BEYOND THE ANGLOPHONE NORM: EVIDENCE FROM POST-SESSION REPORTS IN A MULTILINGUAL WRITING CENTER

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Post-session reports submitted by tutors after consultations constitute a fairly typical element of how tutoring is institutionalized in various writing centers. However, despite prior research agreeing on the merit of the reports as a tool to support student progress, little attention has been given to how they can reinforce the center's mission. When treated as a form of big data, the reports provide valuable insights into institutional practices and student needs. This study investigates the role of post-session reports in a multilingual writing center - Nazarbayev University in Kazakhstan, where English is a foreign language for most students - using a mixed-methods design that includes textual analysis of the reports and an online survey administered to faculty and undergraduate tutors. The analysis of nearly 200 post-session reports revealed that multilingual students' writing concerns largely fall into four categories: organization, brainstorming, conciseness, and grammar. While brainstorming and grammar reflect conventional challenges, organization and conciseness encompass a variety of writing issues, depending on how they are interpreted. Survey results showed that tutors varied in how they viewed post-session reports, with most treating them as routine administrative tasks rather than meaningful tools for reflection or feedback. This study not only identifies ways to improve current practices by evaluating student concerns and tutor perceptions, but also expands research on post-session reports by bringing in a unique geographic and institutional context.

INTRODUCTION

Since the 1990s, writing center scholarship has often discussed post-session reports in terms of both their practical utility and the insights they offer into institutional practices. Although each writing center is distinct in the way it functions and assigns responsibilities to the relevant stakeholders, post-session reports—also known as tutor notes, conference summaries, or session notes—represent a fairly typical element of how tutoring is institutionalized in various writing centers. Generally, the idea that this form of writing represents a valuable tool—in facilitating the work that writing centers do and their communication with all stakeholders—has been met with wide scholarly acceptance, despite some disagreement on the best way to integrate post-session re-

ports into the institutions' daily operations. Specifically, given the uneasy positioning of the writing center in relation to the composition classroom and its mission to empower student writers and protect their confidentiality, the question as to whether to share tutor notes with faculty has been a matter of professional and ethical debate. Michael Pemberton labels the two positions in this debate as "sharers" and "seclusionists" in his 1995 column in the *Writing Lab Newsletter*, highlighting not only the complexity of the practice but also why it warrants continued scholarly attention.

Previous research on session notes varies in scope, methodology, and the types of questions it seeks to answer. Traditionally, it explores the perceptions of writing center practitioners and other stakeholders, such as students and faculty, regarding the usefulness of this common record-keeping practice. For instance, in their 2016 article "Summing Up the Session," Melissa Bugdal and colleagues examine how different variations of these reports serve the needs of students, tutors, and faculty. Based on actual tutor notes from their writing center, the authors identified five distinct types, categorized by differences in length, tone, and purpose: the Reporter Note, Bro Note, Coach Note, Cheerleader Note, and Quick Note (Bugdal et al. 15). They then surveyed and interviewed students, tutors, and faculty to learn how useful they found each type of note and which they preferred. While they highlight specific features—such as the use of a second-person address in the Coach Note or the detailed content in the longer Reporter Note—that make certain notes more effective according to their participants, their central finding is that all three groups value this form of reporting in and of itself. In particular, the authors argue that "all three constituencies independently converged on the assumption that the chief purpose for tutor notes should be supporting student progress on particular projects or their broader development as writers—or both" (Bugdal et al. 29). This finding adds to what Jane Cogie concludes in her 1998 article "In Defense of Conference Summaries," based on surveying similar groups of stakeholders, namely, that the very process of writing and sharing post-session reports strengthens the quality of student-tutor and student-teacher relationships (59).

What further connects these two studies, and others like them, is that the task of writing conference summaries typically falls to the tutor, who is the perceived authority on what happens during the session. But, as Margaret Weaver points out, this practice does not encourage student writers to view themselves as active participants with full authority over their learning ("Resistance"). That is why, in her intervention in the debate between "sharers" and "seclusionists" (Pemberton), Weaver suggests that writing centers change tack and "encourage students and tutors to create jointly told tales" (51) by making post-session reports a collaborative endeavor, to help maintain student authority. It is unclear to what extent her 2001 call has been heeded, as scholars since have become less interested in the perceived value of post-session reports as a tool for supporting students' progress or for communicating with other stakeholders, which is taken as

more or less established. Instead, they have begun to show more interest in the value of these notes as large data repositories that can be mined for evidence on how writing center work gets done and how well what we say matches what we do.

