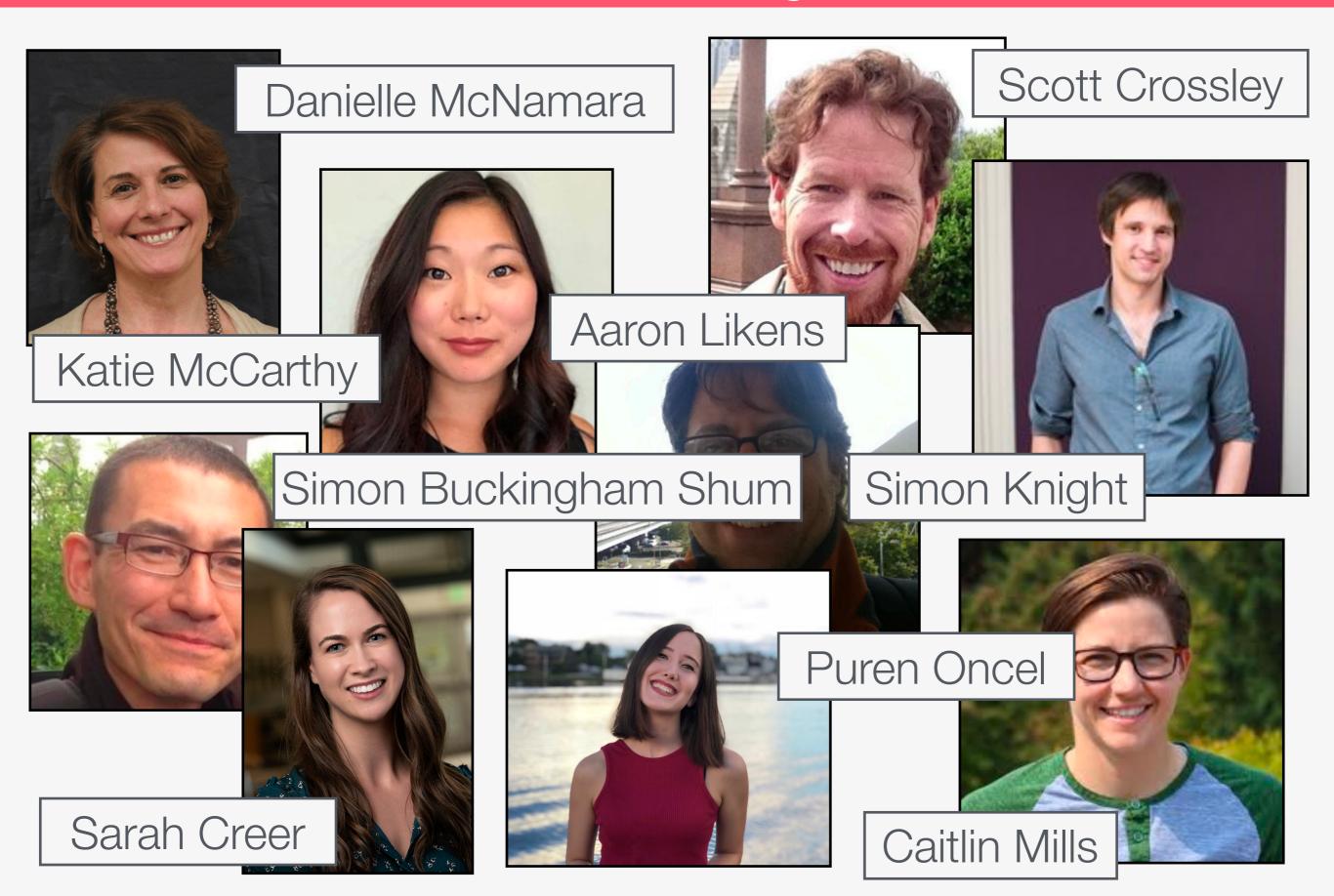
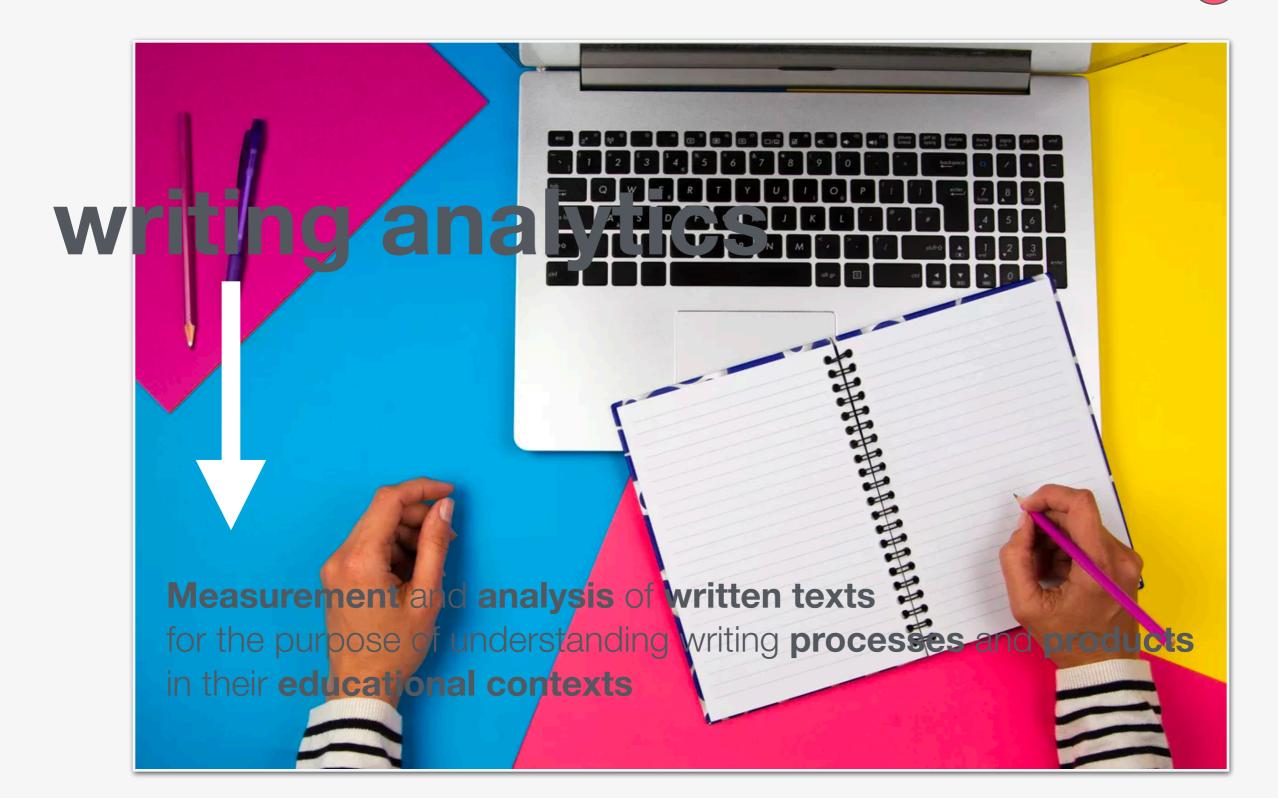
# leveraging writing analytics for a more personalized view of student performance



