**Improvement in the writing of teachers following an intervention program to promote students' writing of argumentative text**

**Abstract**

The current study focuses on improving argumentative text writing among eight 5th grade teachers, following an intervention program to promote students' achievement in writing. The improvement of teachers' knowledge of writing instruction and the improvement of their own writing abilities to write argumentative text and of their self-perception as research. The improvement in the writing ability of teachers was assessed through several measures of writing, related mainly to the development of the ability to reason in order to substantiate an argument. The findings show the importance of professional development frameworks in elementary school in the field of writing and writing instruction and especially in the field of argumentative writing.

Keywords: argumentative writing, professional development, teachers as writers, teaching knowledge, writing instruction

1. **Introduction**

Argumentative writing has been a key component of curriculum reforms in recent decades in schools around the world (Newell, Beach, Smith, Van Der Heide, 2011). As early as the 1990s, researchers have been arguing that teachers who write and who experience success, enthusiasm, and confidence in their writing will serve as role models for their students (Emig, 1971; Geekie, Cambourne & Fitzsimmons, 1999). Students' motivation to write rests on the teacher's beliefs and abilities as a writer, as this shapes students' beliefs about themselves as writers (Daniels, 2018).

An argument is a complex verbal and social action that focuses on an interaction between two or more interlocuters that aims to resolve disagreements. Many researchers explain that in an argument, participants try to convince each other of their claims through a personal thought process, in which the writer deliberately communicates with the addressee's mental representation and engages in expandingor reducing a controversial point ofview (Berland & NcNeill, 2010; Crasnich & Lumbelli, 2005; Van Eemeren et al., 1996; Berrill 1992; Crammond, 1998; Qin & Karabacak, 2010; Nussbaum et al., 2005; Allen et al., 2019). The complexity of an argumentative text stems in part from the writer being required to simultaneously address argument activities and textual activities (Dellerman et al., 1996; Allen et al., 2019). It has been found that teachers' knowledge of creating a reasoned argument is limited, and they are unaware of the content and procedural knowledge required to write argumentative writing (Beyer & Davis, 2008). Previous researches suggest various strategies that may help teachers as writers develop the ability to reason in argumentative texts in order to produce a coherent text that meets its goals:

**Posing specific goals for writing -** When teachers provide clear directions regarding what should be included in the essay and encourage persistence by allowing the writer to track their progress toward the overall goal, writing performance might improve (Ferretti, MacArthur, & Dowdy, 2000; Nussbaum et al., (Eds.), 2005).

**Focusing on opposing positions and counterarguments –**

Many writers tend to focus on their claim and the reasons that support it without addressing the arguments that oppose it (Felton & Kuhn, 2001; Kuhn & Udell, 2003). According to Walton (2007, 2011, 1989) an argument based on two goals: using counterarguments to support the writer's argument and the possibility of challenging the opposing position by identifying weaknesses in it. Both of these goals require the writer to pay attention to the opposing position and counterarguments. According to Walton, the novice arguer thus fails to embrace the dual goals of argumentative discourse - to identify weaknesses in arguments opposed to his position and to use the counterarguments to support his own claims. It was found (Mateos at el., 2018) that writers are able to refer to the position of the other, and even produce an argument against it, when they are asked to do so explicitly. It was also found that providing explicit goals for writing an argument that direct the writer to provide well-founded reasons for his position and formulate counter arguments led the writers to write high quality argumentative texts (Ferretti, McArthur, and Daudi, 2000; Nussbaum & Kardash, 2005).

**Linguistic components for creating and establishing dialogues between the writer and the audience** - According to researchers ((FlØttum et al., 2006; Hyland, 2001, 2005; Author b, 2012) dialogue includes the writer's interaction with himself, with the reader and with other texts. Among the typical linguistic means for creating dialogues in an argumentative text are interrogatives, syntactic structures for expressing contrast and concession, and various rhetorical expressions.

**Producing a coherent and cohesive text -** Cohesion and connectivity are essential features in producing a logical and comprehensible discourse unit (Kostopoulou 2007). In argumentative texts, writers are expected to develop and explain arguments that support their position and to work more efficiently in the writing process to produce a text that contains a meaningful message, that reflects the ideas and is easy to understand for the readers, while complying with the rules of cohesion and connectivity. Therefore, it is important and even necessary to integrate these two elements into the curriculum where teachers teach the process and the rules explicitly (Crowhurst, 1981; Gao, 2012; Liu & Braine, 2005; Mutwarasibo, 2013; Yang & Sun, 2012).

**1.1 Professional development for writing instruction**

Since the 1990s, many researchers have found that teacher quality is closely linked to students' academic achievement (Darling-Hammond, Chung-Wei, Andree, Richardson & Orphanos, 2009; Jordan, Mendro & Weerasinghe, 1997; Nye, Konstantopoulos & Hedges, 2004; Rice, 2003; Rivkin, Hanushek & Kain, 2005; Sanders & Rivers, 1996; Wright, Horn & Sanders, 1997). The effectiveness of writing instruction in elementary schools has been found to be mediocre. A review of empirical works between 1990 and 2015 on teachers as writers (Cremin & Oliver 2017) showed that teachers have narrow perceptions about what is considered good writing and that there are multiple tensions involved, which are related to teachers’ low self-confidence as writers and insufficient experience in writing and writing instruction. The study by Goldenberg et al. (2011) revealed that teachers admit that they do not feel comfortable with the craft of teaching writing due to little practice during their professional development. Previous studies have shown that teachers who do not feel confident in their knowledge of writing instruction do not feel competent or willing to teach writing and avoid doing so (Bifuh-Ambe, 2013; Cantrell & Hughes, 2008; Harward et al., 2014; Klehm, 2014; Mosenthal, 1995; Marculitis, 2017). A random sample of fourth- to sixth-grade elementary school teachers across the United States found that nearly two-thirds reported that teacher training courses in college provided them with little preparation for writing instruction (Gilbert & Graham, 2010; National Center for Education Statistics, 2013). Other studies have suggested professional development for teachers to guide them to build content knowledge and knowledge of effective instruction (Marculitis, 2017; Cantrell & Hughes, 2008; Parr & Jesson, 2016; Howell, et al., 2018; Joyce & Showers, 2002).