For example, Genie Giaimo and Samantha J. Turner ("Session Notes") use discourse analysis to examine six semesters' worth of post-session reports (a total of 1,261 records) to determine whether training has an impact on how tutors engage in the note-taking process (136). With this purpose in mind, the authors differentiate between undergraduate and graduate tutors based on their years of experience and prior preparation. The authors find that training affects tutors' ability to recognize the rhetorical moves these notes make and to understand how different ways of characterizing writing center sessions, clients, and practices can shape their tutoring approach (Giaimo and Turner 153).

An earlier study by Genie Giaimo et al. takes a broader approach and uses a Voyant web-based application to conduct a corpus analysis of the reports collected among four public universities across the United States. The scale of this research far exceeds that of the previous study. Reports collected from Michigan State University alone amount to 23,794 observations, covering the period from fall 2012 to summer 2017 (Giaimo et al. 232). Applying the same analytical tools to the records from each of the four institutions, the authors identify the most common words used to describe the content of the sessions and the context in which they occurred. For example, high-frequency words, such as "wanted," "make," "asked," and "help," are found to be indicative of the emotional labor performed by tutors during the session (Giaimo et al. 249), a "surprising revelation" that suggests emotional labor is more pervasive in the authors' writing centers than they are aware of (252). The two studies demonstrate the range of implications that come from treating post-session reports as a data repository and mining them for evidence of everyday writing center practices, of how our philosophies and training are enacted on the ground, and of what kinds of pressures the pragmatic needs of student writers may place on "our conventional writing center ideologies" (Giaimo et al. 252).

This type of writing center research, which takes a "big data" approach to post-session notes, is still nascent. It is also rare because of the labor-intensive nature of working with large corpora of texts. More importantly, scholarship on post-session notes has been predominantly based on the monolingual practices of writing centers in Anglophone countries such as the United States. All studies reviewed here are written by scholars based in American public universities (Bugdal et al.; Cogie; Giaimo et al.; Malenczyk; Weaver). As such, there is little perspective coming from writing centers in *outer* or *expanding* circle countries (to use Braj Kachru's model of world Englishes), which operate under different circumstances. These are contexts where English is not the native language but is used extensively either institutionally (*outer* circle) or as a foreign language (*expanding* circle), and where multilingual

writers, rather than native English speakers, form the majority.

This study hopes to bridge this gap in the existing literature by contributing empirical data from a unique institutional context, Nazarbayev University in Kazakhstan, where all students are multilingual, and English, while the primary language of instruction, is a foreign language for the majority of the country's population. Specifically, it examines two key variables: post-session reports (analyzed for the type of data they contain and the insights they offer into writing center practices) and tutor perceptions (measured through an online survey). While the study began with the broad aim of exploring what post-session reports can reveal about the day-to-day operations of the institution, it ultimately evolved into two distinct research questions, which are: 1) *What do post-session reports reveal about the concerns of multilingual writers?* and 2) *What do tutor perceptions of post-session reports reveal about the role the reports play in writing centers?* In addressing these questions, this study extends the discourse on post-session reports by bringing insights from a setting that significantly diverges from those typically examined in prior research, enriching the field with a perspective that has been largely underrepresented.

METHODOLOGY

Similar to other institutions described in the literature review, Nazarbayev University uses the WCOnline system to schedule and conduct consultations. The number of tutors each semester varies depending on the time commitments of the faculty and the number of students who completed the Writing Fellows training sequence of three credit-bearing courses, which prepares them to serve as undergraduate tutors in the Writing Center. Aside from the three-semester-long training, undergraduate tutors attend an orientation meeting where they are introduced to the concrete functioning of the writing center. This is when the role of post-session reports in facilitating the tutoring process is emphasized in relation to three main stakeholders, specifically the Writing Center coordinator (who can use them for reporting and planning purposes), the tutor (who can use them to track a writer's progress and reference past sessions), and the student writer (who can use them to track their own progress or share with their professors if they need to). The suggested structure of the report mirrors the structure of the tutorial, namely 1) negotiating the agenda, 2) following through, and 3) specifying the next steps.

