, though not consistently effective nor properly used in the idea's contextualization.

DISCUSSION

The research findings on the relationship between the demographic profile of the respondents and the writing proficiency of their written texts in terms of grammar, mechanics, sentence structure, substance, and vocabulary should also be looked at, as these might show significant information that may be used in the writing interventions and enhancement.

Table 2. Significant Relationship Between the Profile and the Proficiency in Grammar

Demographic Profile and Grammar			Narrative Essay	Argumentative Essay	Persuasive Essay	Informative Essay
Spearman rho	Gender	Correlation Coefficient	.128	.132	.046	.081
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.091	.081	.540	.287
		N	176	176	176	176
	General Average	Correlation Coefficient	.584**	.572**	.582**	.542**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000
		N	176	176	176	176
	Favorite Subject	Correlation Coefficient	.045	.039	.034	.089
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.549	.603	.653	.240
		N	176	176	176	176
	Educational Attainment of Mother	Correlation Coefficient	.126	.133	.200**	.149*
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.097	.079	.008	.049
		N	175	175	175	175
	Educational Attainment of Father	Correlation Coefficient	.218**	.183*	.222**	.215**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.004	.016	.003	.004
		N	175	175	175	175

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

a) Demographic Profile and Grammar: Results revealed that there was no significant association between gender and favorite subject with the respondents' English Written Texts in terms of grammar, while the average grade and the educational attainment of the parents were found significantly associated with the respondents' proficiency of grammar in all the written texts (Narrative, Argumentative, Persuasive, and Informative Essays). These findings suggest that students with higher academic performance and those whose parents attained higher levels of education tend to demonstrate better grammatical proficiency; however, these relationships do not imply causation, as other unmeasured variables may contribute to these patterns.

Table 3. Significant Relationship Between the Profile and the Proficiency in Mechanics

Demographic Profile and Mechanics			Narrative Essay	Argumentative Essay	Persuasive Essay	Informative Essay
Spearman	Gender	Correlation	.113	.075	.111	.120

rho		Coefficient				
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.136	.325	.144	.112
		N	176	176	176	176
	General Average	Correlation Coefficient	.533**	.495**	.581**	.502**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000
		N	176	176	176	176
	Favorite Subject	Correlation Coefficient	.084	.043	.026	-.011
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.269	.571	.728	.889
		N	176	176	176	176
	Educational Attainment of Mother	Correlation Coefficient	.103	.144	.152*	.178*
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.176	.058	.045	.018
		N	175	175	175	175
	Educational Attainment of Father	Correlation Coefficient	.171*	.197**	.263**	.169*
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.024	.009	.000	.026
		N	175	175	175	175

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

b) Demographic Profile and Mechanics: The data showed that there was no significant association between gender and favorite subject with the proficiency of the students' English Written Texts in terms of mechanics as the writing convention. On the other hand, the students' average grade showed significant positive associations with their proficiency in mechanics across all their written texts (Narrative, Argumentative, Persuasive, and Informative Essays). Lastly, the educational attainment of the parents was associated with mechanics scores, for mothers in terms of the scores in mechanics in the essays (Persuasive and Informative Essays) and for the fathers (Narrative, Argumentative, Persuasive, and Informative Essays). It is important to note that these associations do not establish causal direction; for instance, while higher parental education may provide supportive home environments for learning mechanics, it is also possible that students with better mechanical skills come from families with higher educational backgrounds, or that both are influenced by third factors such as socioeconomic status.