Laura K. Allen (University of New Hampshire) SoLAR Webinar: December 11, 2019

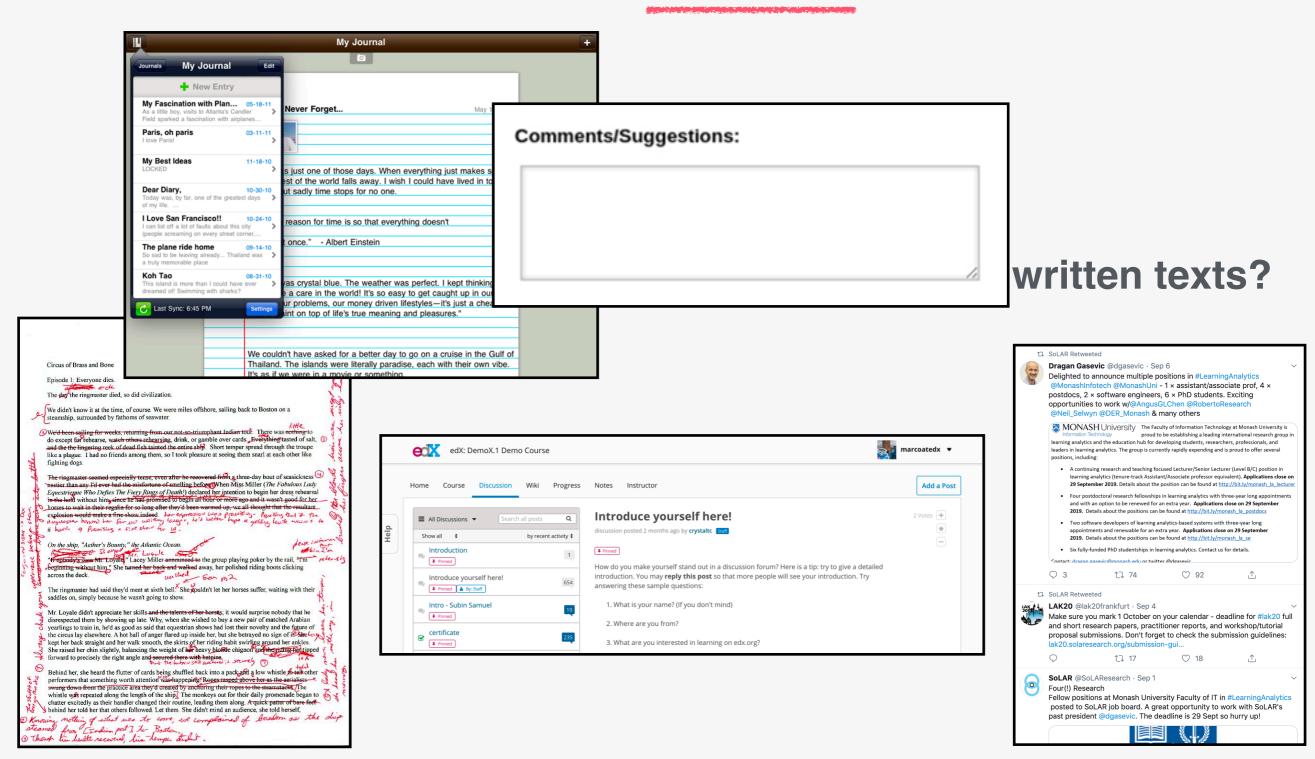
#### a few acknowledgments





Buckingham Shum, Knight, McNamara, Allen, Bektik, & Crossley, 2016

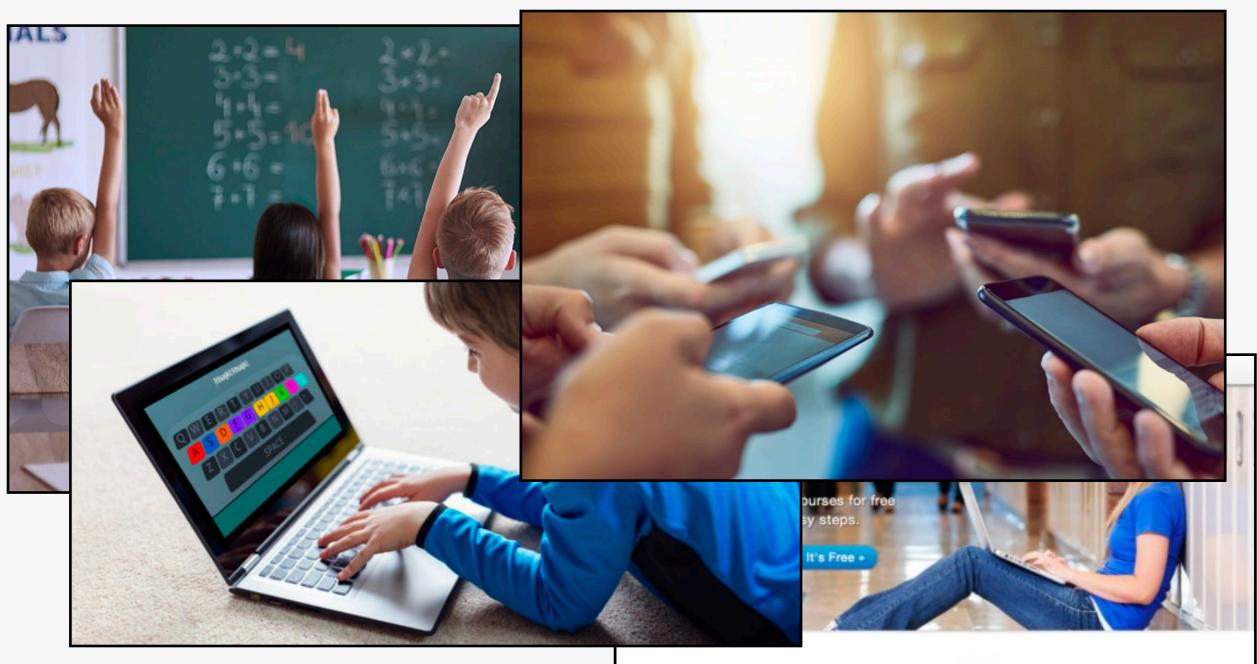
#### Measurement and analysis of written texts



#### Understanding writing processes and products



#### In their educational contexts



Our Courses Join open courses for free. Experience the fun and excitament of OpenLearning with:



Teach public or private courses online, engage students like never before and get started for assumption: the language of others (and our own!) can provide important data about individual differences, performance, learning processes, and other factors important for learning



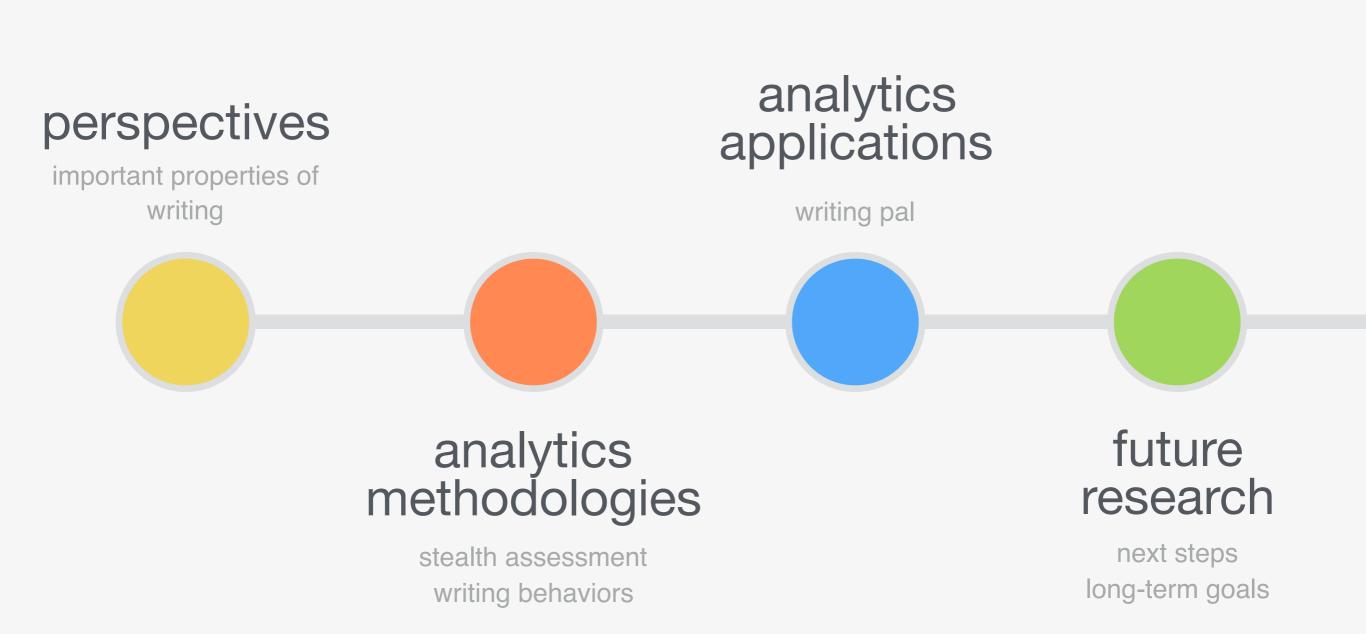
#### how can writing analytics be used to provide better training and feedback in educational contexts?



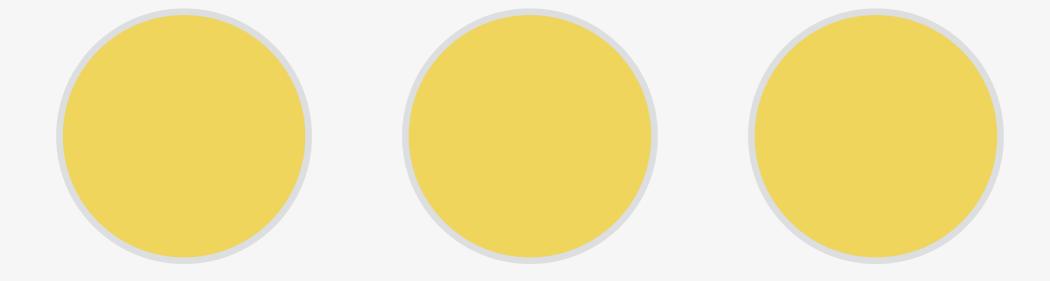
## what might the **properties** of our written discourse reveal about us & our students?

(how can we *tap into* and **leverage** these differences to improve educational outcomes?)

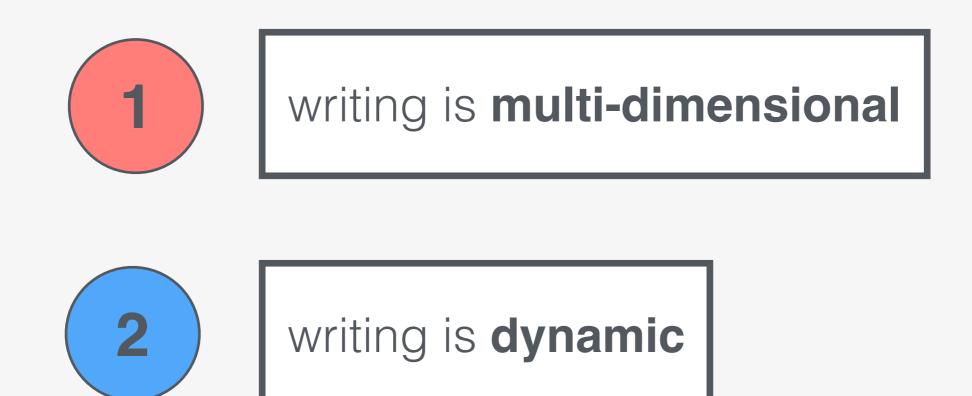




## perspectives



# important features of writing that should dictate theory, analytics & practice:





#### writing is **multi-dimensional**, constrained by surface and deep levels (Graesser et al., 2011; Sardinia & Pinto, 2014)

linguistic analyses tend to focus on a single dimension of writing (e.g., words)



attending to the dimensions of writing (and their interactions) can help model its complexities

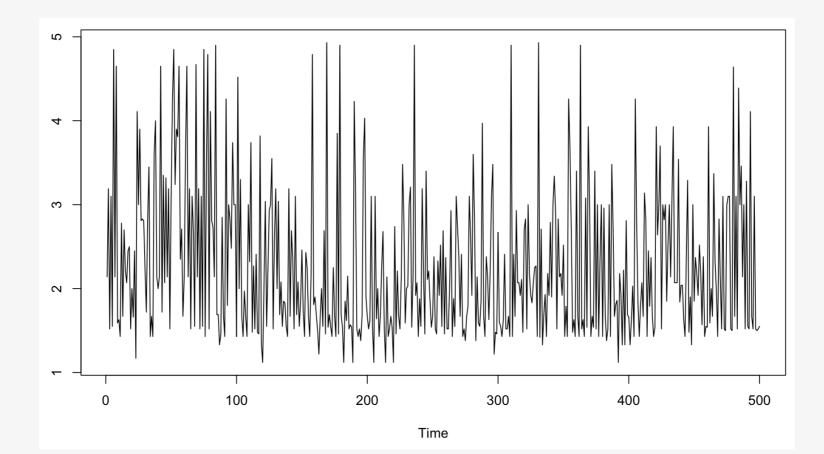
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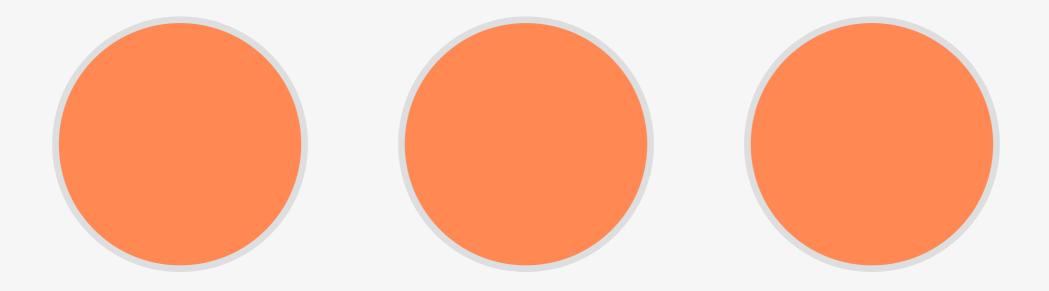