Although post-session reports have been strongly institutionalized within the center's daily operations, they have not yet served as a basis for a substantive evaluation of the kinds of difficulties students usually encounter. The practitioners' understanding of the most common genres of work brought to the writing center, the type of help students say they need, and what they actually take away from the sessions has been largely anecdotal, not firmly based in empirical evidence. As much as the institution tries to focus on developing arguments, creating a logical flow of ideas, and ensuring overall clarity of the work, also known as higher-order concerns (HOCs), it is possible that questions

of grammar, spelling, and word choice (LOCs) are more relevant for the student population. An analysis of post-session notes can reveal how much attention both tutors and student writers give to various aspects of writing in their conversations. It can also indicate whether tutors consider the practice valuable or if, as some of the tutors surveyed by Jane Cogie, they perceive it as a burden that takes away from both the quality of the tutoring sessions and the students' learning experience (57).

To address both of these questions, this study used a combination of textual analysis of post-session reports and an online survey for faculty and undergraduate tutors in the writing center. The methodology draws inspiration from previous studies, while also departing from them in key ways. Unlike Giaimo et al., I manually analyzed nearly 200 session notes written by faculty and student tutors. Though laborious and limiting in terms of sample size, the analysis allowed for a detailed, context-specific examination. Like Bugdal et al., I surveyed tutors on their views on the value of this institutional practice. However, my current study differs from theirs in that it started with the textual analysis of the post-session reports to generate a big picture of trends and patterns that define the needs of multilingual students at this institution. It then proceeded to an online survey administered exclusively to tutors to refine the idea of how reports fit into the existing mode of operation of the writing center.

The decision to use a mixed methods approach was driven by the dual nature of the research question, which aims both to uncover what post-session reports reveal about the needs of multilingual writers and to evaluate how tutors perceive the usefulness of these reports within the context of Nazarbayev University. While prior studies have explored post-session reports primarily as tools for supporting individual student progress, fewer have examined their role as institutional documents that reflect the writing center's broader mission. Relying solely on textual analysis would have offered insight into tutoring practices but would not have captured how tutors themselves interpret or value the task of writing these reports. By combining the textual analysis of report content with survey data on tutor perceptions, this study hopes to present a more comprehensive understanding of how the reports function institutionally. The research was approved by the Institutional Research Ethics Committee at Nazarbayev University.

TEXTUAL ANALYSIS

In fall 2023, the overall number of reports submitted to the system was 460 from the undergraduate and 133 from the graduate schedule, which is close to the average number of sessions conducted each semester. This time frame was picked to capture the variety of works brought to the Writing Center, given that the genre of assignments may change depending on the season (e.g., scholarship or graduate school application period). It is important to note that the research was conducted as part of the Writing Fellows training sequence, which requires researchers to operate within course-established deadlines. As such, the data collection period was limited to approximately five weeks, which prevented this study from examining all of the reports. To ensure the reliability of the results, it was decided to analyze one-third of the re-

ports submitted by the tutors on both tutoring schedules, resulting in 153 undergraduate and 44 graduate entries.

Each of the entries was manually analyzed, and the relevant data was extracted into an Excel spreadsheet. The reports were examined according to the genre of the assignment, the concern indicated by the student in the appointment form, and what the tutor indicated to have worked on during the session. The decision to include student concerns as one of the observations was motivated by the purpose of comparing tutors' and students' understanding of what writing aspects needed attention. Another column in the spreadsheet was kept open ("Notes"), reserved for special cases—for example, reports that included information beyond the expected 3-part structure that tutors were instructed to use. To some extent, this procedure replicates what Rita Malenczyk does in her study of reports at Eastern Connecticut State University. More specifically, Malenczyk recognizes the rhetorical complexity of the reports, suggesting that they could also serve a community-building function (75). Hence, such outstanding elements of the reports were recorded in a separate column. Table 1 shows an example of spreadsheet entries.