Initial training and professional development programs provide opportunities for the reformulation of attitudes and self-esteem as writers (Cermin & Oliver 2017). Teachers of writing may develop new understandings that can enrich their pedagogy and influence the achievement of their students (Gennrich & Janks 2013; St. John et al., 2004). From this it can be concluded that the most effective way to improve student achievement in writing is to provide teachers with professional development aimed at expanding their knowledge of writing and writing instruction and changing their pedagogical beliefs in these regards (Wood & Lieberman, 2000; Bifuh-Ambe, 2013).

Swan (2003) found that professional development workshops enable teachers to explore their writing skills and later guide them to translate the skills they learned into effective classroom teaching. Research evidence supports the hypothesis that the effectiveness of teachers’ reading and writing instruction is contingent upon them becoming confident and enthusiastic readers and writers themselves (Atwell, 1987, 1991; Calkins, 1993; Commeyras, Bisplinghoff, & Olson, 2003; Gambrell, 1996; Gilespie, 1991; Graves, 1978, 1983, 1994; Mueller, 1973; Murray, 1985; Routman, 1991). Monte-Sano & Allen (2018) found that the level of sophistication of students’ written arguments depends on the teaching and guidance given to them by their teachers.

Studies have found that teachers have difficulty with specific components of argument-writing instruction, such as finding evidence and arguments to support the claim, and that their understanding of the concept of reasoning is limited (Hillocks, 2010; Newell et al., 2011). Studies show that teachers are often unaware of concepts such as evidence or causal evidence and are therefore unable to effectively incorporate explicit teaching of reasoning and argumentation in their classrooms. Thus, expanding teachers' knowledge of writing text for argumentative purposes is essential to promote the development of reasoning and argumentation among students (McNeill, 2009; McNeill & Pimentel 2010). McNeill & Knight (2013) showed that teachers’ professional development that is focused on argumentation instruction helped teachers formulate a better understanding of the essence of an argumentative text.

**The present study**

In accordance with the global need to promote the quality of students' writing and examine the impact of different types of writing interventions tailored to students' needs (Gilbert & Graham, 2010; Rosário at el., 2019), the current article is based on a broad study conducted to examine the improvement of student achievement in writing following a professional development program for their teachers. The present paper presents only part of the findings, focusing on the connection between the elaboration of teachers' knowledge of writing instruction and the improvement of their own writing abilities and their self-perception as writers, following an intervention program to improve students' ability to write text for argumentative purposes. Thus, our research question is whether and how a process of professional development to promote student achievements in teaching writing, promoted the teachers' achievements in writing argumentative texts.

1. **Method**

This experimental mixed method study relies on paradigms from the qualitative research and also incorporates a quantitative measurement method to measure the impact of the intervention program on the achievements of eight teachers in writing a text for argumentative purposes. The researchers were involved in the intervention program and its guidance. The current study relies on the findings of a broader study that examined the students' and teachers' performance before and at the end of the intervention program (Author a, 2019). The findings related to the students are not reported in the present paper.

**Participants**

The study involved eight teachers of Hebrew language participated in an advanced professional development training program (henceforth “the training program”) in which they learned about the writing process in general and how to perfect the instruction of writing argumentative text in particular, through diverse instructional practices. They then applied this knowledge in their classes. The intervention included 80 Hebrew-speaking fifth-grade students, mostly native Hebrew speakers, who were students of the teachers who participated in the training program.

* 1. **The intervention program**

Based on previous studies conducted to promote students' writing through the professional development of their teachers (see, for example, studies by Graham and his colleagues: Graham, & Harris, 2018; Graham, MacArthur, & Fitzgerald, 2013) and in accordance with the curriculum for language development in elementary school, the intervention program included training for teachers in 10 three-hour sessions that took place over an entire year, accompanied by the application of what was learned in their classrooms, under the guidance of one of the researchers who serves as a national instructor for teachers in the field of language education in elementary schools. The training included about 20 teachers, but only eight of them expressed their consent to participate in the study, therefore the information and findings presented in this article will refer to eight teachers only. The purpose of the program was to expand the teachers' knowledge of writing, to foster positive self-efficacy and self-confidence in writing, and to expand their teaching knowledge so that it would allow them to teach writing in the classroom and succeed in promoting their students' writing. The program included improving the teachers' understanding of the process of writing texts in general and argumentative texts in particular, experience in writing argumentative texts and evaluating them according to theoretical models. The learning process included activities such as identifying linguistic-rhetorical components in argumentative texts, classroom exercises in looking at a problem or issue from various points of view, and learning new strategies for improving reasoning, such as linguistic components for creating and establishing dialogue between the writer and the audience, tools for producing a coherent and connected text, using syntactic and discourse structures appropriate for presenting counter-arguments, formulating authentic tasks where the goal and audience are well defined, and a conducting collaborative argument writing exercise. The teachers were exposed to new ways of developing the ability to reason and expand the argumentative content, aimed at producing a quality and well-reasoned argumentative text that includes different points of view. In the advanced training sessions, discussions were held, and written products of the teachers and their students were analyzed. The joint discussions focused on ideas for encouraging dialogic writing, such as examining contrary positions—for example, through questions aimed at addressing the other's views or by creating diagrams of arguments for and against a certain position. The teachers also experienced writing according to the genre and purpose of the text. As mentioned, to examine the impact of learning on teachers' personal progress in writing, they were required to write an argumentative text at the beginning and end of the program.

Another experience of the teachers during the training program included writing a personal blog. Teachers were asked to raise every week thoughts, ideas, attitudes, and feelings in relation to their personal learning experience, to describe their classroom experience following what was learned in the program, and to present insights in relation to it. At the end of the training program, data-rich personal blogs were received, which were used by the researchers in the qualitative analysis.

While the teachers participated in the training program, the knowledge they acquired was applied by them in their classrooms. This knowledge included explicit instructional practices for writing an argumentative text, with an emphasis on content development and expanding the reasoning. During the classroom experiences, their students were instructed to pay due attention to the purpose of writing, to identify the audience and the context, and to give these elements a place in their writing in order to create a text tailored to the audience. The students also learned to devote time to thinking and discussing together in order to plan the text and to emphasize writing arguments, counter-arguments, and refuting them through contrastive structures (antithesis and concession).