Table 4. Significant Relationship Between the Profile and the Proficiency in Sentence Structure

Demographic Profile and Sentence Structure		Narrative Essay	Argumentative Essay	Persuasive Essay	Informative Essay	
Spearman rho	Gender	Correlation Coefficient	.094	.168*	.094	.110
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.216	.026	.214	.146

	N	176	176	176	176
General Average	Correlation Coefficient	.583**	.522**	.542**	.589**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	176	176	176	176
Favorite Subject	Correlation Coefficient	.056	.056	.020	-.010
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.463	.459	.796	.894
	N	176	176	176	176
Educational Attainment of Mother	Correlation Coefficient	.143	.136	.149*	.179*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.059	.072	.050	.018
	N	175	175	175	175
Educational Attainment of Father	Correlation Coefficient	.154*	.185*	.261**	.181*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.042	.014	.000	.017
	N	175	175	175	175
* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).					
** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).					

c) Demographic Profile and Sentence Structure: The study showed that gender was significantly associated with sentence structure in writing argumentative essays, with females tending to score higher. Average grades showed significant positive associations with sentence structure across all four essay types, indicating that students with higher grades tended to write well-structured sentences. Favorite subjects showed a negligible association with sentence structure, indicating that students' subject preferences were not significantly linked to their writing skills. Lastly, the mother's educational attainment was significantly associated with sentence structure in persuasive and informative essays. In contrast, the father's educational attainment was significantly associated with sentence structure across all four essay types. These patterns describe co-occurrences between variables rather than causal pathways; therefore, caution should be exercised in inferring that parental education directly causes improvements in sentence structure, as the correlational design does not rule out alternative explanations.

Table 5. Significant Relationship Between the Profile and the Proficiency in Substance

Demographic Profile and Substance		Narrative Essay	Argumentative Essay	Persuasive Essay	Informative Essay	
Spearman rho	Gender	Correlation Coefficient	.086	.131	.065	.094
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.256	.084	.394	.213
		N	176	176	176	176
	General	Correlation Coefficient	.561**	.531**	.560**	.542**

Average	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	176	176	176	176
	Favorite Subject	Correlation Coefficient	.066	.025	.111
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.381	.742	.142	.708
	N	176	176	176	176
Education al Attainme nt of Mother	Correlation Coefficient	.150*	.156*	.139	.185*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.047	.040	.067	.014
	N	175	175	175	175
Education al Attainme nt of Father	Correlation Coefficient	.178*	.165*	.217**	.160*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.018	.030	.004	.034
	N	175	175	175	175
* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).					
** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).					

d) Demographic Profile and Substance: Results indicated that there was no significant association between gender and favorite subject with the proficiency of the Grade 10's English written texts in terms of substance as the writing convention. Conversely, average grade and the educational attainment of the parents (both mothers and fathers) showed significant associations with the proficiency of the students' substance in their written outputs. While these variables move together in predictable patterns, the correlational nature of this study impedes conclusions about whether higher parental education leads to better writing substance or whether students with stronger writing skills come from families with different educational backgrounds.

Table 6. Significant Relationship Between the Profile and the Proficiency in Vocabulary

Demographic Profile and Vocabulary			Narrative Essay	Argumen- tative Essay	Persuasive Essay	Informative Essay
Spearman rho	Gender	Correlation Coefficient	.120	.100	.071	.131
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.112	.187	.352	.084
		N	176	176	176	176
	General Average	Correlation Coefficient	.579**	.521**	.602**	.543**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000
		N	176	176	176	176
	Favorite Subject	Correlation Coefficient	.043	.074	.043	-.003
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.569	.328	.572	.969

		N	176	176	176	176
Educational Attainment of Mother	Correlation Coefficient		.158*	.168*	.196**	.194**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.037	.027	.010	.010
	N		175	175	175	175
Educational Attainment of Father	Correlation Coefficient		.211**	.180*	.258**	.132
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.005	.017	.001	.081
	N		175	175	175	175
* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).						
** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).						

e) Demographic Profile and Vocabulary: Data indicated that there was no significant association between gender and the favorite subject with the English written texts' proficiency in terms of vocabulary, as well as the writing convention. Furthermore, the students' average grade and the educational attainment of their parents (both mothers and fathers) were found to be significantly associated with their vocabulary scores across all their written texts. These significant associations should be interpreted as descriptive patterns rather than evidence of causal influence. The direction of any potential relationship cannot be determined from this design, and intervening variables such as home literacy environment, access to reading materials, or student motivation may account for these observed associations.