Table 1. Sample of Data Extracted from the Appointment Forms and the Post-session Reports

Assignment	Student Concern	Report Concern	Notes
Argumentative essay	Brainstorming, conciseness	No thesis statement in the intro; how to serve arguments	N/A
Motivational letter	Brainstorming, organization	Aligning main idea with the argument	"X left with some good ideas and was eager to start writing"

Note: Data collected from reports submitted by tutors in fall 2023.

A basic inductive coding approach was applied to analyze the data. As such, no predefined coding scheme was imposed, allowing themes to emerge from the data through multiple readings of the post-session reports. During the first reading, each entry was summarized with brief notes regarding what the tutor reported as the focus of the session, such as "generate some ideas," "connection of ideas between paragraphs," "minor sentence level things," or "concerns about the length of the paper." After reviewing the initial batch of reports (approximately 40), the observations were clustered into broader thematic categories. This way, anything related to structure, the connection between ideas, or adding new sections was coded as **organization**. Next, grammar, punctuation, word choice, citation and formatting, and other sentence-level issues were coded as **lower-order concerns**.

Reports that mention working on **brainstorming**, **clarity**, or **idea development** were coded accordingly. A report could be coded under multiple categories if the tutor indicated working on multiple aspects of writing. Additional codes were added to mark reports that included tutor reflections on the effectiveness of the session, methods used, or non-instructional issues such as technological problems and student attitude.

Once all reports were coded, simple Excel formulas (COUNTIF and SUM) were used to calculate the frequency with which each code appeared. This allowed for the identification of common patterns and their comparison to student-indicated concerns on the appointment

forms. Although the coding process was conducted manually using Excel, which implied limitations in scalability, it proved sufficient for the aims of this study in providing context-sensitive analysis.

ONLINE SURVEY

Getting an insight into how tutors approach this post-session procedure is essential to identify how effective the adopted practice is in improving the quality of services provided by the Writing Center and how it contributes to the work done by the tutors. To do so, an anonymous online survey was administered to faculty and undergraduate tutors who held consultations during the fall 2023 semester. Overall, 10 tutors were invited to participate (7 faculty members and 3 undergraduate interns).

The survey questions were designed to address the most frequently cited uncertainties in the literature, such as the amount of time tutors spend writing reports, their perceptions of the reports' primary purpose, and how they integrate them into their day-to-day tutoring practices. While some questions ("How useful do you find post-session reports for improving your tutoring practice?") asked the respondents to answer based on a 5-point Likert scale, others were open-ended so as not to unduly limit the scope of tutors' experiences ("What challenges, if any, do you face when writing post-session reports?"); for further reference, please see the Survey Questionnaire in the Appendix. The following section presents the findings derived from these responses and the textual analysis of the reports, discussing their implications in the context of the writing center at Nazarbayev University.

RESULTS

POST-SESSION REPORTS

One of the primary findings of this study is that appointment forms in isolation are not always informative about the kind of help students are seeking. Out of 197 sessions, only 38 appointment forms provide responses that go beyond listing a few isolated words (see Table 2). For example, in one form that is fairly typical of the amount and type of information writing center clients at this institution submitted during the chosen period, one student indicated a need to work on "organization, conciseness" in their motivation letter. In contrast, in their post-session report, the tutor describes the session as addressing "the sequence of ideas" and "moving the discussion of motivation from the end of the letter to the beginning."

The most frequently cited concern was "organization" (93 instances), followed by "grammar," "brainstorming," and "conciseness" (each mentioned 41 times). Other terms such as "feedback," "clarity," and "style" appeared less often (see Table 2).

Table 2. Commonly Cited Student Concerns in Appointment Forms

Word	Frequency	Word	Frequency
organization	93	overall	14
grammar	41	content	11
brainstorming	41	improve	10
conciseness	41	how	7
feedback	16	check	6
idea	16	clarity	5
structure	15	style	5

Note: Results from analysis to appointment forms submitted by Writing Center clients in fall 2023.