**2.2 Research tools**

*2.1.1 Writing assignments*

The eight teachers were assigned two writing tasks for argumentative purposes, developed for this purpose, one at the beginning of the training program and the other at its conclusion. Each assignment included the presentation of a topic for which they were asked to formulate a position and write an argumentative text that presents this position to a defined audience for the purpose of persuasion. At the same time as the teachers, their students in the classes were also required to do two writing assignments, one at the beginning of the intervention and the other at the end.

Task one, given before the intervention (Text 1), was formulated as follows: “As an educator, you are interested in consolidating a position regarding students using Facebook. Is Facebook for kids aged 10–12 worth it? Think about the subject from different angles, read information, expand your knowledge, formulate positions. Write and try to convince the other teachers in the group of your position.” Task Two, given at the conclusion of the intervention (Text 2), was formulated as follows: “The Ministry of Education and the Teachers' Union are considering allowing teachers to go on vacation during the year that is not adjacent to the teachers' vacation schedule. What do you think about it? Write a letter addressed to the committee dealing with the issue in the Ministry of Education, express your position, and try to convince the committee members to accept it.”

These two slightly different genres(a so-called position paper and and an argumentative letter) was not part of the training program and was not examined in this study. The research focused on the content of writing, the ability to reason and the structure of the text.

*2.1.2 An index for evaluating writing quality*

The writing tasks of the teachers and students were assessed using an analytical index constructed by the researchers to examine measurable achievements before and after the intervention. It has been found that an analytical assessment for writing assessment, which includes clear measurement criteria, leads to a more focused and rigorous assessment process, and the decomposition of written text assessment into components helps to reduce the influence of irrelevant factors (QuelJrnalz, 1986). The evaluation of the texts using the index referred to the presence of the measures and their quality. The notation in the index makes it possible to evaluate optimal, partial, little or missing performance. The assessment components in the index are based on national assessment test indicators for elementary school students in Israel. The analytical index that was developed (see appendix) contained criteria for evaluating the content, the quality of the reasoning, the structure, and the vocabulary. The scoring used a four-point scale which included "very good", "good", "average" and "poor", each scored 4, 3, 2 and 1 respectively (Jumariati, & Sulistyo, 2017). In the process of building the index, five performance measures were defined related to writing in general, such as cohesion, connectivity, vocabulary (i.e., accuracy in word choice and style), but not to aspects related to writing conventions such as spelling and punctuation. In accordance with the aim of the study, the bulk of the components in the index focused on the ability to produce appropriate reasoning.

The holistic approach to evaluating a written text refers to the text as a whole rather than to its components (Galti et al., 2018, Scriven, 1994). The advantage of this approach is in being able to acquire a general impression of the overall quality of the writing. Therefore, the eight teachers' texts were also evaluated holistically, by the researchers, to identify the use of the vocabulary, the choice of word combinations and the production of the cohesion of the texts before and after the intervention, as suggested by Galti (Galti at el., 2018).

*2.1.3 Personal blogs*

During the year of the training program, the teachers maintained a personal blog that was used to document their learning and their application of the knowledge they acquired in the classroom. Blog writing included insights, conclusions and attitudes of the teachers towards writing, and reports on the application of the new knowledge in the classroom following the program. It also served as a model for future experiences with students in the classroom.

The rich data that was gathered from the personal blogs was evaluated qualitatively according to the "natural data" method (Silverman, 2006). The analysis was based on sorting the expressions in the texts written by the teachers into main content categories (Strauss & Corbin, 1990, p. 73) and on content analysis that brought up diverse categories, referring to words and descriptions that reflect emotions, thoughts, and beliefs according to the context in which they were expressed (Krippendorff, 2013, 2018).

The analysis of the blogs according to the grounded theory method produced a series of findings. It shows change and progress in the teachers' personal and professional knowledge of writing and writing instruction and in their attitudes toward writing instruction, as a result of the training program, and their impact on teaching as described from the teachers' point of view.

**3. Findings**

The findings presented in this paper address the impact of the professional development program on teachers' personal and professional knowledge of writing and writing instruction. The study findings were produced using the following measures:

1. Evaluation of the texts written by the teachers before and at the conclusion of the intervention by index and by holistic view.

2. Content analysis of the teachers' personal blogs.

3. The impact of the intervention on students’ writing ability achievements

We will present the findings in this order.

*3.1 Findings arising from the evaluation of the teachers' texts*

The intervention program included a process in which the teachers themselves engaged in “conscious writing”, in which they were made aware of each step in the process. Although these texts can be considered as written by skilled writers, the findings show that the training program had an effect and improved teachers’ writing skills, including the ability to reason broadly, use counter-arguments, and produce writing that is more cohesive and focused on the topic at hand and meets the purpose of the text. It seems that in the texts after the intervention, the teachers concentrated less on the structure of the argumentative text, which includes the presentation of a claim accompanied by reasons that support the claim, and focus more on expanding the reasoning and strengthening the argument. The teachers’ writing progress indicates that the writing intervention program promoted teacher's writing, on measures that before the intervention were weak.

Figure 1 presents the achievements of the teachers in writing before and at the conclusion of the intervention, according to the aforementioned index.

**Figure 1. Teacher’s Writing Achievements before and after the Intervention**

The Y-axis in the chart shows the scores for both texts. The highest score obtained was 68 (68= 100%). The X-axis in the diagram shows the eight teachers (A-H). The columns in the chart show, side-by-side, the teachers’ score before the intervention (orange) compared to the score they received for writing at the conclusion of the intervention (blue). The chart shows a statistically significant improvement for the eight teachers at the conclusion of the intervention.

Figure 2 show the average change in teachers’ texts before (Text 1) and after the intervention (Text 2) on various writing measures**.**

Figure 2. **Grade Averages for Both Teachers’ Texts on Specific Measures**

The Y-axis shows the average grades of the eight teachers' texts before the intervention (blue) and after it (orange) in specific components of the argument, for which the highest score according to the analytical index (see index) was 4 points: reference to opposing position, providing reasons for the opposing position, use of specific syntactic structures to express contrast, clear logical connections between arguments and the occurrence of conclusion.

Fig. 2 shows that following the intervention program the teachers were able to improve their writing and produced better argumentative texts. The most significant progress was found in those measures that aimed at substantiating the central claim, such as presenting opposing positions accompanied by counter-arguments, using concessive structures as a linguistic means to create dialogicity, and using appropriate vocabulary and style.

