
ELEMENTARY STUDENTS' FIRST-LANGUAGE NARRATIVE WRITING: A LONGITUDINAL STUDY

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The presentation described preliminary findings of a longitudinal study of Canadian English-stream and French-immersion students' narrative writing with emphasis on the results of semantic and syntactic analyses of first-draft and revised texts at grade 3, 4, and 5 levels. I used sample texts drawn from the assessment files of high, average, and low achieving students to illustrate grade-by-program developmental trends, and described techniques for narrative writing assessment and instructional implications of the study's findings.

The primary objectives of the longitudinal study were: description (i.e., the delineation of developmental trends in English-stream and French-immersion students' narrative writing), and comparisons (i.e., establishment of the presence/absence of significant differences among grade, achievement, and program subgroups). These objectives were introduced through reference to the literature regarding English-stream/French-immersion writing development, and examination of a variety of student texts at the grade 1 to 6 levels. We discussed the development of criterion-based guidelines for teacher evaluation of narratives, as well as the design of more detailed semantic analyses (e.g., procedural frame analyses): we offered analyzed texts to illustrate use of these techniques. Finally, we presented preliminary findings regarding English-stream and French-immersion

students' writing development, emphasizing results of the semantic analyses of grade 3, 4, and 5 students' narratives.

Participants and presenters discussed the implications of these findings for student evaluation, classroom programming, and future research regarding the writing process.