# writing is dynamic, recursive, self-organizing, and non-linear

(Beckner et al., 2009; De Bot, 208; Ellis, 2011; Van Geert, 2008)

traditional models of statistics treat increased variability as source of noise *structure* of variability can reveal important information about complex processes

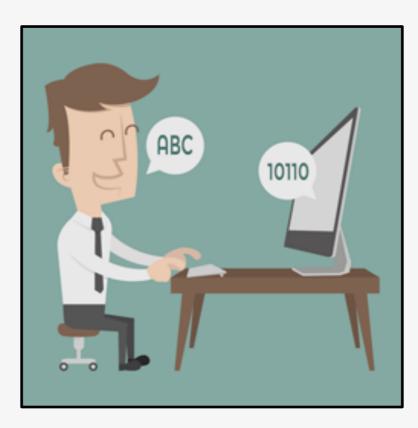




# analytic methodologies

### writing is **multi-dimensional**

use of Natural Language Processing (NLP) techniques to understand (model) and ultimately improve writing **processes** and **performance** 

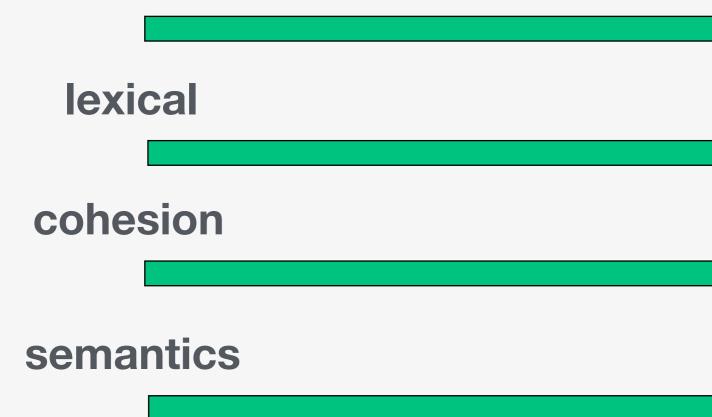


Bird, Klein, & Loper, 2009; Crossley, Allen, Kyle, & McNamara, 2014

### natural language processing

NLP can help analyze language along a number of linguistic dimensions

#### descriptive



Bird, Klein, & Loper, 2009; Crossley, Allen, Kyle, & McNamara, 2014 In fifth grade Officer Brown, my D.A.R.E. instructor, asked my class to draw a picture representing the physical characteristics of a typical drug dealer. I drew an evil looking man with snake like eyes. He was wearing dark black clothing, and he was standing on a grungy street corner in front of an abandon warehouse. The purpose of this exercise was to demonstrate that anyone could be a drug dealer. A drug dealer could be a sweet Suburban soccer mom who bakes homemade cookies for her children, or a drug dealer could be that evil looking guy wearing black clothing on the street corner. Officer Brown explained that as a society, we tend to associate negative characteristics with drug dealers because the media depicts drug dealers in this manner. As a result, this negative imagine of drug dealers have been imbedded into our minds at a very young age.

Disney movies have been instrumental in influencing children's views of good versus evil. The movie and the segret emphasis on the characters' physical appearance. For example, In *The Little Mermaid*, and skinny. She has long flowing red hair, big bright blue eyes, perfectly full red lips, and glow about her. She is very feminine, and her voice is high pitch but pleasing to the in The Little Mermaid are strapping and handsome. They have big bulging muscles that can aid the scue mermaids if they get into trouble. The men also have a full head of hair that always says in plat. The "good" characters in Disney movies are always portrayed with good characteristics. In fact it is as if they are perfect. On the other hand, the "evil" characters are described as perfectly repulsive. Ursula, a sea witch, in *The Little Mermaid* is an ugly dark looking creature with a long pointy noses, and long fingers. She has monster sharp teeth and a gruff manly voice. Ursula does not possess one positive quality. Like other "evil" characters, Ursula is on the other end of the continuum compared to Ariel. The environment is also use to depict differences between the "good" and "evil" in Disney

example, in *The Little Mermatd*, Ariel lives in a well-maintained golden castle. The water stelle is crystal clear. On the floor of the sea, there is green seaweed and bright colored

movie

discovarious forms of life swimming around the castle. The fishes, shrimps, crabs, and other a contract of bright vibrant colors. Ursula on the other hand, lives in a dark dreary cave. During parts of the contract of the value surrounding the cave is black, and at other times, the water is dark blue. Ursula's cave is unkempt, and it is full of dieing souls and skeletons. The only form of life near the cave is Ursula's assistances, eels. The eels are black with slanted snake like eyes that glow a yellowish-green color. The floor of Ursula's cave is not made of grass. Instead the floor is made of dirt and rocks. The entire atmosphere surrounding the castle represents death.

In the pervious paragraphs it was alluded that the use of color also helps distinguish between "good" and e scenes involving the "good" characters contained an abundant amount of color. There are mostly biother slors, such as yellows, reds, oranges, purples, and blues. For example Flounder, Ariel's

w with a mixture of dark and light blue strips. Most of the fish in the sea are a mixture ne fishes are either red with yellow fins, purple with yellow fins, blue with red fins, and blue with the fishes are either red and orange. There is also some pink mixed among the animals. The scene involving the "evil" characters lack color almost entirely. The little color that is use is cold and dark. The most abundant color representing Ursula is black. Ursula herself is a dark purple, and there are some dark blues and greens. There is also the yellowish-green glow that comes out of the eels' eyes. Officer Brown was on to something when he stated that the media influences our opinion. It may not be obvious to children as they watch The Little Mermaid or another Disney movie, but that movie is influencing their opinion. The movie gives children a template as to how "good" individuals should look, how the should act, and even what they should possess. Of course, the movies also give children a template the children as they watch The tare the tare that "evil" individuals should look, act a

template text individuals. The template teaches children that evil individuals should look, act a teaches them that evil people should not possess certain items. For example, in The lives in a castle, but Ursula was not even good enough to have a house. Instead she neary cave. As they grew, children take these images of "good" and "evil" and adopt them as their a beliefs. Louis Althusser coined the term interpellation, the idea that as individuals we tend to accept society's norms as our own. Therefore in the beginning of the paper when I described my picture of a drug dealer in the fifth grade, it could be conjectured that I obtain those images from society, and not from reality. In reality there is no such concept as a "typical" drug dealer. As officer Brown stated, anyone could be a drug dealer.



## what can **multi-dimensional** writing analytics tell us that we don't already know?

Some examples...

Allen & Creer, in prep; Allen, Creer & Oncel, in prep

## one example

substantial research in the learning sciences has been devoted to understanding the role of individual differences in performance on discourse comprehension and production tasks

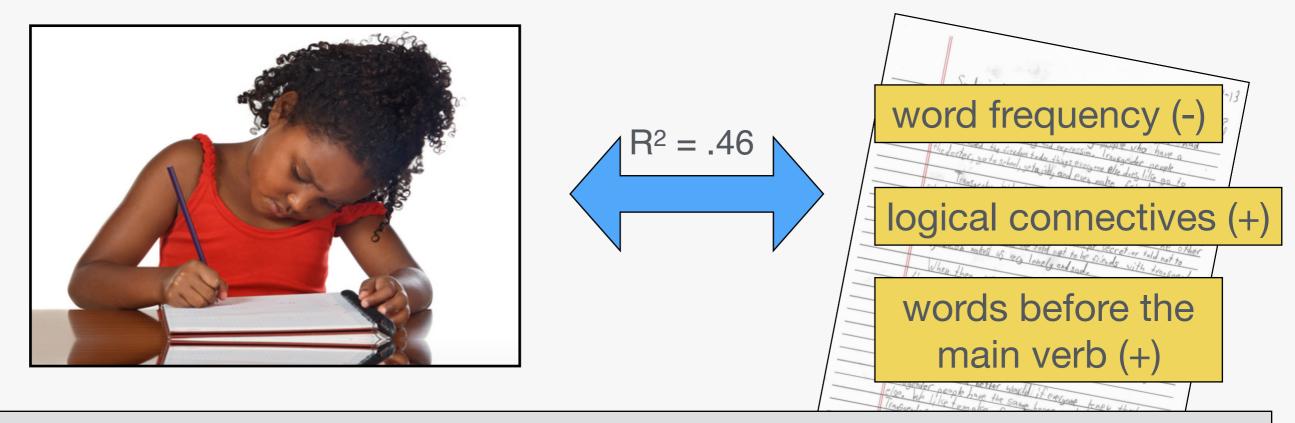
we know that **working memory**, **vocabulary knowledge**, **domain knowledge** are all linked to performance on these tasks (Attali & Powers, 2008; Hoskyn & Swanson, 2003)

But **how** do they influence these processes?



