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DEVELOPMENT OF TEXTUAL QUALITY IN HEBREW EXPOSITORY WRITING: A MULTI-DIMENSIONAL, TYPOLOGY-SENSITIVE PERSPECTIVE

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Abstract

This study investigates the development of textual quality (TQ) in Hebrew expository writing among students in Grades 2 to 5. A total of 273 Hebrew-speaking students produced descriptive and argumentative texts, which were analyzed across three key dimensions of TQ: transcriptional (text length and spelling), lexical (basic and advanced lexical categories), and structural (macro-level organization). Findings revealed consistent grade-related gains in productivity and spelling accuracy, alongside selective increases in advanced lexical features—particularly abstract nouns and derivational adjectives in descriptive texts. Argumentative writing, characterized by higher cognitive and linguistic demands, exhibited greater variability and sharper developmental contrasts. Structural development showed progression toward more hierarchically organized texts, though some parameters plateaued across adjacent grades, suggesting non-linear consolidation processes. The results support a

componential and gradual model of writing development shaped by language-specific typological features. In particular, Hebrew's root-based morphology and variable orthographic transparency appear to influence both lexical expansion and spelling trajectories. Genre emerged as a key moderating factor, shaping the pace, nature, and visibility of TQ growth across dimensions. Beyond charting developmental patterns, the study contributes to broader cross-linguistic understandings of writing by foregrounding how typological properties interact with genre and grade level. It underscores the importance of multi-dimensional, genre-sensitive approaches to writing research, especially in languages beyond English. Pedagogically, the findings highlight the need for instruction that is tailored to genre-specific demands and supports lexical precision, structural awareness, and transcriptional fluency over time. The results also have implications for developing assessment tools that reflect the complexity and graduality of writing development in typologically diverse contexts.

Keywords:

Textual Quality, Writing Development, Hebrew Expository Writing, Genre, Lexical Development