In contrast to the assessment of the students' texts, which was conducted using the analytical indicator alone, assessing the teachers' texts was conducted using a holistic analysis of the entire written essay, focusing on their main message or idea. The holistic analysis shows that while the texts written before the intervention included superfluous information that at times harmed the coherence of the text, the texts written at the end of the intervention were shorter but more complex in terms of structure and content, more focused on the issue in question, more cohesive and included more relevant arguments. It is evident that the teachers learned about the importance of using contrastive syntactic and textual structures to present opposing positions that helped them produce texts that were focused on the dilemma, and promoted the writer’s position while presenting and refuting opposing positions.

*3.2 Findings from the teachers' personal blogs*

The findings in this section refer to the attitudes of teachers as writers toward writing and toward the teaching of writing before and at the conclusion of the intervention. The texts the teachers wrote in their personal blog were analyzed by means of content analysis and grouped into the categories described below.

3*.2.1 Teachers’ attitudes toward the act of writing*

At the beginning of the intervention, all eight teachers expressed the view that for them, writing is a complex, challenging task that requires much effort:

• *When I have to write even a greeting, I find myself sitting in front of the page and having a hard time formulating it.*

• *Writing always requires a lot of effort from me, more than situations where I am required to speak or read.*

*• As a student and as a teacher I have invested and still invest a lot of effort in writing.*

In contrast, at the end of the learning process, all eight teachers stated that the enhancement of instructional knowledge in the classroom also contributed to their writing and increased their self-confidence as writers.

• *As a writer, the strategies I acquired in the course, the experience of writing in a group, and the exposure to a variety of texts contributed a lot to me, and today, when I have to write, I approach the page with much more peace and confidence.*

*• You could say that writing has always been “my Achilles heel” as I personally feel. I have always felt that I am not professional enough in the field and that in order to teach the field I need to specialize as a writer. In this program, I felt that I was getting tools for myself and of course tools for teaching in the classroom.*

3*.2.2 Teachers' attitudes toward writing instruction*

At the beginning of the intervention, six of the eight teachers stated their attitudes toward writing instruction, expressing concerns and discomfort.

• *I have always felt that this is a subject that is very difficult for me to teach and convey the content in the best way to my students.*

*• Argumentative writing is complex writing for students and is not easy to teach.*

During and after the training program, it was evident that their self-confidence in writing instruction had increased. They stated that they were able to increase their instructional knowledge and use it in their classroom.

• *The confidence I feel today while teaching writing is felt in the classroom; students are no longer giving up on writing.*

*• I learned mainly to make room for the opening lesson, to hear what the children have to say on each topic and not to be afraid of learning in stages. I insist with the children on preparing before writing the text and not rushing to write it.*

In the teachers' comments in the blog, expressions of their self-learning as writers were identified.

• *I learned the importance of cohesion and connectivity in the text. I learned how to write a short, focused paragraph using conjunction. I have, no doubt, learned an important skill of ordering and organizing information at the personal and professional level.*

*• I learned how to approach writing text myself. As we progressed in the training, I felt it was easier for me to address any subject that could be written and within a few minutes to know what I was going to write.*

*• When I felt that I had made a change in thinking and realized that it was possible to write differently, the students also began to make a change. This is my success.*

These findings show that as a result of the training program, the attitudes of eight teachers toward writing changed for the better, and their self-confidence as writers and teachers whose job is to teach the craft of writing, increased. Following learning and increased knowledge, the feelings of apprehension and discomfort regarding the craft of writing that were expressed by six teachers were replaced with the sense that they are able to write and teach writing.

*3.3 The impact of the intervention on student achievements*

The findings (see Table 1 and also Author a 2019) indicate a statistically significant positive difference in the achievement of elementary school students who participated in the intervention program over one school year. The intervention group showed great progress. In accordance with the findings from the teachers' texts (see 3.1 above), the most significant progress in students' writing was found in those measures that aimed at substantiating the central claim, such as presenting opposing positions accompanied by counter-arguments, using concessive structures as a linguistic means to create dialogicity, and vocabulary and style.

**Table.1 The students' achievements in the texts written before and after the intervention\***

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **רכיבים במחוון** | | **לפני התערבות** | | **בסוף ההתערבות** | |
| **ממוצע** | **סטיית תקן** | **ממוצע** | **סטיית תקן** |
| **1** | התאמה הטקסט לנושא |  |  |  |  |
| **2** | התאמה הטקסט למטרת הטקסט (סוגה) |  |  |  |  |
| **3** | פתיחת הטקסט |  |  |  |  |
| **4** | גוף הטקסט |  |  |  |  |
| **5** | סיכום הטקסט |  |  |  |  |
| **6** | **הצגת דילמה הקשורה בנושא הנדון** |  |  |  |  |
| **7** | טענת הכותב |  |  |  |  |
| **8** | התחשבות בידע הנמען |  |  |  |  |
| **9** | מכוונות לנמען באמצעים דיאלוגיים |  |  |  |  |
| **10** | הצגת הנמקה הגיונית מגוונת ואמינה |  |  |  |  |
| **11** | הנימוקים מורחבים ומלווים בפירוט, הסבר, דוגמה |  |  |  |  |
| **12** | קשר לוגי בין הטענה להנמקה |  |  |  |  |
| **13** | **הצגת עמדות מנוגדות לעמדת הכותב** |  |  |  |  |
| **14** | **הצגת נימוקים המתייחסים לעמדת הנגד** |  |  |  |  |
| **15** | **הצגת נימוקי נגד באמצעות קשר לוגי של ניגוד או ויתור** |  |  |  |  |
| **16** | **הצגת קשר בין הנימוקים** |  |  |  |  |
| **17** | **מסקנה** |  |  |  |  |
| **18** | לכידות |  |  |  |  |
| **19** | קישוריות |  |  |  |  |
| **20** | אוצר מילים |  |  |  |  |

**\*** The components where a significant improvement has occurred are highlighted.

**4. Discussion and conclusions**

In the present section we discuss the main conclusions that emerge from the study in relation with the teachers' abilities and beliefs.