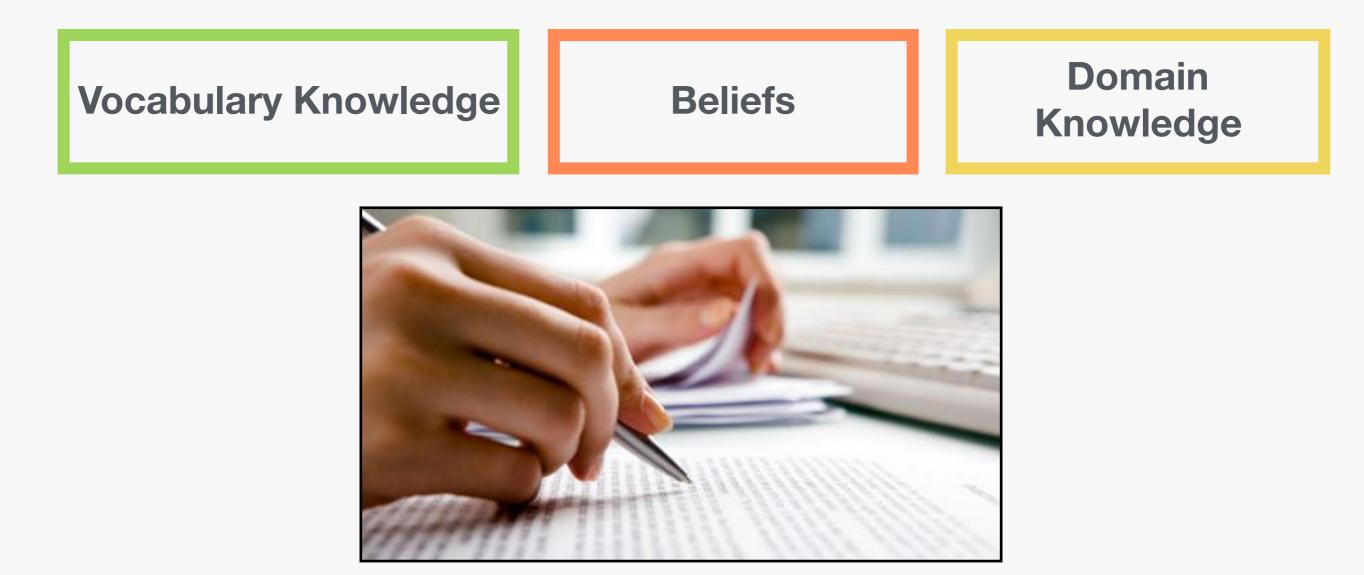
#### examining vocabulary and writing relations

#### vocabulary test score



higher vocabulary scores related to generation of text with more complex sentence structures, less familiar words, and greater incidence of words that signal logical connections

These multidimensional analytics provide insights into the processes underlying writing and can be used to inform **stealth assessments** & deliver **personalized feedback** 



## second example

students use a variety of **strategies** to develop coherent representations while learning from text

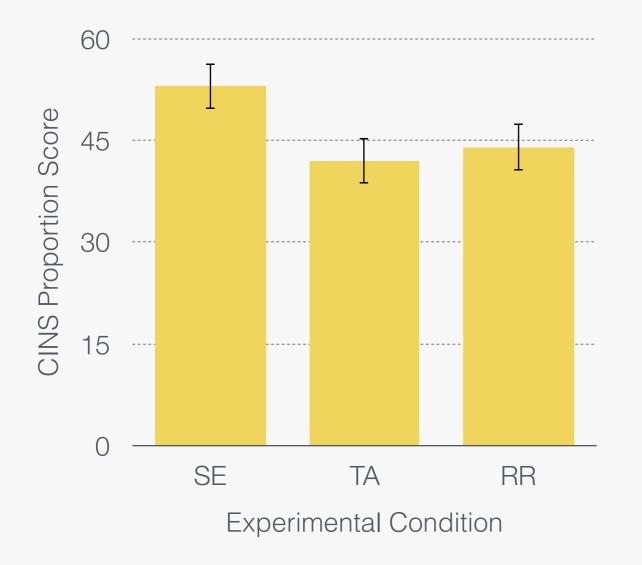
**self-explanation** fosters activation of prior knowledge, prompts inference generation, and promotes increased processing of causally relevant information (particularly for expository texts)

How do the properties of students' constructed responses to text relate to their understanding?



**previous study** self-explanation v. think-aloud during single text comprehension

**Q:** will self-explanation promote deeper understanding of a complex topic (i.e., natural selection) compared to thinking-aloud or re-reading?



Participants in the self-explanation condition outperformed both the think-aloud and rereading conditions

F = 43.17, p < .001

#### To understand whether self-explanation instructions prompted participants to generate different forms of connections, we can analyze the **linguistic features** of the responses



The way individuals are making connections across a text can provide important information about successful discourse processing strategies

Allen, McNamara, & McCrudden, 2015; McCrudden, Allen, & McNamara, 2018

we can examine these different connection types through **cohesion** analyses

referential cohesion

explicit overlap at the noun level across sentences e.g., **Jane** went to the store to buy a **sandwich**. The **sandwich** tasted very good to **Jane**.

semantic cohesion

semantic overlap of concepts across sentences e.g., The **dog** caught the frisbee. The **animals** enjoyed playing at the park.

## Do these beneficial self-explanation processes manifest in the **cohesion** of students' responses to the text they are given to read?

Allen, McNamara, & McCrudden, 2015; McCrudden, Allen, & McNamara, 2018



**Q:** Do these beneficial self-explanation processes manifest in the cohesion of individuals' responses to the text they read?

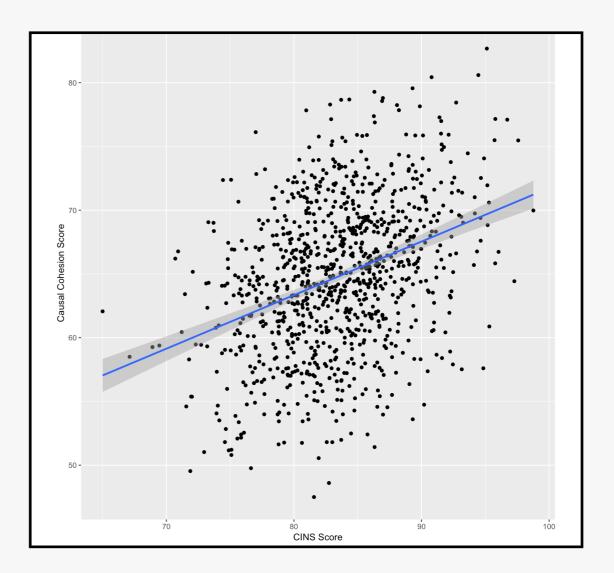
Cohesion **was** predictive of condition (p < .001)

Classified **69.1%** of individuals' experimental conditions based on the cohesion of text responses

Allen, McNamara, & McCrudden, 2015; McCrudden, Allen, & McNamara, in prep

**Q:** Do these beneficial self-explanation processes manifest in the **cohesion** of individuals' responses to the text they read?

Cohesion indices significantly correlated with scores on the natural selection knowledge test (r = .36, p < .01)

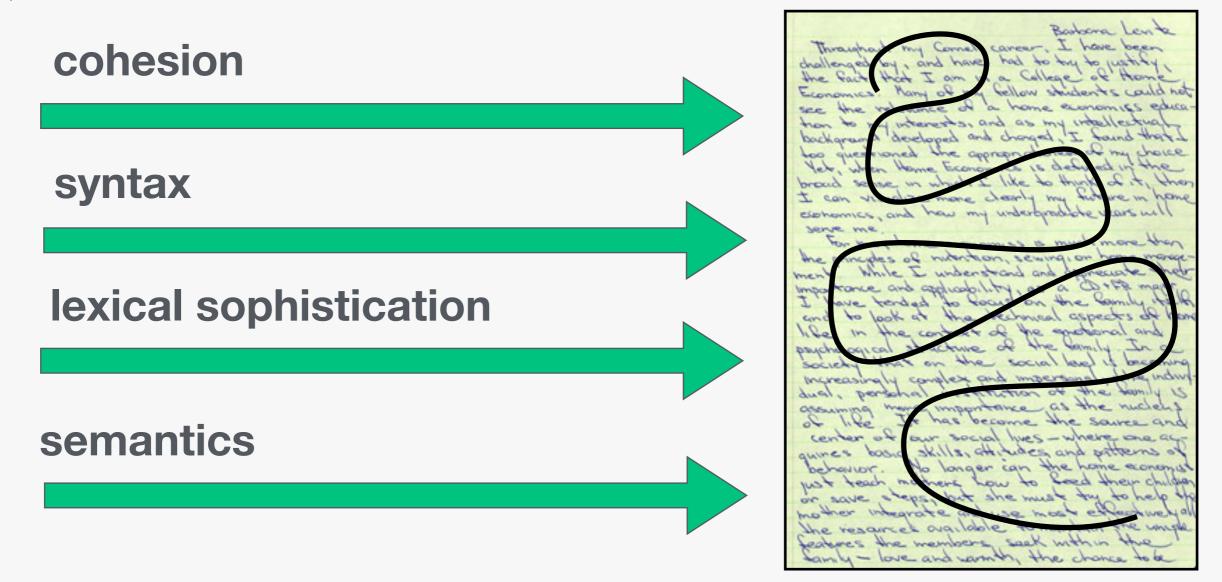


Self-explanation led to increased knowledge of natural selection compared to thinking-aloud or re-reading

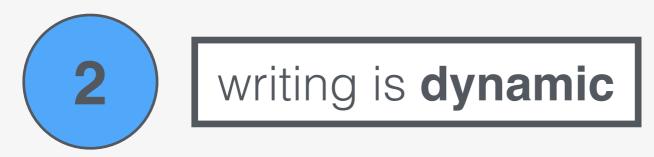
writing analytics can be used to model comprehension processes and can be leveraged to provide automated feedback to students on their reading behaviors

Further research has replicated these findings and extended it to other contexts, including **multiple document comprehension** and **peer** explanation

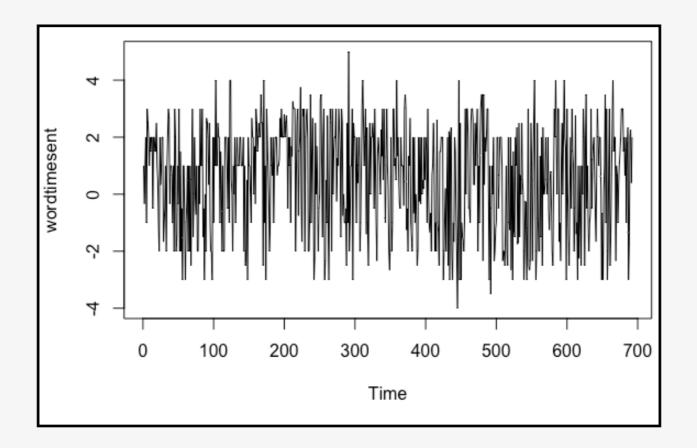
W.ashavellialshthiteodaysium/dercoftlingviettical protocols at hangel of entreference comprehension processes through their verbal protocols