CONCLUSION

The class sections in Pantabangan District showed no gender disparities and demonstrated strong academic performance, with English emerging as the most preferred subject among students. However, the fact that most parents had only attained high school education suggests that students might not have access to substantial academic resources or support at home.

In terms of writing proficiency, the students performed "Below Average" in grammar, mechanics, and sentence structure. These findings point to clear challenges in constructing grammatically correct sentences, using appropriate punctuation and tenses, and organizing coherent ideas across sentences and paragraphs. Contrarywise, their performance in substance and vocabulary registered as "Average," reflecting moderate ability in conveying purpose, developing ideas with some depth, and maintaining relevance. While students showed some capacity for using varied words and phrases, they have yet to fully employ advanced vocabulary or figurative language effectively.

Notably, average grades and parental educational attainment showed positive correlations with the proficiency of the respondents' written texts. Students who performed well academically tended to demonstrate stronger writing skills, reinforcing the idea that good grades lay the groundwork for effective writing, an essential component of overall academic success. Similarly, higher parental education levels corresponded with better writing outcomes among their children.

Given these findings, the following recommendations are put forward: intervention and enhancement programs are needed to address the diverse needs of writers at all levels, offering specialized strategies for both struggling and advanced writers and implemented consistently; longitudinal studies should be conducted to track the development of students' writing skills over time and expand to include students from private schools, special curriculum programs, and other grade levels, while exploring how writing skills relate to broader academic outcomes such as overall GPA and college admission rates; Pantabangan District should implement

targeted interventions focusing on grammar, mechanics, and sentence structure, alongside enhancement programs for students' substance and vocabulary; collaborative measures—including parent-teacher partnerships, workshops, and support programs—should be established to help narrow the gap in writing skills; future research should investigate the impacts of different teaching approaches and interventions on students' writing development, with this study proposing "Project Write Right: A Skill-Targeted Writing Intervention and Enhancement," designed specifically for students requiring writing intervention and enhancement; and school principals and heads are encouraged to recommend this project to English Education Program Specialists (EPS) at the district level, as successful implementation could pave the way for cascading the program to the division level.

The "Project Write Right: A Skill-Targeted Writing Intervention and Enhancement" is a comprehensive program designed to address the diverse needs of Grade 10 writers in Pantabangan District. The project operates on the premise that writing proficiency is not uniform; hence, it employs a dual-track approach where students are categorized into Intervention Programs (for those scoring Poor to Average) and Enhancement Programs (for those scoring Above Average to Excellent) based on diagnostic assessments using the five writing conventions: grammar, mechanics, sentence structure, substance, and vocabulary. This targeted differentiation ensures that struggling writers receive foundational support—such as grammar mini-lessons, sentence imitation exercises, and mechanics checklists—while advanced writers are challenged through advanced grammar topics, prose adaptation, copy-reading, and editorial style assignments. The project is structured across three phases: Pre-Implementation (planning and orientation), Conduct (actual intervention/enhancement activities), and Post-Implementation (final evaluation), with the District English Coordinator overseeing management and School English Coordinators serving as facilitators.

The pedagogical strategies embedded in Project Write Right are both intentional and comprehensive. For grammar, intervention students engage in error analysis and tense timelines, while enhancement students tackle translation exercises and peer editing. Mechanics instruction ranges from spelling bees and punctuation puzzles for struggling writers to advanced proofreading and style assignments for proficient ones. Sentence structure development employs transitional sentence starters and paragraph coherence exercises for intervention groups, contrasted with complex sentence modeling and peer editing for flow among advanced learners. Substance and vocabulary are similarly differentiated, with brainstorming and word quests for developing writers versus Socratic seminars and etymology exploration for those excelling. Holistic strategies such as daily journaling and story grammar checklists further reinforce consistent writing practice across all proficiency levels. This structured yet flexible framework allows facilitators to adapt strategies while maintaining fidelity to the skill-targeted approach, ultimately aiming to narrow writing proficiency gaps and foster student ownership of their writing progress.

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