*4.1 The impact of the intervention program on teachers' writing abilities*

The findings of the current study show that systematic professional development in the field of writing instruction that was aimed at teaching teachers to experience writing, learn about writing processes, and apply what they have learned in their classes strengthened both teachers' writing ability and their confidence as writers. These findings are in line with previous findings (Wood & Liberman, 2000; Bifuh-Ambe, 2013; Graham & Harris 2019), according to which the development of teachers’ writing alongside the acquisition of instruction knowledge can help them become better skilled writers with greater writing confidence and become teachers of writing who know the craft of writing in all its complexity. As mentioned, due to the limited number of teachers who participated in the study, we chose to base the assessment of the teachers' texts both on an analytical analysis, similar to the assessment of the students' texts, and on a holistic analysis. Specifically, the teachers' writing after the intervention included elements that reinforce reasoning, an element which did not stand out or did not appear at all in their writing before the intervention. Examining the teachers' texts indicates an improvement in the writing results, especially in the components: reference to opposing position, providing reasons for the opposing position, use of specific syntactic structures to express contrast, clear logical connections between arguments and the occurrence of conclusion, We found in their arguments a more accurate choice of words, use of diverse and appropriate conjunctions.

The changes that took place in the teachers' texts after the intervention show that processes for improving writing can help skilled writers as well as novice writers. These finding agree with previous studies that focused on teachers as writers, which found that improving teachers' writing processes helped to refine their writing and subsequently allow them to demonstrate to their students the processes involved and to provide expert knowledge and advice based on experience (Grainger, 2005b; Cremin, 2006; Cremin et al., 2017). Moreover, the findings indicate a relationship between the indicators that improved in both groups, teachers and students.

*4.2 The impact of the intervention program on teachers' beliefs*

The texts written by the teachers in their personal blogs indicate that the intervention program had an impact on their beliefs about their own writing and on their ability to promote their students' writing. In line with previous findings (Rietdijk, van Weijen, Janssen, van den Bergh, & Rijlaarsdam, 2018), our findings show that following a process of training and instruction, they felt more confident both in their own writing abilities and in teaching writing and that their experience as writers themselves influenced their perceptions and attitudes toward writing. Before the intervention, some teachers expressed the feeling that writing is a challenging task for them that requires a great deal of effort, but at the end of the training program they stated that their self-confidence as writers had increased. There was also a change in their approach to writing instruction, from fears and discomfort at the beginning of the process to the feeling that they had succeeded in expanding their knowledge of instruction and applying it in their classrooms. The teachers reported that the learning process in the training program contributed to their skills as writers and teachers of writing because they better understood what was required of writers when they approach the task of writing. In the present study, the intervention program directed teachers to implement new strategies unfamiliar to them in writing an argumentative text—strategies that focus on the ability to look at an issue from two perspectives, support personal positions, present arguments appropriate to opposing positions, and more. The intervention helped teachers implement explicit instruction and believe that they are capable of teaching argumentative text writing and advancing their students through the focused instruction of elements related to substantiating an argument.

At the end of the intervention, after a process of learning among the teachers, and as a result, explicit instruction in their classroom, the teachers acquired the ability to establish in their own writing arguments that not only expressed the writer's position but also referred in a certain way to the opposing position. It is evident that the teachers have learned to consider and present in their texts alternative views and even views that are contrary to the writer's position and accompany them with reasons and examples. The measures relating to orientation to the audience and the use of dialogical means, which are responsible for increasing the text's effectiveness in relation to the audience, also improved considerably. These performances strengthened the text's persuasive power.

The present study shows that participation in the intervention program promote teachers' knowledge of writing instruction by implement the newly acquired writing strategies and skills in both their teaching and their writing, and improve their own writing abilities and their self-perception as writers.

*4.3 Implications*

Based on the call of researchers from recent years (Graham, Alves, 2021) to create and establish knowledge on writing and writing instruction, the research findings provide policy makers in the education system with a future path for the professional development of writing instruction among teachers in general, and primary school teachers in particular. It may not be possible for elementary school teachers to promote writing to their students if they themselves do not go through a process of personal progress in writing. The education system seems to be required to enhance the frameworks for professional development for writing instruction and to take into account the importance of teachers' experience as writers alongside the learning of pedagogical knowledge aimed at classroom teaching. Rethinking is required to design learning frameworks for teachers that provide them with arenas for experiencing writing in various genres.

Moreover, the uniqueness of the present study stems from its focus on writing in the argumentative genre. Ferretti and Graham (2019) emphasize the gap between the slow and late development of a written argument text and the early appearance, at a young age, of an oral argument. Hence the necessity of having professional development frameworks that focus on teaching the writing of an argumentative text and incorporating in-depth learning on the ways of reasoning and examining different perspectives of the same issue. The learning process should address methods and strategies for developing reasoning ability such as creating a collaborative discourse to raise ideas, setting specific goals for writing, relying on prior knowledge to substantiate the argument, and familiarity with linguistic means for creating and establishing a dialog with the audience.

*4.4 Limitations and recommendations for further research*

The current study was based on a small number of eight teachers, thereby limiting the external validity of the study. It is therefore proposed to examine the issues raised in this study in more classrooms, at other ages, and in other contexts. Given the innovative value of this study, it is important to repeat the study design, further examine the findings, and use additional methodologies in order to generalize the findings and draw valid conclusions.