## dynamics



Can use dynamic modeling techniques to analyze the time-varying properties of discourse processes



## dynamics

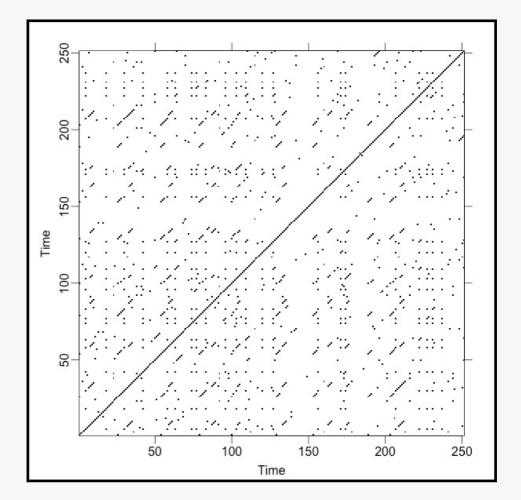


Recurrence Quantification Analysis Maps time series against itself on x- and y-axes to uncover states and sequences that recur over time

Provides means to **visualize** and **quantify** recurrent patterns in continuous or

So how does it work?

Offers potential to develop deeper understanding of the ways in which comprehension processes unfold over time





## Conversion

Convert transcripts or texts to sequence of numeric identifiers

"The ice cream man brought ice cream on Friday."

The = 1; ice = 2; cream = 3...

1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 2, 3, 6, 7

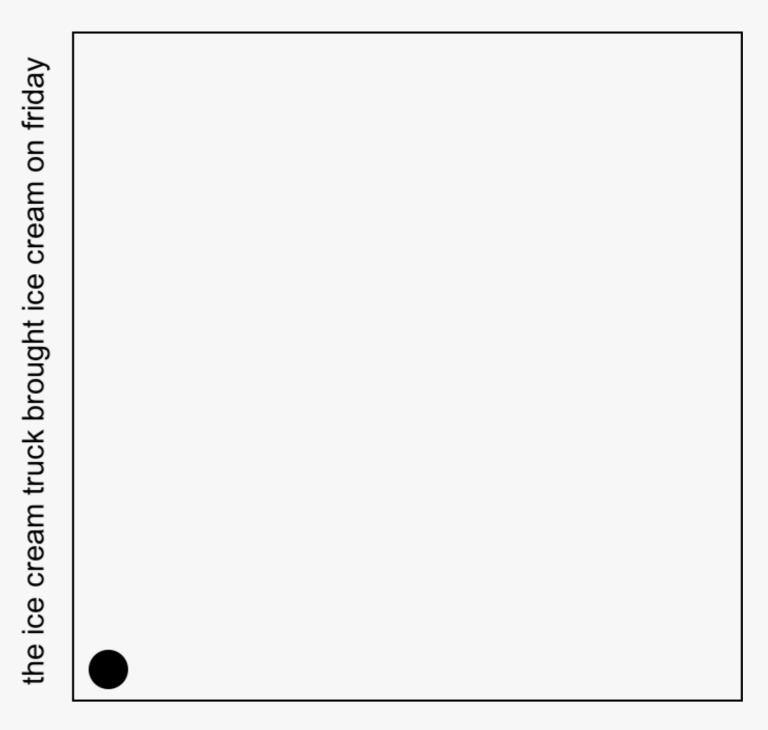
Level of analysis here: words

#### "The ice cream man brought ice cream on Friday."



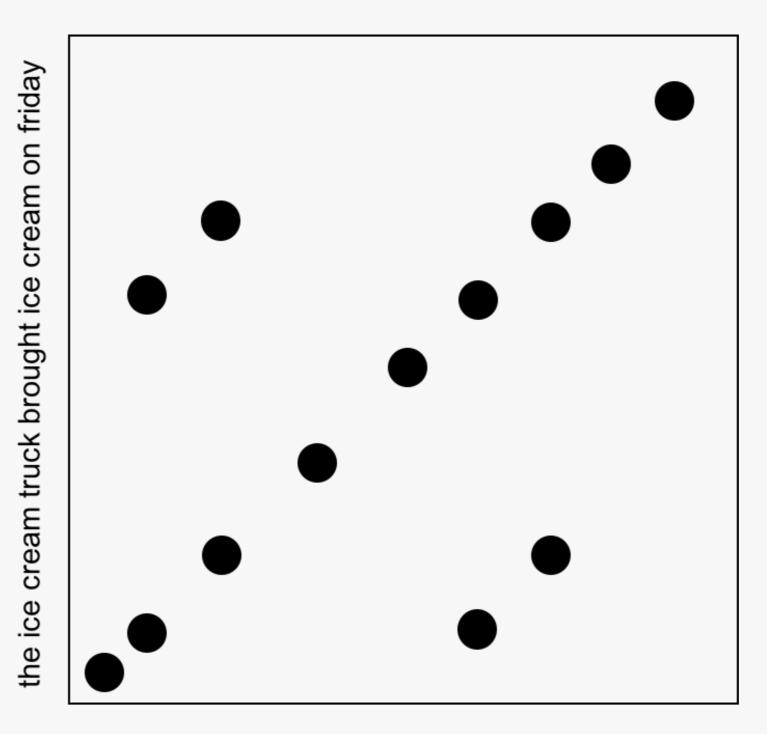
the ice cream truck brought ice cream on friday

#### "The ice cream man brought ice cream on Friday."



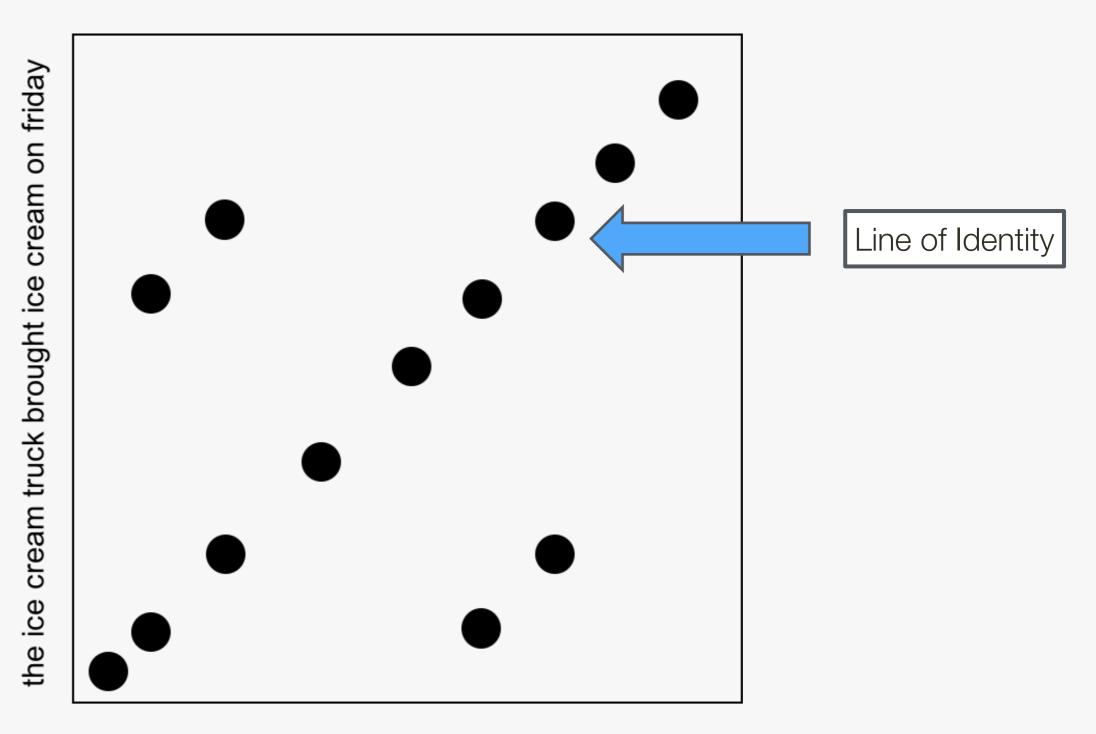
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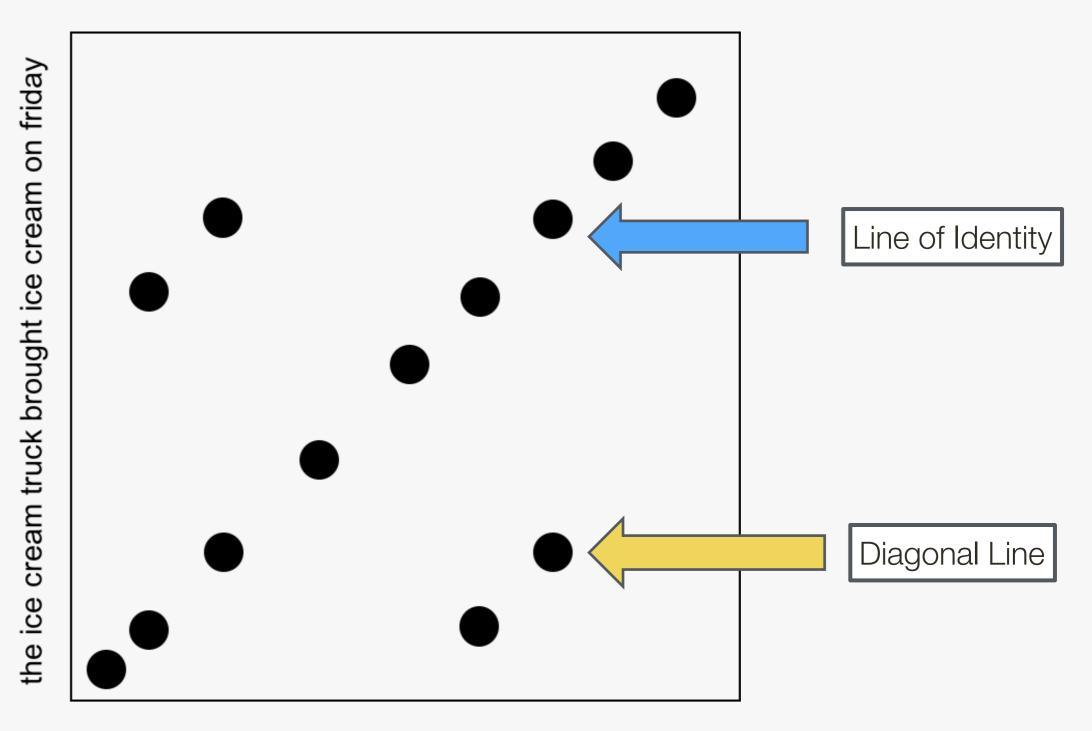
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the ice cream truck brought ice cream on friday