In most cases where *organization* was listed as a concern, the corresponding reports confirmed that structural revisions were addressed. Tutors reported activities such as rearranging paragraphs, strengthening introductions and conclusions, or improving flow between ideas. However, in 10 reports, tutors noted no organizational issues and instead described working on other areas, including wording changes. This suggests that while students frequently cite *organization* as an area they want to work on, their understanding of the term may vary.

Similarly, *conciseness* was often used imprecisely. Although mentioned in 41 appointment forms, only 12 post-session reports reflected a focus on sentence-level clarity. In most cases, tutors interpreted "conciseness" more broadly, as aligning the content with assignment prompts, addressing wordiness, or improving overall focus.

Brainstorming, by contrast, was used more consistently to signal a need for idea generation. Tutors often mentioned brainstorming activities, especially for motivation letters or upcoming assignments, even when it was not listed in the appointment form.

Lastly, *grammar* was listed as often as brainstorming and conciseness, found in 41 appointment forms, either on its own or alongside other concerns. However, only 15 of the corresponding post-session reports note addressing the issue of grammar during the session. Aside from that, 4 cases mention addressing grammar, or LOCs in general, without the appointment from indicating it as something the student would like to work on. Overall, only 19 of the reports suggest working on grammar, punctuation, word choice, or citation and formatting from almost 200 samples, which is surprising given how much emphasis is put on grammar in multilingual contexts.

GENRE

In terms of genre, the analysis indicates that motivational letters are the most common type of writing brought to the writing center. Of the 197 recorded entries, 129 were related to motivational letters, with 43 specifically written for DAAD, the German scholarship program. This is not surprising, given that the DAAD deadline falls on October 31, midway through the fall semester. Other genres, such as news reports, policy memos, literature reviews, and research papers are more evenly distributed among discipline-specific assignments.

SURVEY

Survey responses were collected from tutors (5 faculty and 3 undergraduate) who conducted consultations during the fall 2023 semester, of-

fering insight into whether these reports function as more than an administrative procedure.

When asked about the goals they had in mind while writing post-session reports (Question 5: "What specific goals do you have in mind when writing post-session reports?"), 7 out of 9 (77.8%) respondents indicated that the reports serve primarily as a tool for documenting student progress and supporting future reference. One tutor stated that their goal was to "provide robust data on our practices," while another responded, "No goals really. It's just a requirement to write these reports," indicating some divergence in perceptions of the reports' purpose.

The majority of tutors (66.7%) reported spending less than five minutes on each report in response to Question 6 ("How much time, on average, do you spend writing a post-session report?"). This brevity may help explain the limited detail found in many reports and may reduce their potential usefulness for informing tutor practices or supporting institutional reflection.

Regarding the use of existing reports, only one respondent reported "always" reviewing previous reports before sessions with returning clients (Question 7: "How often do you refer to previous post-session reports before starting a new session with a returning student?"). Two tutors (22.2%) reported doing so "frequently," while the rest selected "sometimes," "rarely," or "never." When asked about challenges faced when writing reports, six tutors (66.67%) described the task as redundant, burdensome, or distracting from other responsibilities.

Tutors' practices around sharing post-session reports also varied. When asked whether they shared reports with students, four tutors responded "never," and two responded "rarely." Responses to Question 4 ("If you share a report with a client, could you briefly explain why or what for?") revealed uncertainty about whether sharing was even an available feature, as one tutor asked, "Is that an option we have in WCOnline?" Others recognized its potential, stating that reports could serve as "a guide for revision or action plan." As for sharing reports with faculty, none of the respondents reported doing so. These results reflect a largely internal and tutor-centered use of the reports, shaped by an institutional emphasis on student privacy and discretion. The following section interprets these findings in the context of prior literature and the specific institutional setting of the study.

DISCUSSIONS

STUDENT INTENTIONS

The difference in the level of detail between the two accounts, namely the appointment form and the tutor report, can be due to the way the relevant question in the appointment form is formulated: "What is the main issue you want to work on? (i.e., brainstorming, organization, conciseness, grammar, etc.)?" While this formulation is intended to aid students in identifying their concerns, it may also have the unintended effect of presenting students with easy options that save them the time and effort necessary to reflect on their needs. In other words, students may use the listed options to relieve

the cognitive load of identifying the issue they wanted to address in the first place.