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Appendix 1

**מחוון להערכת טקסטים טיעוניים**

| **פירוט** | **במידה רבה מאוד**  **4 נקודות** | **במידה רבה**  **3 נקודות** | **במידה חלקית**  **2 נקודות** | **במידה מועטה**  **1 נקודה** | **בכלל לא**  **0 נקודות** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **מידת התאמת הטקסט (תוכן ומבנה) לנושא ולמטרת הכתיבה**  סה"כ 8 נקודות | | | | | |
| 1. **1**. הכותב הציג את התייחסויותיו בהתאם **לנושא** הנדרש במטלה. | התייחסויות בהתאם לנושא הנדרש במטלה באופן מיטבי ובמידה רבה. | התייחסויותיו בהתאם לנושא הנדרש במטלה. | התייחסויות בהתאם לנושא הנדרש במטלה באופן חלקי . | ניתן להבין באופן משתמע כי הכותב הציג את התייחסויותיו בהתאם לנושא הנדרש במטלה. | הכותב לא התייחס כלל לנושא הנדרש במטלה. |
| **2**. הכותב הציג התייחסויות בהתאם **לסוגה** הנדרשת במטלה. | התייחסויות בהתאם לסוגה הנדרשת במטלה באופן מיטבי ובמידה רבה. | התייחסויות בהתאם לסוגה הנדרשת במטלה. | התייחסות לסוגה במידה חלקית, למשל הכותב אינו מציג טענה ברורה אלא מציג עמדה דואלית שאינה מפורשת, או הכותב מציג טענה ללא הנמקה משכנעת ורלוונטית או, הכותב משתמש בצייני עמדה אך לא מתייחס באופן תקין למאפייני הסוגה האחרים. | הכותב מתייחס לסוגה במידה מועטה, לעתים באופן משתמע ולא גלוי ומפורש. | הכותב מציג התייחסויותיו שלא בהתאם לסוגה |
| **הפקת יחידת שיח שלמה ועצמאית (רכיבי מבנה)**  **סה"כ 20 נק'** | | | | | |
| **3.** פתיחת הטקסט - הכותב הציג את הנושא ואת ההקשר התקשורתי (נסיבות הכתיבה) לכתיבה באופן מפורש, ברור והגיוני לכל קורא, גם לנמען שאינו מכיר את המשימה. | הכותב הציג את הנושא ואת ההקשר כפי שמופיע במשימה באופן מפורש מפורט ומורחב : | הכותב הציג את הנושא ואת ההקשר שמופיע במשימה באופן מפורש: | הכותב הציג את הנושא ואת/ או את ההקשר שמופיע במשימה באופן חלקי. | הכותב הציג הקשר כלשהו ( לעתים באופן משתמע) לנמען ובו התייחסות לנושא | הכותב אינו מציג הקשר לכתיבה כלל |
| **4**. גוף הטקסט - הכותב הציג יחידת טיעון הכוללת טענה, נימוקים בליווי הסברים ודוגמות רלוונטיות ומהימנות לביסוס ההנמקה. | יחידת הטיעון כוללת את כל המרכיבים: טענה ונימוק מורחב ומפורט או לפחות 2 נימוקים המלווים בהרחבה וביסוס או, הכותב הציג טענה וטענה נגדית המלוות בנימוקים מורחבים המתאימים לכל טענה. | יחידת הטיעון כוללת טענה ולפחות נימוק אחד המבסס את הטענה ומלווה בדוגמה או הסבר או, טענה וכמה נימוקים הגיוניים מהימנים ורלוונטיים ללא הרחבה. | יחידת הטיעון כוללת טענה ולפחות נימוק אחד הגיוני מהימן ללא הרחבה מהימנה או מתאימה ו/ או משכנעת. | יחידת הטיעון כוללת טענה בלבד או טענה לא רלוונטית או, טענה והנמקה דלה, או טענה המשתמעת בהתאם לנימוקים | יחידת הטיעון לא כוללת טענה והנמקה באופן מפורש כלל. |
| **5**. סיכום הטקסט - הכותב הציג את עמדתו ככותב בסיכום. | הכותב מציג בסיכום את עמדתו בהכללה, תוך שהוא מנסח מחדש ולא חוזר באותן המילים על טענתו ותוך התייחסות להיבטים רבים מתוך ההנמקה המדגישים את עמדתו ומבססים אותה. | הכותב מציג בסיכום את עמדתו ומתייחס להיבטים המדגישים את עמדתו ומבססים אותה, או מנסח את הטענה בדומה לניסוח הטענה שהוצג כבר בטקסט תוך התייחסות לרכיבים בהנמקה, או בליווי הצגת המלצות הנשענות על ההנמקה. | הכותב מציג בסיכום את עמדתו תוך התייחסות מצומצמת לרכיבים בהנמקה, או מציג בסיכום את עמדתו ומוסיף לה מידע חדש שלא הוזכר קודם. | הכותב מציג את עמדתו בדומה להצגת הטענה בטקסט קוד, או הכותב הציג המלצה בלבד או התייחסות מפורשת לתוצאה של השכנוע, המביעה את ההתכוונות שלו להשפיע על הקורא | הכותב לא הציג סיכום כלל. |
| **6**. הכותב הציג את הדילמה הקשורה בנושא הנדון. | הכותב מציג באופן מדויק ובהרחבה את הדילמה הקשורה בנושא . | הכותב מציג באופן מפורש וענייני ( בדרך כלל כשאלה) את הדילמה הקשורה בנושא. | הכותב מציג את הדילמה באופן חלקי. | הכותב אינו מציג במפורש את הדילמה אך היא משתמעת מתוך הכתוב. | הכותב אינו מציג כלל את הדילמה. |
| **7**. טענת הכותב מנוסחת בבירור לכל קורא (גם למי שלא ראה את המשימה). | הכותב מציג את הטענה באופן ברור ומפורש במידה רבה ובהלימה לנדרש במשימה. | הכותב מציג את הטענה באופן מפורש ובהלימה לנדרש במשימה. לעתים, הטענה כוללת סיוג המצטרף לעמדה או מחזק אותה. | הכותב מציג את הטענה באופן חלקי או באופן שאינו מפורש וברור, או מציג שתי טענות המנוסחות בבירור כטענותיו. | הכותב מציג במידה מועטה את הטענה, או הטענה משתמעת מן הכתוב, או הכותב מציג טענה ברורה, אך בהמשך הטקסט משנה את דעתו ואת טענתו ומבסס אותן. | הכותב אינו מציג טענה כלל |