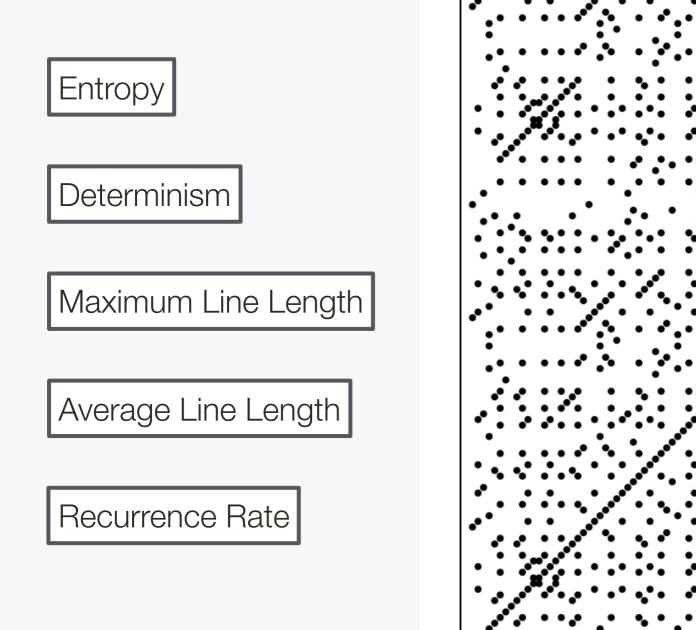
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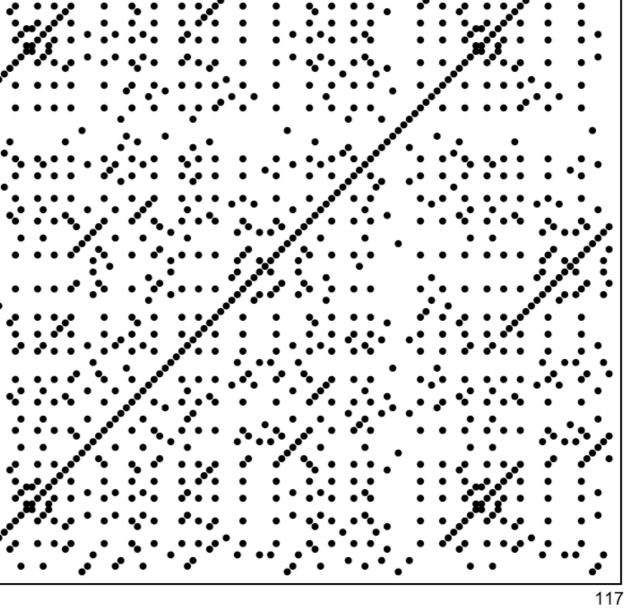


the ice cream truck brought ice cream on friday

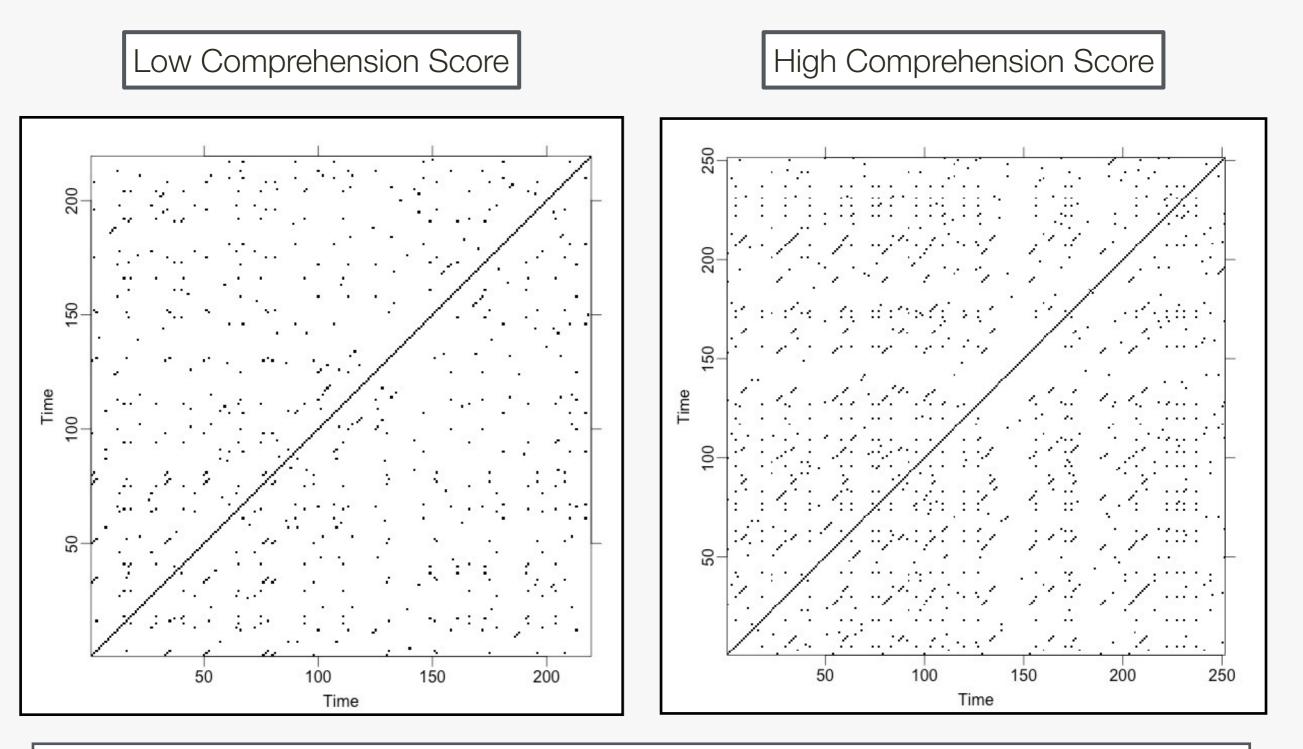
#### **Recurrence Quantification Analysis**

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#### previous study



RQA metrics account for 38% of variance in individuals' deep comprehension of text material

Dynamical methodologies such as **recurrence quantification analysis** allow us to model the time-sensitive properties of writing



Allen, Likens, & McNamara, 2017; Likens, Allen, & McNamara, 2018; Wallot, 2017

### second example

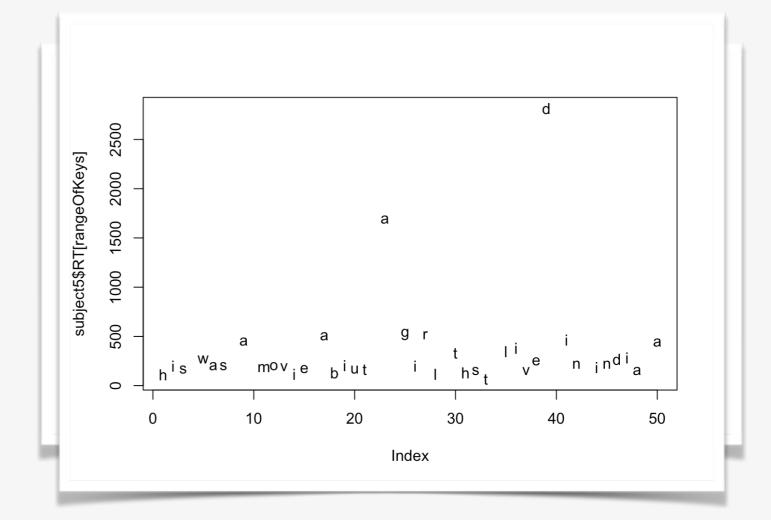
individuals engage in complex behaviors while producing writing (e.g., editing behaviors, production, etc)

**keystroke** analyses can provide important information about how writing is produced over time — rather than solely focusing on the final product

> How do individuals' **typing** behaviors relate to the quality of their writing?

#### **Keystroke Dynamics**

Dionodinteerselykeystaskef typaittenesveelbitenporttaet ipfopettiesnafdbettexe tleat prodvæsigngolocesises?