Another possible explanation is that students may perceive and believe that "a writer has a relatively fixed repository of linguistic blunders that can be pinpointed and then corrected through drill" or that "good writing is correct writing" (Rose 345). When interpreted in this light, making an appointment at a writing center becomes a vulnerable act, requiring students to publicly acknowledge their mistakes. This is especially true for multilingual writers, who may feel pressured to conform to a certain standard of academic writing. In her case study of graduate multilingual writers, Phillips recounts how one student felt hesitant about making an appointment because "the prospect of negotiating his writing in English for nearly an hour was overwhelming" (42). Therefore, the reluctance to fully engage with the appointment form might be indicative of the discomfort that often stems from misunderstanding the writing center as a site of correction rather than support.

Given that almost half of the appointment forms mention organization, it is clear that students recognize it as a central concern in their writing. While the rest of the appointments might have been equally concerned with organizational matters, it is in some cases unclear what organization means to those visiting the center. This is not to discredit organization as a valid reason to visit the writing center since it remains a key factor in effective writing. Rather, the question is how students at Nazarbayev University perceive and understand it.

As defined by Purdue OWL, "the goal of revising for organization and structure is to consciously design your writing projects to make them easy for readers to understand," which portrays organization as a characteristic that varies according to the genre. In most other instances, though, students' intention to work on organization was, indeed, dedicated to structural matters. Tutors indicated having "moved some things around for a clearer organization," "worked on introduction and conclusion," and "connected ideas between the paragraphs." There were also cases when *organization* implied a student bringing the word count of their essay down from 800 to 600 words, writing stronger paragraphs, and making their writing more focused. In other words, while still consistent with the formal definition of the word, organization is often used as an umbrella term for overall writing improvements.

A similar pattern emerged in how students described *conciseness*. Like *organization*, the term tends to lack precision in identifying a specific area for improvement. According to Purdue OWL, "concise writing does not always have the fewest words, but it always uses the strongest ones," highlighting concerns at the word level. However, out of the 41 post-session reports following appointments for which students listed conciseness as a goal, only 12 reflect this understanding. In the remaining cases, students seem to interpret conciseness as alignment between their writing and the assignment prompt. In other words, conciseness means whether their response addresses what is being asked. To illustrate, one such

post-session report mentions that the student "was not focusing on what the motivation letter was asking for," leading the tutor to suggest that they "find ways to make it more connected to the guidelines given." Another example demonstrates that the student "was concerned about wordiness and structure," further extending the definition of *conciseness*.

A study by Allie Johnston arrives at a similarly surprising conclusion. In trying to cultivate a better supporting environment for multilingual students, the writing center at Austin Peay State University conducted a comprehensive review of how the institution served its international population. Johnston reports that "tutors perceived grammatical explanations as the most important aspect of working with multilingual students" (169). However, observations revealed a very different picture as many students sought emotional support, trying to manage the pressure of producing perfect work, not merely grammatical assistance (Johnston 171). My study, conducted in an entirely multilingual context, confirms that while student writers worry about grammar, it is rarely their primary concern. Other elements of the writing process, such as organization, clarity, conciseness, and the ability to develop relevant ideas, are equally prominent in their understanding of effective writing, which more closely aligns with the realities of multilingual writers' needs.

The analysis suggests that discrepancies in defining various aspects of writing are fairly common. For instance, *organization* varies in meaning from writer to writer, reflecting the diverse ways students engage with the writing process and highlighting the value of an inclusive tutoring approach. Another conclusion that follows is that appointment forms and post-session reports are most effective when analyzed together, as they offer complementary perspectives. Ignoring one might lead to a distorted understanding of what students recognize as the purpose of the writing center. Contextualized analysis of the range of student concerns thus leads to important insight into the kinds of support students both seek and receive, particularly within multilingual environments.