| **מכוונות לנמען ושימוש באמצעי דיאלוגיות**  **(ביטויים לכך שהמוען ער לנוכחותם של נמעניםו ומנהל עמם דיאלוג)**  סה"כ 8 נקודות | | | | | |
| **8**. התחשבות בידע הנמען- הכותב מבהיר ומרחיב בכתיבתו דברים שבעיניו הקורא צריך לדעת בנושא. | הכותב משלב במידה רבה מאוד מידע המופנה לנמען בניסיון להסביר, לחזק ולהבהיר לו את הכתוב בכלל ואת עמדתו בפרט. | הכותב משלב מידע המופנה לנמען בניסיון להסביר ולהבהיר לו את הכתוב ואת עמדתו. | הכותב משלב באופן חלקי מידע המופנה לנמען בניסיון להסביר ולהבהיר לו את הכתוב, או מוסיף משפטים שתכליתם לנסות להבהיר את הכתוב אך לא במידה מספקת (כגון עצות והמלצות, הבעת תקווה). | הכותב פונה באופן גלוי לנמען בניסיון לכוון את דבריו אל הנמען אך לא מוסיף מידע חיוני המבהיר את עמדתו, או הכותב מציין בכתיבתו פרטים קלים שמתוכם משתמעת התכווננות לנמען. | הכותב מציג את העמדה והנימוקים ונראה כי הוא אינו ער דיו לנוכחותו של הנמען או לידע שלו. |
| 9. מכוונות לנמען באמצעים דיאלוגיים - הכותב מכוון את דבריו לנמען באמצעות ביטויים לשוניים לדיאלוגיות כגון, שימוש במשפטי שאלה: שאלות רטוריות, שאלות הפונות לנמענים, שימוש במבנים של ניגוד או וויתור: בהצגת עמדות או טיעוני נגד: אבל, אך, אמנם... אבל, למרות ש... אף על פי כן, שימוש באמצעים רטוריים ומשחק לשוני כדי להעיר את תשומת ליבו של הנמען ובניסיון לשכנעו. | בטקסט מופיעים ביטויים לשוניים רבים לדיאלוגיות עם הנמען באופן מפורש וברור. | בטקסט מופיעים ביטויים לשוניים לדיאלוגיות עם הנמען. | בטקסט מופיעים ביטויים לשוניים שעשויים להצביע על ניסיון הכותב ליצור דיאלוגיות עם הנמען אם כי השימוש אינו תורם במידה רבה ליצירת הדיאלוגיות עם הנמען. | בטקסט מופיעים ביטויים לשוניים מעטים לדיאלוגיות עם הקורא. | בטקסט לא מופיעים כלל ביטויים לשוניים לדיאלוגיות. |
| **מידת מיצוי התוכן ועיבוי ההנמקה הכוללת**  סה"כ 32 נקודות | | | | | |
| **10**. הכותב הציג הנמקה הגיונית מגוונת ואמינה המתאימה לעמדתו ומבססת אותה. | הכותב מספק הנמקה רחבה , הגיונית, מהימנה המתאימה לעמדתו.  הכותב מספק הנמקה רחבה והסברים הולמים ומספקים , דוגמות רלוונטיות ולא מומצאות התומכות בטענה ומבססות את הנימוקים. | הכותב מספק לפחות שני נימוקים שונים מבחינת התוכן, הגיוניים ואמינים המתאימים לעמדתו. ההנמקה הרלוונטית אינה מפותחת דייה | הכותב מספק שני נימוקים אך לפחות אחד מהם לא מספיק מהימן, מדויק או משכנע או הכותב מספק נימוק אחד הבנוי משני חלקים שיש ביניהם קשר תוכני המתאים לטענה. | הכותב מספק הנמקה שאינה הולמת או מספקת מבחינת כמות ואיכות הנימוקים.  הנמקה דלה למשל באמצעות דוגמות שאינן מבססות את הטענה במפורש. | הכותב אינו מספק נימוקים כלל, או הכותב מספק הנמקה דלה מאוד או הנמקה שאינה רלוונטית ומתאימה. |
| **11**. הנימוקים מורחבים ומלווים בפירוט הסבר או דוגמה מתאימים לטענה. | הכותב מספק במידה רבה מאוד הסברים הולמים ומספקים, דוגמות שנבחרו בקפידה, פרטים עשירים, עדויות אמיתיות ואמינות התומכות בטענה ומבססות את הנימוקים. | הכותב מספק הסברים הולמים ומספקים, ודוגמות אמינות התומכות בטענה ומבססות את הנימוקים. | הכותב מספק הנמקה הולמת מבחינת הכמות אך ללא הרחבה רלוונטית או מספקת כדי לשכנע את הקורא. | הכותב מספק הנמקה שאינה הולמת או מספקת מבחינת כמות ו/ או איכות הנימוקים, או ההסברים או הדוגמות המלווים את הנימוקים אינם מהימנים או מדויקים. | הכותב לא מספק הסברים, פירוט, דוגמות המלווים את הנימוקים כלל. |
| 12. הכותב הציג קשר לוגי ברור ותקין בין הטענה לבין ההנמקה. | הקשר הלוגי בין הטענה לבין ההנמקה ברור היטב ובולט לקורא. | הקשר הלוגי בין הטענה לבין ההנמקה נעשה באמצעות מילות קישור מתאימות. | הקשר בין הטענה לבין ההנמקה אינו מפורש וברור. לעתים הקשר הלוגי בין הטענה להנמקה משתמע. | קשה לזהות את הקשר בין טענת הכותב ובין ההנמקה לאורך הכתיבה. קשה לזהות את העמדה העיקרית של הכותב ואת ההנמקה לביסוסה, או עמדת הכותב המוצהרת בטקסט משתנה במהלך הטקסט והקשר בין הטענה להנמקה אינו ברור. | לא מוצג קשר כלשהו בין הטענה להנמקה. |
| **13**. הכותב הציג עמדות המנוגדות לעמדתו. | הכותב מציג באופן גלוי, מפורש , מדויק וברור עמדה/ ות המנוגדת/ות לעמדתו. | הכותב מציג עמדה/ות המנוגדת/ות לעמדתו. | הכותב מצהיר על על עמדות מנוגדות אך מציג באופן מפורש עמדה אחת בלבד (עמדת הכותב). | הכותב מספק מידע משתמע לגבי עמדות מנוגדות אפשריות . | אין כלל הצגה או התייחסות לעמדות מנוגדות. |