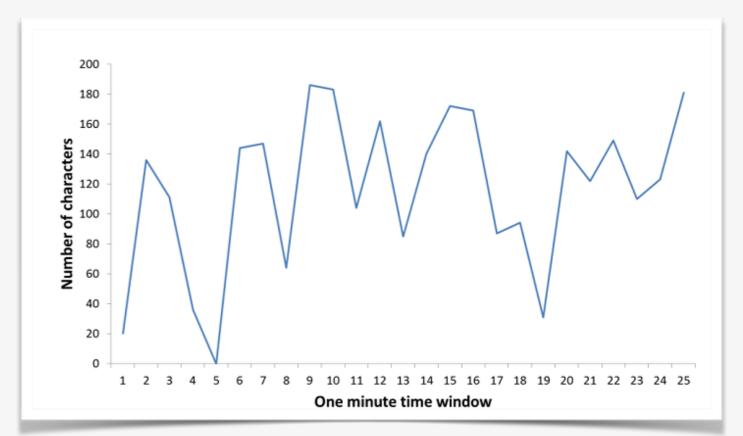
# Patterns of keystroke behaviors account for 43% of variance in essay scores

#### **More Keystroke Dynamics**

Recent research has used keystroke behaviors to predict **clusters** of writers based on linguistic properties of essays

Identified **four clusters** of source-based writers

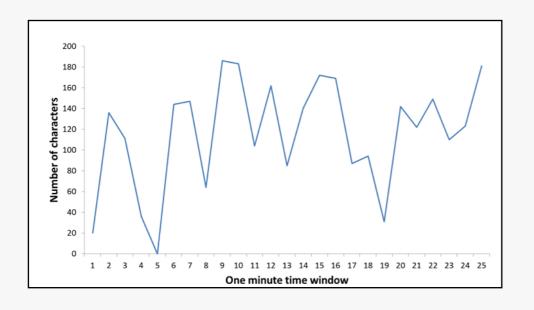
Academic/Argumentative Descriptive Story Tellers Summarizers

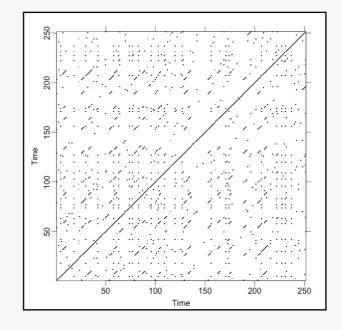


**Basic Keystroke behaviors** classify participants into clusters with 78% accuracy

# analytics applications

Multi-dimensional and dynamic writing analytics can provide new insights into the psychological processes involved in discourse processing





Research on discourse processes can be leveraged to develop **educational** interventions and technologies



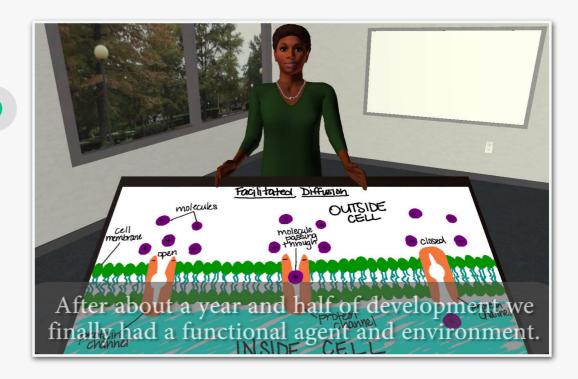


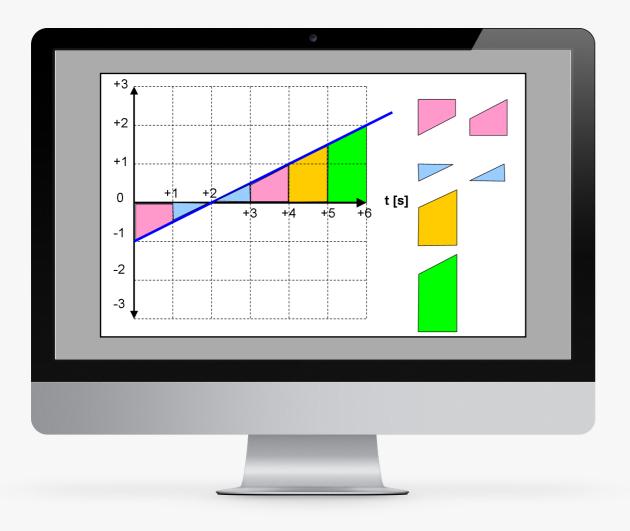
#### **Expert Human Tutors**

Provide interactive and adaptive scaffolding to support effective learning

#### Intelligent Tutoring Systems

Mimic (or improve upon) human tutoring tactics to support learning Can be as effective as human tutors





Immediate, corrective feedback, scaffolding, and strategies

Adaptive and Individualized

- inner and outer loops
- knowledge tracing, student tracing
- respond to student responses

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Well-defined Learning Domains

- grounded in clear procedures
- rely on simple, repeated assessments



Individual differences

Summative assessment

• Formative feedback

Suggested activities

- Performance
- Affective States
- Metacognitive Accuracy

Roscoe et al., 2013



Writing Pal: Intelligent Tutoring System designed to support adolescent writing proficiency via strategy instruction, educational games, and automated summative and formative feedback

s:	ESSAY WRITING FEEDBACK REPORT:								
	(	POOR	WEAK	FAIR	OKAY	GOOD	GREAT		
	LENGTH: Acceptable RELEVANCE: Acceptable STRUCTURE: Acceptable								
	This essay continues to show weaknesses in the body of the essay. It may be helpful to review your previous drafts and the feedback you received about body building. The feedback below describes some additional issues you should consider when revising your essay.								
	REVISION								
	<ul> <li>Skilled writers revise their essays to make them more clear and understandable. Moving information around is a revision technique that can improve the structure and flow of an essay.</li> <li>Reread your essay to make sure that it follows a logical flow</li> <li>Try changing the order of sentences or paragraphs to fix organizational problems</li> <li>Remember that you can move small or large sections of your writing, whichever works best for your essay</li> </ul>							is a revision technique that	
at the more things change the m									
lage evolves over time demonstra			n inge seen	, 113 OI 9011	mang, which				
nd that things do not stay the sar e popular every few months, and s r require new terms to describe th	REVISION								
ammar can even fundamentally ch	Revision is a crucial process for writers of all levels. One strategy for revising essays is to add important information that the reader might need to know.								
needs a thesis statement.	Check to see if your essay is missing any important components, such as thesis statements or topic sentences								
needs to preview the arguments	<ul> <li>Make sure each claim is s</li> <li>Add details to your evider</li> </ul>				-				
needs an attention-grabbing tec	, <u> </u>		, ,						
correctly uses the TAG strategy.									

#### Essays and Feedback

Choices-12c: 9:55	N PROMPT SCRATCH PAD ESSAY WRITING FEEDBACK REPORT:
these practices used of a the psych different ways of looking at the psych person. Behaviorism was the domina United States during the first half of Behaviorism psychologists primarily were concerned with observable beh a stimuli. Psychologists prior to beh stressed more internal processes the subjective and therefore the data to bias and validity issues. Behavioris argued their way was superior to unlike previous studies behavioris operational definitions in order to objective results of behavior.	POOR       WEAK       FAIR       OKAY       GOOD       GREAT         LENGTH: Acceptable RELEVANCE: Acceptable STRUCTURE: Acceptable       Image: Control of Control

#### Method

**Goal:** Examine efficacy of W-Pal to improve the writing skills and monitoring accuracy of its users

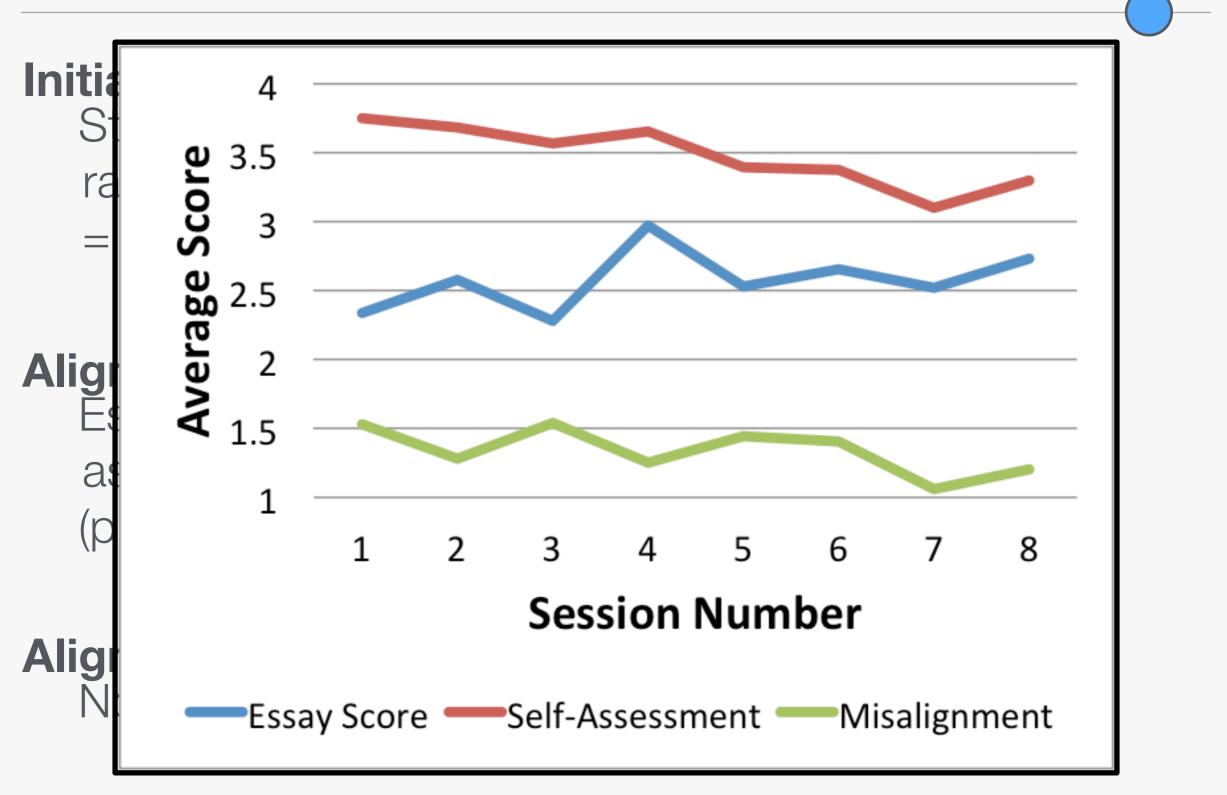
High school students (n = 86) participated in summer workshop program

Writing Pal essay practice with automated feedback

- write and revise 16 essays
- typical of current writing tools (e.g., Criterion)

Learning with complete Writing Pal system

- write and revise fewer (8) essays
- strategy instruction and game-based practice



# findings

students able to learn from W-Pal writing performance monitoring accuracy

strategy instruction and practice led to equivalent gains compared to heavier doses of deliberate writing practice with feedback

computer-based writing instruction can promote better monitoring accuracy— an important element of transfer



How can computational linguistic analyses be used to provide better training and feedback in the classroom?



how can you apply writing analytics to your own research?

# do you have data that is linguistic in nature?





how might this data provide new information about the students?

could you use what you learn to drive feedback or adaptivity in a system?