TUTOR PERCEPTIONS

Having examined what post-session reports reveal about student needs, it is equally important to consider how tutors themselves perceive and engage with the practice, particularly how the reports fit into their daily workflow and whether they view them as a meaningful part of the tutoring process. It is common for writing center practitioners to portray the reports in an idealized light, arguing that tutors use them not only as an opportunity to discuss their sessions with one another but also to reflect on their experiences in the center and consider their development as writing consultants (Giaimo et al.). My survey results reflect this sentiment to some extent, specifically when almost all the tutors indicated that the reports are meant *for future reference* and *documenting progress.* However, as was also clear from the survey, there is no uniformity of opinion among the respondents. In other words, it might be too early to frame the practice as a comprehensive solution for both

tutoring service delivery and communication among stakeholders. The fact that more than half of the survey respondents spend less than 5 minutes writing the reports further undermines the utility of the reports in informing tutor practices and the writing center function in general.

In addition to spending limited time writing post-session reports, tutors also reported rarely referring back to them. One reason for this may be found in their responses to another survey question about the challenges they face when writing the reports. Mirroring findings from Cogie (57), six tutors described the reports as redundant, time-consuming, or a distraction from other responsibilities. These responses suggest that, as currently perceived, post-session reports are not a matter of utmost importance.

Despite the seeming lack of enthusiasm on the part of the tutors, some of the reports offer valuable and unexpected observations of the sessions, although that depends on the tutor's personal style. To illustrate, a number of the reports were indicative of the student's mood or level of readiness to submit an assignment. The tutor would use "left feeling more comfortable," "much happier," "no idea where to start," and "ready to submit" to communicate the emotional state of the student upon finishing the session. This kind of structure is most consistent with what Bugdal et al. identify as the *Cheerleader Note*, characterized by the presence of encouragement (15). While authors claim that this genre of notes was not "useful/purposeful in general" based on feedback from faculty, tutors, and students (Bugdal et al. 28), these kinds of details help create an image of the motivations and emotions driving students who seek to improve their writing. Some of the tutors incorporated tutoring strategies, such as reverse outlining, that they used during the session. Although that was only the case for 2 tutors in the fall 2023 semester, they went into detail regarding how a particular problem was approached. For instance, "I used the 'compliment sandwich' strategy to address the two places I thought the wording could be improved." In offering more contextually rich and empirically relevant information about the sessions, these types of notes also fall outside the scope of the standard reporting procedure.

This might lead one to infer that tutors in our writing center are more reflective in notes that go beyond the recommended format, but the reality is more nuanced. The way in which tutors at NU are trained to write the post-session reports most closely resembles the *Reporter Note*, which Bugdal et al. also portray as traditional (15). More specifically, the authors define it in terms of a balance between summary and goal-setting, maintaining a formal tone, and institutionally appropriate features. As such, it emerged as a favorite of the faculty, tutors, and students who participated in Bugdal et al.'s study. However, it is difficult to definitively conclude whether tutors at NU gain more utility from one type of report than another, if at all.

The primary reason for that is the difference in how reports are institutionalized within the daily operations of the center. Unlike the University of Connecticut, where Bugdal et al. conducted their research, tutors at NU do not

consistently share session summaries with the students, and faculty are not considered as one of stakeholders in this process. As for sharing them with other faculty, the policy at this writing center seems to be intuitively "seclusionist," as it seeks to prioritize student confidentiality and privacy, and protect students' full ownership over the process. Overall, given the level of engagement with the reports, they are more often viewed in terms of their administrative and personal utility for the tutor, rather than as an essential part of the tutoring process.

CONCLUSION

Based on textual analysis of almost 200 post-session reports, this study found that the range of concerns multilingual students tend to have regarding their writing can be captured with four broad terms: organization, brainstorming, conciseness, and grammar. While issues of brainstorming and grammar, the way they come up in the reports, reflect a traditional interpretation of the concepts, organization and conciseness encapsulate a wider range of writing issues. These terms allow students to delegate the task of identifying the area for improvement to tutors or to avoid explicitly naming aspects of writing they find challenging. Overall, the data shows that multilingual students at Nazarbayev University seek support with higher-order concerns, particularly organization, which was listed alone or alongside other concerns in nearly half of all appointment forms. Contrary to assumptions about multilingual institutions, tutoring sessions rarely focus on word or sentence-level issues, such as grammar or formatting.