| **14**. הכותב הציג נימוקים המתייחסים לעמדת נגד. | הכותב מספק הנמקה רחבה, מגוונת הגיונית, מהימנה המתאימה לעמדה הנוגדת את עמדתו ככותב, המוצגת בטקסט. | הכותב מספק הנמקה הגיונית המתאימה לעמדה המנוגדת. | הכותב מספק לפחות נימוק אחד הגיוני, מהימן המתאים לעמדה הנוגדת את עמדתו ככותב, המוצגת בטקסט. | הכותב מספק מידע משתמע לגבי נימוקי נגד אפשריים. | הכותב אינו מספק כלל טיעוני נגד. |
| **15**. הכותב הציג נימוקים המתייחסים לעמדת הנגד באמצעות קשר לוגי של ניגוד/ ויתור כך שברור לקורא מדוע הכותב מעדיף עמדה זו ולא אחרת. | הכותב הציג במידה רבה נימוקים המתייחסים לעמדת הנגד באמצעות שימוש במילות ניגוד או באמצעות שימוש במילות וויתור כגון אומנם אבל, לעומת זאת, למרות, אף על פי ש... כך שברור לקורא מדוע הכותב מעדיף עמדה זו ולא אחרת. | הכותב הציג חלקים מתוך ההנמקה המתייחסים לעמדת הנגד תוך שימוש ברכיבים תחביריים המעידים על ניגוד ועדיין ברור מדוע הכותב מעדיף עמדה אחת על פני אחרת. | הכותב הציג נימוקים המתייחסים לעמדת הנגד תוך שימוש במבנים של ניגוד או ויתור אם כי לא באופן שמחזק את עמדתו למשל שימוש ב- מצד אחד מצד שני או שימוש לא מדויק במבנה ויתור. | ניתן לזהות התייחסות משתמעת לעמדת הנגד. | הכותב לא הציג כלל נימוקי נגד באמצעות מבנים של ניגוד. |
| **16**. הכותב הציג קשר בין הנימוקים השונים המחזקים את עמדתו ככותב. | הכותב הציג קשר מפורש, הדוק והגיוני בין הנימוקים השונים כך שישכנע את הנמען גם באמצעות אמצעי קישור וחזרתיות על מילים. | הכותב הציג קשר בין הנימוקים השונים באמצעות אמצעי קישור וחזרתיות על מילים. | הכותב הציג קשר חלקי בין הנימוקים השונים באמצעות אמצעי קישור או באמצעות חזרתיות על מילים. | הכותב הציג קשר רופף בין הנימוקים השונים. | הכותב לא הציג כלל קשר בין נימוקים. |
| **17.** המסקנה (בסיכום) נגזרת באופן לוגי מן ההנמקה. | הכותב מציג מסקנה מפורשת וברורה הנגזרת באופן לוגי מן ההנמקה ומחזקת את עמדת הכותב. המסקנה מנוסחת במילים אחרות מן הטענה המוצגת בפתיחת הטקסט וכוללת מידע המסתמך על ההנמקה. | הכותב מציג מסקנה ברורה והיא מנוסחת בחלקה במילים אחרות ושונות ממילות הטענה. | הכותב מציג מסקנה חלקית, למשל , חזרה על הטענה בליווי המלצה הנשענת על הטענה המרכזית של הכותב. | הכותב מציג את הטענה פעם נוספת ללא כל שינוי, או הכותב מציג המלצה בלבד הנגזרת מן הטענה וההנמקה. | אין מסקנה הנגזרת באופן לוגי מן ההנמקה. |
| **לכידות הטקסט**  **סה"כ 4 נקודות** | | | | | |
| **18.** הדברים כתובים בצורה רציפה. קיים קשר בין הרעיונות והנושאים המופיעים בטקסט כך שהם מתקבלים על הדעת ומובָנים הגיונית לקורא. | ארגון הרעיונות והנושאים המוצגים בטקסט מובילים את הקורא להבין היטב את הנושא המדובר. הרעיונות קשורים זה בזה וקיימת ביניהם זרימה הגיונית וברורה גם ללא שימוש במילים מקדמי ארגון המאותתות לנמען על פתיחה או סיום של ההיצג הכתוב (למשל: שימוש במילים ראשית, שנית, לסיכום). | ארגון הרעיונות והנושאים המוצגים בטקסט מובילים את הקורא להבין את הנושא המדובר. | ארגון חלקי של הרעיונות והנושאים המוצגים בטקסט, כך שהקורא לא מצליח להבין בקלות את הנושא המדובר. הטקסט אינו מפורש דיו ואינו מספק כהלכה את הרעיונות הדרושים להבנת הנושא המדובר.  דוגמות: הטקסט מכיל חזרות היוצרות עודפות מיותרת בטקסט מופיע מידע הסוטה מן הנושא. הזרימה בין הרעיונות מקוטעת מכיוון שהיא מלווה בשימוש במילות קישור מיותרות שתפקידן לאותת לקורא מה הוא עומד לקרוא בהמשך (למשל להלן נימוקיי, להלן דוגמות). | ארגון הרעיונות בטקסט מבלבל את הקורא.  לעתים, הטקסט מכיל מידע מצומצם מאוד והקורא נדרש להשלים פערים בטקסט ומתקשה להבין בקלות במי או במה מדובר, או הקשר בין הרעיונות אינו מובהר בטקסט. | הכותב מדלג באקראי מנקודה לנקודה, ומשאיר את הקורא "מתרוצץ" כדי לעקוב אחר הדברים. |
| **קישוריות**  סה"כ 4 נקודות | | | | | |
| **19.** הטקסט מכיל רכיבים לשוניים שונים גלויים מתאימים (מספקים ולא עודפים) כדי לחבר בין חלקי הטקסט השונים. | הטקסט מקושר היטב באמצעות מילות קישור מתאימות, אזכורים וכינויים המסייעים לקורא להבין את רצף הדברים. | הטקסט מקושר ברובו באמצעות מילות קישור, אזכורים, כינויים. | הטקסט מכיל מילות קישור אזכורים במידה שאינה מספקת (עודפת או מצומצמת) | הטקסט מכיל מילות קישור שאינן מתאימות או לא נכונות הפוגעות בהבנה. | הטקסט אינו מכיל מילות קישור וקשה להבין את רצף הדברים. |
| **אוצר מילים**  סה"כ 4 נקודות | | | | | |
| **20.** הטקסט מכיל אוצר מילים מגוון ומדויק, וסגנון ההולם את האופנות הכתובה, את ההקשר של המטלה ואת התוכן. | אוצר מילים מגוון מדויק, שימוש רב במילים ממשלב גבוה, ובסגנון ההולם את האופנות הכתובה. ניכר שימוש במילות שכנוע. | אוצר מילים מדויק ומגוון ההולם את האופנות הכתובה. | שימוש בלשון יומיומית שאינה תקינה. | שימוש במילות סלנג. | שפה דלה מאוד, משובשת, לא תקינה |