#### **Consider your data sources**

(short statements, essays, etc.) (individual differences, performance metrics)



#### Formulate your research question what do you want to learn about the learning process from this data?

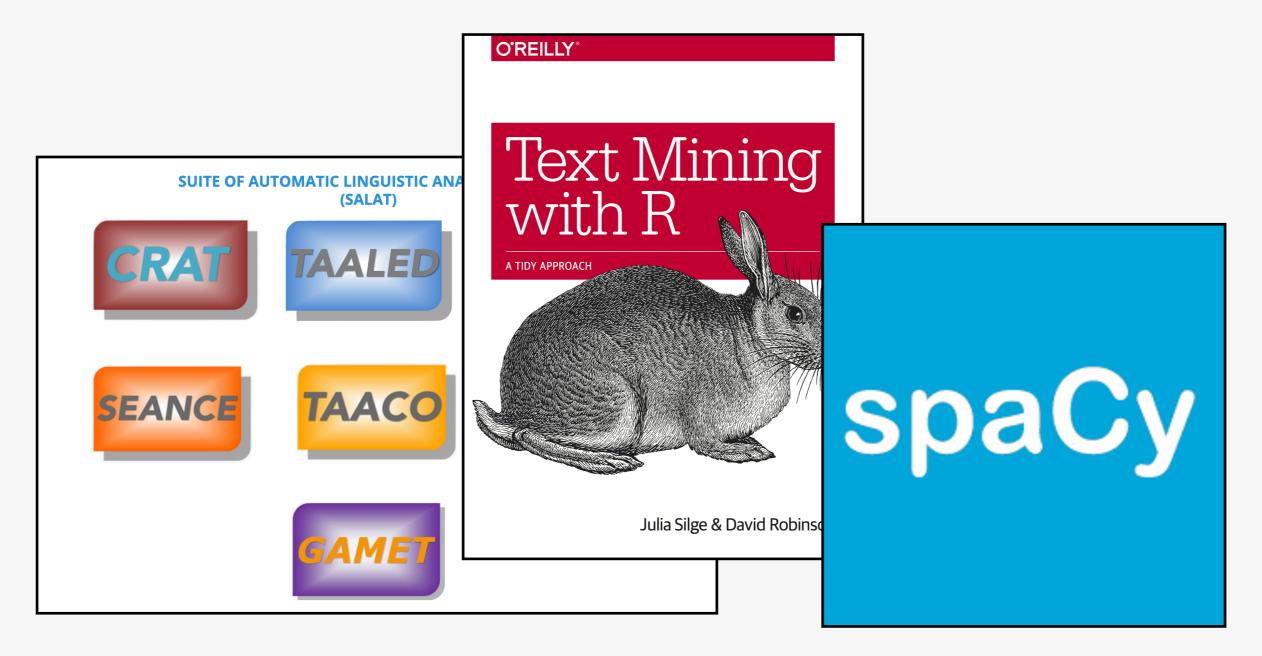


#### Develop an analysis plan based on your data type and research question what techniques or tools do you want to use to analyze the language in your data?

There are a variety of tools and packages available to help you answer your questions



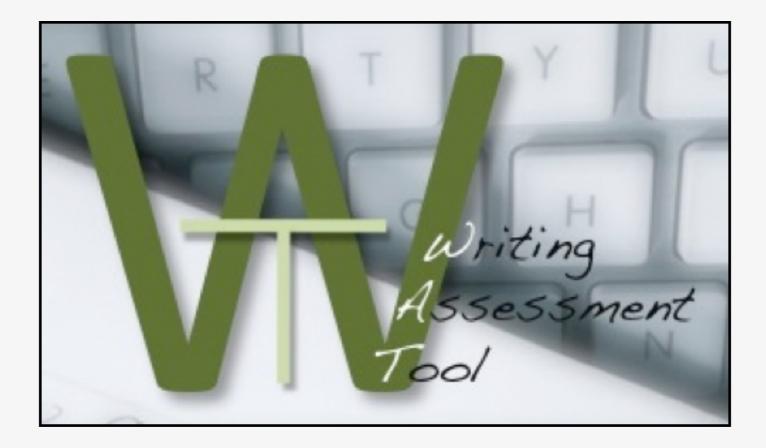
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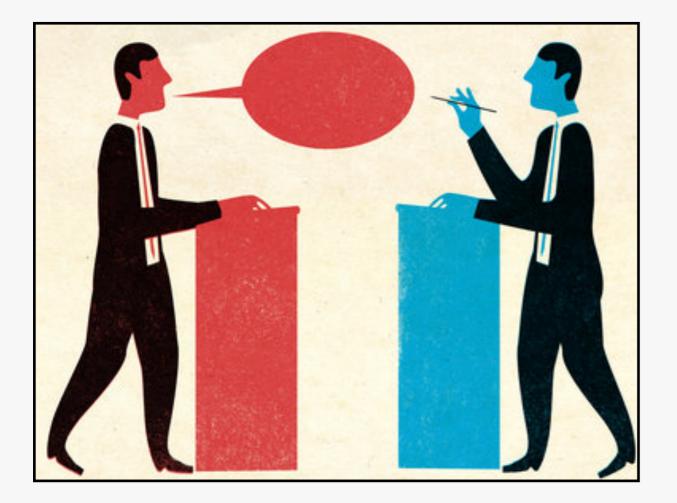
#### The Development of the Writing Assessment Tool

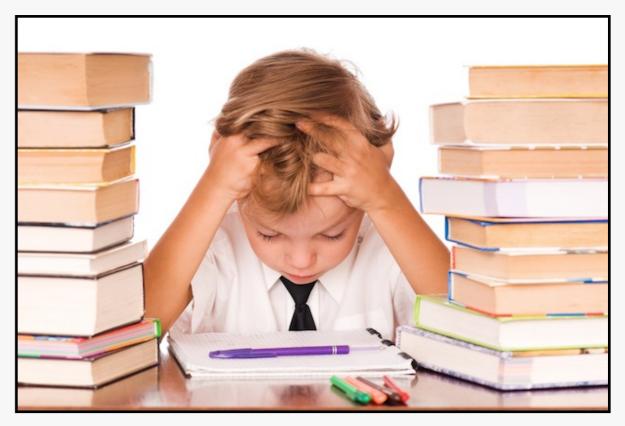
Provides **students**, **teachers**, and **researchers** access to automated writing analytics for summarization, persuasive essays, and source-based writing assignments



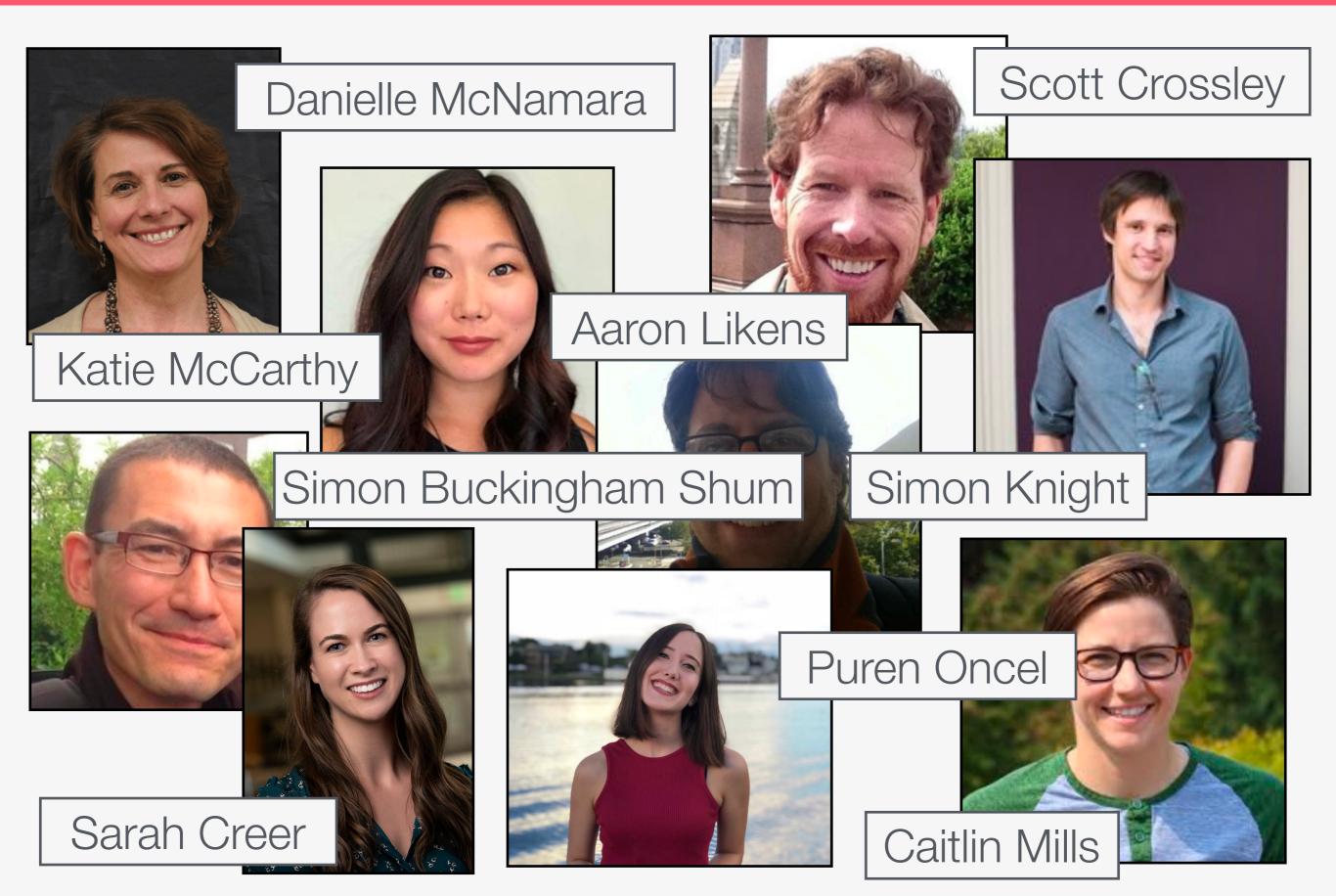
with Danielle McNamara and Scott Crossley

#### development of writing analytics points to potential areas for **improving** processing and production of discourse





#### thank you



# questions?



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**p.s.** I am currently recruiting graduate students for Fall 2020

### additional information



#### Link to Linguistic Analysis Tools



#### To sign up to test WAT Email me @ Laura.Allen@unh.edu