The results of the study also indicate that the way tutors engage with the reports is not uniform. Only a small number of tutors recognized the reports' potential to further supporting the mission of the writing center. Most saw them as routine administrative tasks rather than tools for reflection or feedback. This lack of shared purpose is reflected in how infrequently the reports are revisited or shared beyond the inner database, and in the minimal integration of this practice into the tutors' existing workflow.

Prior research on post-session reports focused overwhelmingly on the merit of the reports as a tool to support student progress, whereas this study mines them for evidence of day-to-day operations of the writing center at Nazarbayev University. It contributes to a growing body of literature by expanding the geographic and institutional scope of existing scholarship, which focused mostly on public universities in the U.S. To date, this is the first study to explore the use of post-session reports in a fully multilingual writing center setting. By treating these reports as a form of big data, the study identifies the kinds of support multilingual students seek and receive, while also assessing how they reinforce the center's mission. This perspective may offer valuable insights to writing centers in similar contexts around the world.

There are two factors that limited the scope of this research. First, the textual analysis of the post-session reports was conducted manually, on a limited sample of nearly 200 post-session reports. Second, because of institutional deadlines associated with the Writing

Fellows course that the research was completed in, the data collection window was quite narrow (a few weeks). For larger data sets and more generous timeframes, other researchers may consider using a software suite like Voyant to uncover trends that may not be visible through manual methods (Giaimo et al.). Despite these limitations, the implications of this study will be important for both writing center practitioners and researchers. The former can reevaluate how they integrate the reports into their practices, whereas scholars can replicate or expand the methodology of this study to understand how writing centers function in other contexts. Writing center administrators may also consider putting more emphasis on discussions about the purpose and potential of post-session reports during tutor training and using them as a tool to evaluate how well their center's day-to-day practices align with its stated philosophy.

Future research could build on these findings in several ways. Cross-institutional studies across different multilingual contexts could help identify broader patterns in how post-session reports are written, interpreted, and used. Additionally, future work might also explore the student perspective, examining how multilingual writers perceive or benefit from the reports written about their sessions.

APPENDIX

Survey Questionnaire

1. Describe your role at the Writing Center:
    - ▯ Faculty tutor
    - ▯ Undergraduate intern
    - ▯ Other

2. Do you consistently submit post-session reports to the WCOnline system after each tutoring session?
    - ▯ Never
    - ▯ Rarely
    - ▯ Sometimes
    - ▯ Often
    - ▯ Always

3. How often do you share the post-session report with the client?
    - ▯ Never
    - ▯ Rarely
    - ▯ Sometimes

- ▯ Often
- ▯ Always

4. If you share a report with a client, could you briefly explain why or what for?
5. What specific goals do you have in mind when writing post-session reports? Check all that apply.
   - ▯ Documenting progress
   - ▯ Providing reflections
   - ▯ For future reference
   - ▯ Other

6. How much time, on average, do you spend writing a post-session report?
   - ▯ Less than 5 minutes
   - ▯ 5-10 minutes
   - ▯ 10-15 minutes
   - ▯ More than 15 minutes

7. How often do you refer to previous post-session reports before starting a new session with a returning student?
   - ▯ Never
   - ▯ Rarely
   - ▯ Sometimes
   - ▯ Often
   - ▯ Always

8. Do you follow a specific format or structure when writing post-session reports?
   - ▯ Yes
   - ▯ No

9. How useful do you find post-session reports for improving your tutoring practice?
   - ▯ Not useful at all
   - ▯ Somewhat useful
   - ▯ Moderately useful
   - ▯ Very useful
   - ▯ Extremely useful

10. Do you believe post-session reports are primarily useful for your own reflection, for other tutors, or for administrative purposes? Check all that apply.
    - ▯ For my own reflection
    - ▯ For other tutors

- Administrative purposes
- Other

11. What challenges, if any, do you face when writing post-session reports?

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